

Final Assessment Report

Child and Youth Studies

Graduate and Undergraduate Programs

(reviewed 2018-19)

A. Summary

1. The Department's Self Study was considered and approved by the Senate Academic Review Committee on November 21, 2018.
2. The Review Committee consisted of two external reviewers: Lauren Silver (Rutgers University) and Judy Finlay (Ryerson University) and an internal reviewer, Erin Sharpe (Brock University).
3. The site visit occurred on March 17-19, 2019.
4. The Reviewers' Report was received on April 24, 2019.
5. The Senate Graduate Studies Committee response was received on May 10, 2019.
6. The Department's response was received on May 21, 2019.
7. The Senate Undergraduate Program Committee response was received on May 21, 2019.
8. The Dean of Graduate Studies response was received on May 31, 2019.
9. The Dean of Social Sciences response was received on June 21, 2019.
10. The Revised Dean of Social Sciences response was received on September 26, 2019.

This review was conducted under the terms and conditions of the IQAP approved by Senate on May 25, 2016.

The academic programs offered by the Department of Child and Youth Studies which were examined and rated as part of the review were:

Program(s)	Excellent Quality	Good Quality	Good Quality with Concerns	Non-Viable
PhD	X			
MA	X			
BA (Honours)	X			
BA (with major)	X			
BA (Honours) combined	X			
BA (with major) combined	X			
BA (Honours)/BEd	X			
BA (Pass)	X			

B. Strengths of the Program

The reviewers wrote the following:

We found that Child and Youth Studies (CHYS) demonstrates many strengths, and overall, CHYS is highly effective, innovative, collegial, well-organized, and successful across many areas:

Interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity:

As CHYS is organized through three key streams: developmental psychology, sociocultural studies, and exceptionality, we found the multi, inter, and transdisciplinary nature of the curriculum and research to be a strength across the community of faculty and students. Students reported the ways in which exposure to multiple approaches in understanding children and youth helped them to find their own critical stances and diversified knowledge about children. They also shared the ways in which classes across these streams helped them to explore different professional options for their futures. Faculty talked about how collaborations with other members of their unit helped them in applying for inter and transdisciplinary research grants, in diversifying their own scholarly approaches, and in classroom innovations. Some faculty members shared how they had started to experiment with transdisciplinarity in the classroom and the experiment seemed fruitful for both students and faculty members. Transdisciplinarity in particular is an innovative approach stemming from CHYS and the graduate students shared how they are pioneering this approach through their coursework and through their dissertation research designs.

CHYS also support multidisciplinary through the complicated range of concurrent undergraduate degrees offered with Education, Applied Linguistics, Geography, Psychology, and Sociology. The flexibility and breadth of degree programs supports students' multidisciplinary education and application in their acquisition of knowledge and in their professional endeavors.

Innovation:

We found CHYS to be innovative in designing/supporting new graduate programming and in responding productively to increased enrollments and class sizes. In particular, as enrollments and class sizes have increased (particularly in the undergraduate program) since the last review period, the faculty has innovated the structure and modes of instruction/learning used in classes. Faculty members, students, and staff all talked about the importance of seminars (usually offered by grad student TAs) in supporting small group cohort exchanges, and through application of concepts learned during large lectures. Faculty members also use small group presentations, debates, and critical reflections to support student learning.

Advising:

We witnessed evidence of excellent advising across academic, social, and mental health domains. Undergraduate and graduate students report an "open door policy" among both staff and faculty in CHYS. They mentioned the ongoing support, follow-up, and high level of communication across different members of CHYS in supporting their success as students. Students reported face-to-face availability of advisors and academic assistance as well as email bursts with access to a range of supports and encouragement. Students

also receive assistance in the social and academic experience through “boot-camps” offered by faculty members and staff. The excellent advising received by students relates to another CHYS strengths, high retention and graduation rates among their students.

Student Retention and Outcomes:

Clearly the academic program and advising offered by CHYS is quite strong and this is reflected in very high retention and graduation rates for undergraduate and graduate students (as compared to the College, University, and the Province of Ontario more generally). Further, a large number of students enrolled in the MA program also came through the CHYS undergraduate program, which also points the relevance and effectiveness of the academic programs.

Collegiality & Collaboration:

We found CHYS to generally work well together in supporting one another, students, staff, faculty and collaborations with community partners. Across interviews with faculty, staff, and students, many reported on the well-functioning shared decision making within the group. The general collegiality has helped support another strength of the department, its momentum and strategic planning.

Momentum and Strategic Planning:

CHYS is quite robust in its strategic planning and forward momentum. Despite budget cuts, the program was able to garner support to innovate a transdisciplinary PhD program in 2016. The PhD program has exceeded CHYS’s expectations in terms of the number of students, quality of students, and diversity of students enrolled. Further, a couple of PhD students have recently offered their own courses with great success. The early success of the PhD program has not come at the expense of the other programs and in fact CHYS has supported mentorship across levels.

C. Opportunities for Improvement and Enhancement

Recommendation #1

Increasing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- A. That CHYS take the multiple steps required to ensure a culture of equity, diversity and inclusion with attention to: curriculum development and course content; student admissions; recruitment and retainment of Faculty and staff and the creation of community based diverse knowledge exchanges.
- B. That CHYS continue to work with the Joint Committee on Employment Equity to advance its hiring equity policy for both faculty and staff members, targeting hiring from racialized groups.

In its response, the Department stated:

The CHYS department recognizes the continued need to ensure a culture of equity, diversity, and inclusion. This is specifically the case within its student body and faculty complement. To address this challenge within its student body, the CHYS department will continue to work with the Office of Recruitment and Liaison services to strategize ways to broaden its marketing and appeal more generally to diverse student groups. Further, CHYS will attend to developing course curriculum and content that will aim to attract diverse groups of students both at the undergraduate and graduate level.

In regard to CHYS faculty, CHYS recognizes the need to develop diversity and equity within its complement of faculty, particularly with regard to racial diversity, disability, and Indigeneity.

CHYS will continue to work with Brock's administration and the Joint Committee on Employment Equity to strategize about ways to attract faculty from diverse backgrounds. Currently, one relevant initiative to address diversity is the potential of a Canada Research Chair in CHYS that is specifically targeted to a racialized candidate and/or someone with a disability. CHYS recommends that Brock administration work with CHYS to develop this current CRC position to hire an international scholar that addresses the need for equity and diversity within its faculty complement.

In addition to addressing diversity within its student body and faculty complement, the CHYS department is invested in furthering initiatives that address issues of indigeneity. There are several faculty members who are actively involved with indigenous groups and CHYS will continue to develop such initiatives.

The Faculty Dean stated that:

The Dean's Office supports the Departmental response to recommendation 1. (A) and 1. (B) and notes that ensuring a culture of equity, diversity and inclusion in student and faculty recruitment, curriculum development and community knowledge exchange is

part of Brock's Institutional Strategic Plan as well as the Faculty's updated Draft Strategic Plan.

The Dean of Graduate Studies stated:

I support this recommendation. It is consistent with the goals of the Faculty of Graduate Studies, as well as the university.

The Senate Undergraduate Program Committee (UPC) stated:

The UPC supports all of the recommendations, and strongly supports #1, and #3.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers recommendation 1A to be accepted and in the process of implementation.

ARC considers recommendation 1B to reflect current practice and the provisions of the Brock University/Faculty Association Collective Agreement.

Recommendation 1A

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)	
Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2019/20

Recommendation 1B

Implementation Plan
Recommendation not accepted. Current practice.

Recommendation #2

Maintain/Augment Funding of Graduate Teaching Assistantships

That CHYS maintain and augment capacity of both the graduate and undergraduate program by the funding of graduate teaching assistantships.

In its response, the Department stated:

Graduate student teaching assistantships are a critical component to the CHYS graduate program. The funding provided to students from graduate TAs is vital to the financial well-being of CHYS graduate students. The rate associated with graduate TAs is established by the Faculty of Graduate Studies. As CHYS continues to grow its undergraduate courses, particularly CHYS 1F90, 2P10, 2P35, 2P38 and 2P/F15, the opportunities for CHYS graduate students to TA courses will also grow. In addition to graduate TAs, advanced CHYS Ph.D. students are teaching courses in CHYS.

The Faculty Dean stated that:

The Dean's Office supports the Departmental response to Recommendation 2. and notes that CHYS students are also eligible to apply for additional funding from the Faculty of Social Sciences Student Research Fellowships, which were introduced last year to provide additional assistance for domestic and international graduate students.

The Dean of Graduate Studies stated:

Student TAs are labour contracts and beyond the purview of the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies. I encourage the department to continue its proactive review of both undergraduate and graduate enrolments so as to ensure that students are provided with TA opportunities. TA rates, of course, are determined through union bargaining and not within the Dean's purview.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be not accepted as it lies outside of the Committee's jurisdiction. The Committee understands that graduate TAs are governed by the Brock University/CUPE Collective Agreements. ARC notes the positive response of the Dean of Social Sciences with regard to additional TA funding now available within the Faculty. The Committee expects that the Department will proceed through normal channels of advocacy to maintain and augment Teaching Assistantship resources.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted.

Recommendation #3

Maintain/Augment Service Learning and Professionalism

- A. That CHYS prioritize its preferred teaching modalities with attention to experiential learning / service learning. This may mean a shift to a more applied approach with a wider range of community partners. This is absolutely consistent with trans/interdisciplinary practice and may require a redistribution of resources.
- B. That CHYS maintain internal advising staff with the addition of a part time placement assistant to support the Placement Coordinator for maintenance and development of service learning opportunities and partner collaborations.

In its response, the Department stated:

CHYS is committed to maintaining and developing its experiential learning opportunities for students. Currently, there are several undergraduate courses that include a service-learning component. The most prominent of these courses is CHYS 2P/F15 that serves all second year CHYS and Education students. This course has been a benchmark course for CHYS and Brock University where students spend a significant amount of time in community and school settings. It is important to note that as the compliment of Concurrent Education students increases significantly this Fall (2019), CHYS 2P15 will increase accordingly in the Fall of 2020. The upcoming increase (Fall 2020) in students within this course will place a significant strain on the resources required to place these students as well as the community capacity to host students. To offset this demand, an additional part-time staff member will be hired in CHYS in July 2019 to assist with course coordination and service-learning maintenance. As CHYS moves forward, we will continue to monitor and evaluate our capacity to effectively serve students in CHYS 2P/F15.

In line with Brock's strategic mandate and CHYS's commitment to transdisciplinarity, CHYS will continue to strive towards maintaining and developing experiential learning opportunities for its undergraduate and graduate students.

The Faculty Dean stated that:

The Dean's office is in support of the Department's response to Recommendation, 3. A and B, noting that CHYS can make use of the services of the Faculty of Social Sciences Experiential Coordinator - a full-time staff position that assists faculty in various units and departments to expand experiential learning opportunities. Also, an additional .5 staff person for CHYS to assist with community placements has been approved.

The Dean of Graduate Studies stated:

I support this recommendation as it pertains to graduate students, in particular.

The Senate Undergraduate Program Committee (UPC) stated:

The UPC supports all of the recommendations, and strongly supports #1, and #3.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers recommendation 3A to be accepted for consideration. The Committee recognizes the importance of prioritizing experiential learning as an element of Brock's Strategic Plan but expects the Department to advocate for any allocation of resources through normal channels.

ARC considers recommendation 3B to be not accepted as it lies outside of the Committee's jurisdiction. The Committee recognizes the need for adequate advising staff and expects that the Department will proceed through normal channels of advocacy for these resources. The Committee encourages the Department to consult with the new Faculty of Social Sciences Experiential Coordinator.

Recommendation 3A

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)	
Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2019/20

Recommendation 3B

Implementation Plan
Recommendation not accepted.

Recommendation #4

Provide Teaching Evaluations for Contract Instructors

- A. That CHYS provide the ability to evaluate Contract Lecturers.
- B. That Faculty members provide leadership to contract instructors to ensure continuity in content and delivery, oversight and pedagogical understanding.

In its response, the Department stated:

CHYS agrees with the reviewers' recommendations around evaluating contract instructors. The department will revisit its rules and procedures around evaluating contract instructors and will consider strategies to engage contract instructors more effectively. These strategies will include reviewing and introducing contract instructors to faculty at the beginning of the academic year and providing more opportunities for contract instructors to meet with the chair of CHYS on a more regular basis. Currently, the CHYS department chair meets with each contract instructor at the beginning of the year and student evaluations are collected at the end of each course. Future initiatives may include matching contract faculty up with specific faculty mentors; inviting contract faculty to department meetings and/or colloquia; having a meet and greet event with contract faculty members and established faculty members at the beginning of the year; and including pictures of contract faculty in an area of the department

The Faculty Dean stated that:

The Dean's Office supports the departmental initiatives to evaluate and provide leadership to contract instructors, following Recommendation 4. A and B, noting that these activities need to be compatible with the provisions of the Collective Agreements governing contract instructors.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers recommendation 4A and 4B to reflect current practice at Brock. The Committee recognizes the Department's plans to review and improve its current practices.

Implementation Plan

Not accepted. Current practice.

Recommendation #5

Prioritize CHYS Capacity and Maintenance of Academic Mission

A. That CHYS begin a process of consolidation of the lessons learned to date particularly as it relates to its apparent “open door” policy which accommodates the interests and demands from other Faculties.

B. That CHYS consider other modes of curriculum delivery (e.g. online courses and hybrid models, in-class simulations) that have proven successful in other jurisdictions and that attempt to address issues related to increased enrolment.

In its response, the Department stated:

As undergraduate enrolments increase, CHYS will work with its own faculty along with the Dean of Social Science to maintain its integrity and strength as a high functioning academic unit.

CHYS currently offers several on-line and hybrid course offerings. This offering of such courses typically is reviewed by the department’s undergraduate program committee. The department strives to balance its online offerings with face-to-face learning opportunities in order to provide students with effective educational experiences. CHYS will continue to evaluate its online learning opportunities.

The Faculty Dean stated that:

The Dean’s office supports the Departments’ flexibility in accommodating student needs. Given that students take course across Faculties in the University, cooperation that crosses Faculties is vital to student well-being. CHYS has been successful in securing resources based on its own curricular needs as well as its cooperation with other units.

Regarding Recommendation 5. A, the Dean’s Office will continue to work with CHYS to advance its academic needs within the Faculty of Social Sciences.

Regarding Recommendation 5. B, the Dean’s Office agrees with the strategy of increasing alternative modes of curriculum delivery while supporting the departmental goal of balancing on-line course development with face-to-face- learning opportunities.

The Dean of Graduate Studies stated:

This is a recommendation focused on undergraduate enrolments. To the extent that this might affect TAsip possibilities for graduate students, I support the recommendations.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers recommendation 5A to be accepted for consideration.

ARC considers recommendation 5B to be accepted and in the process of implementation.

Recommendation 5A

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)	
Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2019/20

Recommendation 5B

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)	
Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2019/20

Recommendation #6

Provide Flexibility in Course Options for Undergraduate Years 1 and 2

- A. That CHYS take into consideration students who present with exceptionalities that require accommodation
- B. That CHYS maintain internal advising staff to support a range of student academic and social needs
- C. That CHYS explore curriculum modes and pedagogies to augment student choices in first two years of undergraduate degree program

In its response, the Department stated:

CHYS recognizes the growing need of students with accommodations within the first and second year. The department is committed to providing these students with an effective and appropriate learning experience. However, the growing number of students with accommodations creates a significant challenge for faculty and support staff in understanding the most effective ways to balance the need for accommodations with the integrity of the course. As such, CHYS will work with student services at Brock to maintain and develop its approach to student accommodations.

In addition to this, CHYS is dedicated to maintaining an internal advising staff to support students' needs. The internal advising structure is integral to CHYS' success in serving the growing number of students with accommodations and ensuring high degree completion rates.

In coordination with its internal advising staff, the undergraduate program committee within the CHYS department will continue to evaluate the modes of curriculum and pedagogies currently in place for students with accommodations, particularly within first and second year.

The Faculty Dean stated that:

The Dean's office supports the departmental response to Recommendations 6. A and B, noting that there are also University-wide Student Services available that regulate and provide assistance to students with exceptionalities, including accommodation and advising. The Dean's office supports the ongoing efforts of the Department to follow Recommendation 6. C in augmenting student choice at Year 1 and Year 2, in keeping with available resources.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers Recommendation 6A to be current practice at Brock in compliance with AODA legislation.

ARC considers Recommendation 6B to be current practice in the Department. In response to both Recommendations A and B, the Committee encourages the Department to consult with campus resources that provide support to students with exceptionalities.

ARC considers Recommendation 6C to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee recognizes the Department's ongoing evaluation of program curriculum and pedagogies for students with accommodations.

Recommendation 6A

Implementation Plan

Not accepted. Current practice.

Recommendation 6B

Implementation Plan

Not accepted. Current practice.

Recommendation 6C

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2019/20

D. Summary of Recommendations:

First Priority:

Recommendations - 1A,3A,5A,5B,6C

Second Priority:

Recommendations

Not Accepted:

Recommendations - 2,3B

Not Accepted/Current Practice:

Recommendations - 1B,4A,4B,6A,6B