

Tourism and Environment

Undergraduate Program Review

Four-Year Report (2017)

A. Summary of Review

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

1. The academic programs which were formerly offered by the Department of Tourism and Environment which were examined as part of the review were:
 - BA Pass and Honours in Tourism and Environment
 - BA 4-year with Major in Tourism and Environment
 - Certificate in Tourism and Environment
2. The Review Committee consisted of two external reviewers: Stephen Murphy (University of Waterloo) and Tom Hinch (University of Alberta) and an internal reviewer, Rick Cheel (Department of Earth Sciences).
3. The site visit occurred on March 17-19, 2013.
4. The Final Assessment Report was approved by Senate on January 15, 2014.
5. The reviewers assigned the following Outcome Category:
 - Category 3, "Good Quality with Concerns"
6. On Nov 11, 2015 Senate approved the merger of the Department of Tourism Management and the Department of Geography. The next review of the programs previously in the Department of Tourism and Environment will take place as part of the integrated review of the undergraduate and graduate programs in Geography in 2020/21.

B. Recommendations

The reviewers provided 18 recommendations.

Recommendation #1

Reposition the unit to have a focus on “sustainability” rather than “environment.”

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

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

Implementation Plan (First Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department, Dean of Social Sciences, Dean of Goodman School of Business
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by end of academic year 2013/14

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Enhance environmental course offerings after merger with Department of Geography	2016	2016
Action #2 Participate in the Environmental Sustainability Research Centre’s offering of a Minor in Environmental Sustainability	2016	Ongoing

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

The Department’s initial intention of developing offerings in the area of sustainability was stalled by changes in the faculty complement, whereby it lost three of its four faculty members who specialized in the environmental field. This meant the Department did not have the resources to offer a stand-alone program in sustainability, although it was able to keep a few environmental courses to be taught by the one remaining faculty member who studies environmental topics.

Following the July 2016 merger of the Department of Tourism Management with the Department of Geography, however, the new Department of Geography & Tourism Studies is able to offer a sizeable suite of environmental courses that are, or soon will be, cross-listed. This will enable students in the BA Tourism and Environment program who have a strong

interest in environmental issues to take several of these courses (if not all) for Major credit. A key theme within and across these courses is environmental sustainability.

Finally, although it was not able to mount its own undergraduate program focused on sustainability, the Department of Geography & Tourism Studies has also agreed to participate in the Environmental Sustainability Research Centre's newly-developed Minor in Environmental Sustainability. As part of this, eight TOUR courses will be included in the list of elective credits that may count towards the fulfillment of the requirements for this Minor.

Recommendation #2

Refocus the curriculum by establishing a degree in Sustainable Tourism Management (STM).

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted and in development.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving: Department, Deans of Social Sciences and Goodman School of Business

Responsible for resources: Department, Deans of Social Sciences and Goodman School of Business

Responsible for implementation: Department, Deans of Social Sciences and Goodman School of Business

Timeline: Dean of Social Sciences to report by end of academic year 2013/14

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Develop a new stream in Tourism Management in collaboration with Goodman School of Business	2013-14	2013-14

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

Please see comments regarding Recommendation #1 (above).

Also, the Department established a new Stream in Tourism Management, in collaboration with the Goodman School of Business, in which students began to register in September 2014. While the main focus is on tourism management, sustainability is also an important component of this stream.

Recommendation #3

Construct and lead a Degree in Sustainability Studies.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be not accepted.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation NOT accepted at this time.

Recommendation #4

Develop strategic, operational and marketing/recruitment plans to support the new degrees.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted with respect to the degree in Sustainable Tourism Management.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

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

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Promote the Tourism and Environment programs through the Recruitment and Liaison Office and Co-op Office	2014	Ongoing
Action #2 Hire an Academic Advisor and Communications Coordinator	2016	2016

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

The Department of Geography & Tourism Studies currently offers the BA Tourism and Environment degree and the BA Tourism and Environment Degree with a Tourism Management Stream and Co-op. These program options have been enhanced through the Department of Tourism Management's merger with the Department of Geography and collaboration with the Goodman School of Business.

The programs are now being actively promoted through the Recruitment and Liaison office, the Co-op office, and by the Department's Academic Advisor and Communications

Coordinator, who was hired in August 2016. The Department also has a Marketing and Communications Committee that meets regularly in order to discuss new and innovative ways to promote its programs, as well as to manage ongoing marketing and communication efforts. For example, the Department has embraced social media as a tool for promoting the Tourism and Environment program and has also developed new print materials that reflect the components of the restructured program.

Recommendation #5

Assume a more active role in Faculty and University governance.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation
 ARC considers this recommendation to be not accepted as it lies outside the jurisdiction of the Committee and has implications with respect to the Brock University/Faculty Association Collective Agreement.

Implementation Plan
 Recommendation NOT accepted at this time.

Recommendation #6

Develop additional internal governance and collaborative frameworks that engage a broader spectrum of stakeholders.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation
 ARC considers the recommendation to “develop additional internal governance” to be not accepted as it lies outside of the Committee’s jurisdiction and has implications with respect to the Brock University/Faculty Association Collective Agreement. ARC considers the recommendation to develop “collaborative frameworks that engage a broader spectrum of stakeholders” to be worthy of consideration and expects that the Department is best-positioned to determine strategies to move forward on this issue.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)
 Responsible for approving: Department
 Responsible for resources: Department
 Responsible for implementation: Department
 Timeline: Dean of Social Sciences to report by end of academic year 2013/14

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed

Action #1 Develop a new stream in Tourism Management in collaboration with Goodman School of Business	2014	2014
Action #2 Develop a new Tourism Management co-op option in liaison with the University's Co-op Office	2014	2014
Action #3 Become a partner in the Disney Internship program	2014	2014
Action #4 Explore an articulation agreement with Georgian College	2016	Ongoing
Action #5 Make TOUR 4F99 (Honours Internship) a requirement for Tourism and Environment majors (except those in Co-op option)	2016	2016

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

ARC considered the first part of Recommendation #6 ("develop additional internal governance") not accepted since it lay outside the Committee's jurisdiction and had implications for the Collective Agreement.

With respect to developing collaborative frameworks, the Department established a new Tourism Management stream within the BA Tourism and Environment degree program, in collaboration with the Goodman School of Business. It also developed a new co-op program for students in the Tourism Management stream in liaison with the University's Co-op Office and has become one of the very few Canadian Tourism programs to take part in the Disney Internship Program at the University of Florida in Orlando. The Department was also asked recently to consider entering into an articulation agreement with the Tourism and Hospitality Program at Georgian College in Barrie; however, the Department has not been successful in its attempts to initiate a dialogue with Georgian College about this matter. Finally, students entering the BA Tourism and Environment Program (except for Co-op students) in and after September 2016 will be required to enroll in TOUR/GEOG 4F99, the Honours Internship course, through which they will acquire 120 hours of (unpaid) work experience in a tourism-related employment setting. The internship program, part of the Geography program since 1980, involves the Department's collaboration with dozens of employers throughout Niagara and beyond.

Recommendation #7

Fill the pending retirement by hiring an Assistant Professor in the area of tourism management to support the proposed sustainable tourism management degree.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be not accepted as it lies outside of the Committee's jurisdiction. The Committee expects that the Department is best-positioned to determine its priorities in terms of faculty resources for the program and will proceed through normal channels of advocacy for these resources.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation NOT accepted at this time.

Recommendation #8

Increase the proportion of courses taught by tenure-track faculty members.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC recognizes that hiring and deployment lie outside of its jurisdiction but also that there is more than one pathway available to address this recommendation. Therefore ARC considers this recommendation to be worthy of consideration and expects that the Department is best-positioned to determine strategies to move forward on this issue. The Committee acknowledges that the Department is exploring all options to address this recommendation, including reviewing the curriculum to better align tenured faculty resources to the delivery of the program.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving: Department

Responsible for resources: Department

Responsible for implementation: Department

Timeline: Dean of Social Sciences to report by end of academic year 2013/14

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Request new tenure-track faculty position.	2013-14	2013-14
Action #2 Restructure BA Tourism and Environment program	2015	2016
Action #3 Merge with Department of Geography and cross-list relevant courses	2015	2016

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

In 2013-2014, the Department of Tourism and Environment requested a tenure track replacement to replace a faculty member who had just retired and another who had transferred to another Unit at Brock, but this request was not approved due to the Department's current enrollment levels. As a result, the Department of Tourism and Environment eliminated several of its environment courses as part of a comprehensive review of its curriculum and course bank.

Later, in August of 2015, a three-day retreat involving faculty in the Department of Tourism Management was held to reevaluate the existing course bank. A content analysis of Tourism programs from around the world was completed and meetings were held with Geography to incorporate some of their courses into the new Degree program. Given cross-listings with Geography and contributions from the Goodman School of Business, the new curriculum has been designed in such a way that all required courses and some options can be offered by the full-time faculty complement. The vast majority of courses taken by students in the BA Tourism and Environment program are taught by tenure-track or tenured faculty.

Recommendation #9

Establish a practicum/co-op supervisor position.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be not accepted as it lies outside of the Committee's jurisdiction.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation NOT accepted at this time.

Recommendation #10

The curriculum for the proposed Tourism Management Degree requires an expanded core, a limited number of structured concentrations, courses offered on a regular basis, and clear articulation with Brock University's competitive advantages.

- a. Expanded core curriculum focused on tourism (introductory course, research course, etc.), management (foundation course offered by TREN, complementary courses offered by Business), and sustainability courses.
- b. Offer a limited number of patterns/concentrations that are consistently supported by relevant courses.
 - i. e.g., sustainable tourism planning and development
 - ii. e.g., food and wine tourism (collaboration with CCOVI)
- c. Build on the experiential components of the degree by incorporating:
 - i. A co-op, practicum (i.e., credit), or internship component (partner with regional tourism industry)
 - ii. A modified less resource intensive international study abroad/exchange experience (e.g. blend of study abroad and exchange)
 - iii. Regional field based courses/assignments integrated throughout the curriculum.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to conduct a curriculum review to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee recognizes that the Department is best-positioned to determine the overall direction as well as specific components of the program.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

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

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Create new stream in Tourism Management	2013-2014	2013-2014
Action #2 See Recommendation #6		

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

The Department of Tourism Management decided that it would be more efficient and more realistic to offer one strong program, with one new stream (Tourism Management). It does not currently have the resources, or the demand, to offer multiple patterns or specializations. The Department of Tourism Management also engaged in a curriculum mapping exercise as part of its program restructuring efforts in advance of its merger with the Department of Geography.

Please see also Recommendation #6

Recommendation #11

We propose a Degree in Sustainability Studies. If a degree is offered, the new unit, Faculty, and University will have to decide on a path - it probably cannot do both of the options below though a hybrid third-way might be possible. The assessors offer two options as a start:

- a. This degree could grow from the Environmental Sustainability Research Centre. In this case, there would be more of a biophysical focus, though not exclusively so. The core would be comprised of courses drawn from Sustainable Tourism Management, Biological Sciences, Earth Sciences, Geography, and Business. The risk here is that not all units may want to cooperate (though the Centre's existence may lessen that issue) and it could have a tough time competing against similar programs in other Universities. Nonetheless, it is a logical fit with the Centre's research mission and would give Sustainable Tourism Management an audience that differs from its own core - but still attracts students whose expectations can be met. Dr. [Name withheld] is a clear leader here but since he is mainly doing research, it would probably fall to Drs. [names withheld] to lead any undergraduate degree with this focus.

- b. A more conservative approach might be to focus on sustainability within the social dimension. Here is where there would be collaboration mainly with Economics, Geography, Business, Women's and Gender Studies, Communication, Popular Culture and Film, Political Science, and Sociology. Drs. [names withheld] could lead this. Dr. [name withheld] is quite capable as well but she would be best leading in student engagement foci and business linkages.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be not accepted.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation NOT accepted at this time.

Recommendation #12

The courses offered by TREN should be made more accessible to students from other programs by minimizing pre-requisites where possible.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

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

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving: Department

Responsible for resources: Department

Responsible for implementation: Department

Timeline: Dean of Social Sciences to report by end of academic year 2013/14

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Remove course-specific prerequisites from Tourism and Environment courses and replace with a requirement for students to have achieved a specified number of credits in order to enroll	2013-2014	2013-2014

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

In 2013-2014 all course-based prerequisites for all upper-year courses homed within the Department were removed. Since then, students are required to have completed 4, 8 or 12 credits in order to enroll in second-, third- or fourth-year credits, respectively.

Recommendation #13

Articulated transfer agreements should be explored with Niagara College and similar institutions elsewhere and abroad (e.g., Caribbean countries).

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to explore articulation agreements to be accepted and in the process of development.

Implementation Plan (2nd Priority)

Responsible for approving: Department, Dean, Provost

Responsible for resources: Department

Responsible for implementation: Department

Timeline: Dean of Social Sciences to report by end of academic year 2013/14

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Explore the possibility of negotiating articulation agreements with Niagara College and other Ontario colleges	2014	Ongoing
Action #2 Continue new agreement with University of Florida and Disney	2014	Ongoing

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

The Department has explored various opportunities to collaborate with other academic institutions. Thus far, it has entered into an agreement with the University of Florida to take part in its Disney Internship program. Recruitment and Brock International Services have also been actively promoting the Tourism program abroad. The Department will also more actively look into the possibility of entering into an articulation agreement with Niagara College and/or Georgian College (through their Tourism and Hospitality programs) in 2017. (Progress in this regard had been slowed by the administrative work of setting up the merger of the Departments of Geography and Tourism Management.)

Recommendation #14

There is a need to revisit the program's student recruitment strategy.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

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

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

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

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Work closely with Recruitment and Liaison, Brock International, Communications, and the Registrar's Office to improve promotion of the BA Tourism and Environment program.	2013-2014	Ongoing
Action #2 Hire Academic Advisor & Communications Coordinator following creation of Department of Geography & Tourism Studies	June 2016	August 2016

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

The Department has discussed how to market its newly restructured program with Recruitment and Liaison, Brock International, Communications, and the Registrar's Office. Brock International is also promoting the BA Tourism and Environment program abroad. Also, the Department of Geography and Tourism Studies' Academic Advisor & Communications Coordinator has been actively promoting the program through print, online, and social media; the addition of a staff person with such a role has helped the Department significantly in promoting the BA Tourism and Environment program.

Recommendation #15

Develop more vehicles and opportunities for student and alumni engagement.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

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

Implementation Plan (2nd Priority)

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

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Encourage creation of a student Tourism and Environment club.	2014	2017
Action #2 Re-establish contact with program alumni.	2016	Ongoing

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

On several occasions in the past the Department has fostered Tourism and Environment student clubs, but these have never persisted past specific cohorts. However, Tourism and Environment have very recently created a new club. There is the possibility that this group will merge with the Brock University Geographical Society (the Geography student club) sometime in the near future. The recently-hired Academic Advisor & Communications Coordinator has as part of her mandate the task of establishing contact with program alumni in order to invite them to take part in various Departmental initiatives.

Recommendation #16

Review the state of academic advising at the Faculty level.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving: Dean of Social Sciences

Responsible for resources: Dean of Social Sciences

Responsible for implementation: Dean of Social Sciences

Timeline: Dean of Social Sciences to report by end of academic year 2013/14

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
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Action #1 Continue to use services of Undergraduate Student Affairs Officer in the Office of the Dean of Social Sciences.	2013	August 2016
Action #2 Hire a full-time Academic Advisor & Communications Coordinator for the new Department of Geography & Tourism Studies	June 2016	August 2016

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

At the time of the Program Review the Department felt that its students were well supported by the Undergraduate Student Affairs Officer in the Office of the Dean of Social Sciences. Since the merger of Geography and Tourism Management in 2016, however, advising services are provided by the new Department's Academic Advisor & Communications Coordinator.

Recommendation #17

The faculty and students need proper dedicated space.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be not accepted as it lies outside of the Committee's jurisdiction.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation NOT accepted at this time.

Recommendation #18

There needs to be support from the University and Faculty to market the new unit and degrees(s).

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

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

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

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

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 The Department of Tourism and Environment, and later the Department of Tourism Management, worked closely with Marketing and Communications in order to develop new promotional materials.	2013	2015

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

Please see comments under Recommendations #4 and #14.

C. Unit Summative Analysis and Evaluation

1. To what extent has the Unit achieved the improvements suggested by the reviewers?

While several of the reviewers' recommendations were not accepted, most of those that were have now been followed through in whole or in part. Some of these were made difficult by a lack of faculty resources, such as the recommendation to change the Department's focus from "environment" to "sustainability"; however, the recent merger of the Department of Tourism Management with the Department of Geography has also enabled a number of positive changes. As part of its program restructuring and in anticipation of the creation of a merged Department of Geography & Tourism Studies, the former Tourism Management faculty engaged in a curriculum mapping exercise to plot out the logical sequence of courses that Tourism and Environment students would take.

2. What overall impact has it had on the Unit's programs?

The Program Review pointed to the need for the Tourism and Environment program to be better marketed/promoted and for its course offerings to be revised. The five faculty members in the former Department of Tourism Management worked earnestly to improve their programming in the years following the review. It is now structured in a way that will ensure students are able to meet their program requirements in each year and such that students can enjoy the benefits of numerous experiential learning opportunities. The hiring of an Academic Advisor and Communications Coordinator in the new Department of Geography & Tourism Studies will also go a very long way in helping to build awareness of Brock University's Tourism and Environment programs.

3. Is the Unit adopting a process of continuous quality improvement for its programs?

The newly merged Department of Geography & Tourism Studies consists of 18 faculty members and four staff members, all of whom participate on a variety of committees that aim to continuously improve the quality of the Geography and Tourism and Environment programs. These committees include a Strategic Planning Committee, a Marketing and Communications Committee, a Field Course Committee, and a Curriculum Committee, among others. Each of these committees meets regularly and reports back to the full Departmental Committee. The Curriculum Committee has also engaged in curriculum mapping exercises and continues to monitor the efficacy of the various program revisions that have recently been made.

4. How well do the programs now align with Brock University strategic priorities?

The Tourism and Environment programs align closely with Brock University's strategic priorities related to undergraduate teaching excellence. More specifically, the programs' co-op and internship options and field courses all provide students with strong experiential learning opportunities.

5. How does this review and its results position the programs as the Unit moves into the next review cycle?

The Tourism and Environment programs look significantly different today from what they looked like at the time of the Program Review in 2013. The programs are much more efficiently organized, the Department is making effective use of Brock resources to enhance its offerings (e.g., Co-op), and the merger with Geography has also created a number of positive synergies in terms of course delivery and experiential learning opportunities. There is no reason to doubt that the next several years will see significant growth in the popularity of the Tourism and Environment programs.

D. ARC Final Summary

In final summary of the 2012/13 cyclical academic review of the programs offered by the Department of Tourism and Environment, ARC has determined the following:

1. The Reviewers' recommendations have been addressed satisfactorily.
2. The Unit has established a direction for next steps as it prepares for the next review cycle, which will include the development of a curriculum map.
3. The Unit has achieved a broad-based, reflective and forward-looking self-assessment.