

**REPORT OF THE ACADEMIC PLANNING COMMITTEE
TO THE REGULAR January 2020 SENATE**

FOR DISCUSSION

**QUALITY ASSURANCE - CYCLICAL PROGRAM REVIEW OF LAURENTIAN UNIVERSITY'S
PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAMS
FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT & IMPLEMENTATION PLAN, PSYCHOLOGY 2019**

In accordance with the Laurentian University's Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), the Final Assessment Report has been prepared to provide a synthesis of the external evaluation and Laurentian's response and action plan. This report identifies the significant strengths of the program, opportunities for program improvement and enhancement, and sets out and prioritizes the recommendations that have been selected for implementation.

The report includes an Implementation Plan that 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.

SUMMARY OF THE CYCLICAL PROGRAM REVIEW OF THE PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAMS

In 2018, the programs submitted two self-studies, one for the undergraduate program and the second for M.A. program, to the Office of Vice-President Academic and Provost of Laurentian University.

Part A of the self-studies presented an overview of the program and then each reviewed the program's self-perception of the faculty, physical resources, students, program regulations, and how the program harmonized with the strategic goals and mission of the University. The undergraduate self-study concluded with an overall assessment of the programs' strengths and weaknesses, describing widespread bilingualism, a mentorship program, and growth in online learning as significant strengths while acknowledging staffing decreases and space constraints as weaknesses. The M.A. self-study seemed to rely on the undergraduate study for this part. There were also ten appendices in the undergraduate self-study and eight in the M.A. self-study, including those which listed the library resources available to the program. Part 2 of both self-studies the self-study contained the curriculum vitae of the full-time faculty in the program followed by the curriculum vitae of the adjunct professors associated with the program.

On 3 April, 2019, after reviewing the self-study, the Review Team conducted a site visit. The two externals were Mary Olmstead of Queen's University and Jean Saint-Aubin of Université de Moncton. In addition, the team consisted of two Laurentian professors, Parveen Nangia from

within the faculty and Eric Gauthier from the Faculty of Science, Engineering, and Architecture. Finally, there were two students from the program who were part of the team: one undergraduate student, Hudson Blue, and one graduate student, Zacharie Gagné.

The site visit was thorough and included touring the facilities and reviewing the library support. Stakeholders included senior members of the university administration (Serge Demers, Vice-President, Academic, and Provost; Joël Dickinson, Dean of the Faculty of Arts; David Lesbarreres, Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies) as well as clinical supervisors, librarians, more students, and faculty members.

In their report dated 1 May 2019, the reviewers noted that

- Faculty are active in research: in the past seven years publishing 49 unique articles with a median of 4 articles per researcher
- Faculty had incorporated significant indigenous elements into the curriculum, supporting the tricultural mission of the university
- Online offerings have significantly increased and this online availability is seen as a positive aspect by faculty and students
- The clinical practicum (PSYC 5005) in Applied Psychology is a particularly strong component of the M.A. program

Amidst these encomiums, there were some concerns expressed about the program in the body of the report.

- The M.A. program should continue to be supported but only with the understanding that this was extremely difficult with the current faculty complement
- French-language offerings should be expanded, particularly at the graduate level
- Supervision of students in the applied M.A. program should improve
- More effective communication with clinical supervisors should be instituted in the applied M.A.
- The Applied practicum in the M.A. requires significant revision
- The undergraduate curriculum should be updated to represent the current state of the field
- Department culture should participate in curriculum development and delivery
- Guidelines for experiential learning in labs and projects should be defined
- A procedure to assess online courses that matches assessment of on-campus courses should be implemented that involves the student body and allows for future improvement

In July, 2019, the program submitted its comments on the Report.

The program comments were followed by a set of comments from the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Dean of Graduate Studies. The two deans nicely summarized the Reviewers' recommendations, the Program's reaction to those recommendations, (re-organized appropriately) and added their own reactions. Their report, received in July, 2019, is synopsized below.

SUMMARY OF THE REVIEW TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS (R) THE PROGRAM'S (P) RESPONSES AS WELL AS THOSE OF THE DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF ARTS (DA) AND (if appropriate) THE DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES (DGS)

(R1) Support the continued delivery of the applied MA program. Hiring new faculty is critical since the program is no longer sustainable at current faculty levels. If this is not feasible, the department and faculty must discuss the viability of the program.

(P1) The Department could not agree more. Discussion along the lines of these recommendations are taking place currently. It should be noted that the applied program has several dozen applicants every year, not all of whom are from the immediate area.

(DA1) I agree that the continuation of the applied program is dependent on the hiring of a new faculty member.

(DGS1) I have seen the ebbs and flows of the two streams (applied and basic/experimental) due to students' interests and faculty renewal; yet, I agree that currently, the applied side is suffering from a lack of resources.

(R2) Expand course offerings in French, particularly at the graduate level.

(P2) The Psychology Department has one of the strongest French programs on campus. Expansion could only come as the result of the hiring of more faculty. The graduate program was never meant to be offered in French unless more faculty were hired. Several faculty members are strongly supportive of a possible French MA. If and when sufficient faculty are available, the Department would be please to expand in this direction.

(DA2) I agree with Departmental response.

(DGS2) The Francophone situation in the Health sector is relatively complex with a need for more francophone practitioners in principle but a reality which shows that purely francophone clinical placements are very rare. While offering francophone courses would be an asset in recruiting from this side of the undergraduate program, providing bilingual training, especially with regards to technical terms and sub-discipline would be best.

(R3) Regarding the Applied MA program, we have three related recommendations: 1) Improve student supervision in the applied MA program which requires an internship placement procedure. 2) Incorporate clinical supervisors in planning and revising the curriculum and practicum aspects of the applied MA program. 3) Revise the content of the Master's applied practicum (PSYC 5005 to allow more time for clinical training.

(P3) We agree with these recommendations and are moving in the direction suggested in every case. All three recommendations are being addressed. The Department has already began working along these lines. A new clinical coordinator will be appointed. We look forward to better relationships with placement supervisors and better experiences for students.

(DA3) I agree with the Department's response.

(DGS3) I have no doubt that my colleagues will address these recommendations and provide an improved practicum component to our students.

(R4) Update the undergraduate curriculum to reflect the current state of the field. In updating the undergraduate curriculum, the learning outcomes of each course must be included and kept consistent across sections. From there, the relationship of course outlines to program outcomes and degree level expectations must be mapped and communicated to all faculty.

(P4) The Department agrees to the need for a reorganization of the undergraduate curriculum. How this reorganization shapes up depends on how well the Department is staffed. We would like to note that Neuroscience courses are moving into the purview of the Sciences and out of the Department. We further agree on the importance of learning outcomes and are developing in the direction of including these and building ties between outcomes at course, program, and university level.

(DA4) This is an important exercise however I agree that it is dependent on resources. The department may be able to take advantage of expertise and support from the Center of Academic Excellence in order to achieve this goal.

(R5) Establish a department culture of participating in curriculum development and delivery. Too often, academic freedom is viewed as a major obstacle to any attempt for department-wide coordination of pedagogical issues. Among the many aspects that need better coordination, the establishment of consistency in undergraduate courses across sections, instructors, and delivery methods should be a top priority.

(P5) We agree that Departmental planning should continue and should be open. It always has been so within Laurentian's Psychology Department.

We also agree that different sections of a course should aim at the same learning outcomes. However, the Department feels that too much enforced consistency among sections (e.g., same text books, same lab exercises, same tests) would reduce creativity and provide poorer experiences for students. For example, different professors who offer PSYC 1105, our introductory course, all tend to use standard introductory texts. Each professor, however, brings their expertise (be it applied, forensic, emotion-based, perception-based, or neuroscience-based) to the table and students greatly appreciate this.

(DA5) I agree with the reviewers that the learning outcomes to a particular course should be the same across years and across sections.

(R6) Define guidelines for experiential learning in labs and research projects.

(P6) We plan to do this while developing course outcomes. We agree that the experiential component of our courses needs to be defined and highlighted. Again, we support consistency at the level of desired outcomes but not necessarily at the level of exact methods employed to achieve them. Not every section of the same course has to offer the exact same labs year after year.

(DA6) I agree with the recommendation and response by the department.

(R7) Implement a procedure for assessing on-line courses that matches assessment of on-campus courses. Summaries of this information should be provided to the student body and then used by instructors and the department to improve courses in the future.

(P7) Once course outcomes have been developed, they will be the same for parallel online and on campus courses. Online Psychology courses are rigorously assessed. The final examination serves as a strong component of assessment (25% or more) both on and off line. Methods of assessment are public and can be accessed.

Student evaluations are conducted in on-line courses, but these are not in the purview of the Department, nor are evaluation results circulated within the Department.

(DA7) This recommendation can be interpreted in 2 ways...learning assessment, or student evaluations. Assessment of learning does not have to be identical in order to be valid. Student evaluations can be informative, but not in their current format.

(DGS7) As more or more students will access education through online learning, it will be critical that the assessment of such training be robust and provide the same metrics as in-class assessments so as to guarantee the quality of both type of pedagogies.

ACAPLAN'S RESPONSE

ACAPLAN endorses the recommendations of the Review Team but notes the following recommendations are redundant (if any)

- Expand course offerings in French (undergraduate level)

LAURENTIAN QUALITY ASSURANCE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THE B.A. and B.Sc. PROGRAMS In PSYCHOLOGY

Recommendation	Proposed Follow-up	Responsibility for Leading Follow-up	Timeline
Update the undergraduate curriculum to reflect the current state of the field	Review curriculum changes and how learning outcomes are incorporated into course materials	Department Chair	December 2022
Establish a department culture of participating in curriculum development and delivery	Review how learning outcomes are harmonized across years in different course sections	Department Chair	December 2022
Define guidelines for experiential learning in labs and research projects	Ensure that consistent learning outcomes are defined and supported in experiential work	Department Chair	December 2022

ACAPLAN does NOT accept the following recommendation.

Implement a procedure for assessing on-line courses that matches assessment of on-campus courses	Review learning outcomes to ensure that they are consistent and appropriate for both online and on-campus offerings	Department Chair	December 2022
--	---	------------------	---------------

Reason: The recommendation was seen as problematic, pedagogically and in terms of academic freedom, if it intended to align the online and on-campus courses regarding the exact form of student assessment in each offering and beyond the scope of the program's power to technically determine the assessment of procedures.

The Dean of the Faculty of Arts shall be responsible for monitoring the implementation plan. The details of progress made shall be presented in the Dean's Annual Report and filed with the Vice-President Academic and Provost. The executive Summary and the monitoring reports will be posted on Laurentian University's web site.

LAURENTIAN QUALITY ASSURANCE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THE M.A. PROGRAMS
In
PSYCHOLOGY

Recommendation	Proposed Follow-up	Responsibility for Leading Follow-up	Timeline
Support Applied M.A. with new hiring	Review status of Applied M.A. faculty complement & viability	M.A. Coordinator	December 2022
Improve M.A. supervision including communication with stakeholders and practicum course	Report on work of clinical coordinator and revised practicum course	M.A. Coordinator	December 2022

ACAPLAN does NOT accept the following recommendation.

Expand Applied M.A. offering in French	Review if faculty component allows the creation of a French-language Applied M.A. option	M.A. Coordinator	December 2022
--	--	------------------	---------------

Reason: The program noted that the demand expected by the reviewer was not there for francophone studies in the Applied M.A. at this time and that any available resources needed to be focused on the general program needs.

The Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies shall be responsible for monitoring the implementation plan. The details of progress made shall be presented in the Dean's Annual Report and filed with the Vice-President Academic and Provost. The executive Summary and the monitoring reports will be posted on Laurentian University's web site.

CONCLUSION

The Psychology program in is approved to continue and it will be reviewed in the fall of 2026.