

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

**FOR DISCUSSION**

Eighteen-month follow-up from ACAPLAN's recommendations from the Program Review for the following program: COMMUNICATION STUDIES AT HUNTINGTON UNIVERSITY.

Below is an excerpt from the Institutional Quality Assessment Process at Laurentian University approved at the Quality Council in June 2011 and revised in 2018 and 2019.

**PROCESS FOR FOLLOW-UP**

No later than 18 months after Senate submission, those responsible for implementing the changes writes a report to the Dean and to ACAPLAN, on the actions it has taken in response to the review.

**QUALITY ASSURANCE – CYCLICAL PROGRAM REVIEW OF LAURENTIAN  
UNIVERSITY'S COMMUNICATION STUDIES PROGRAM**

As per the Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), I am submitting a follow-up report on the actions the undergraduate program and department in Communication Studies at Huntington University has taken in response to the recommendations provided by ACAPLAN at Laurentian University. This report comes 18 months after the Senate submission of ACAPLAN's recommendation as per the requirements and deals specifically with the recommendations that were under my responsibility as Chair of the department.

For clarity, I have chosen to respond to each of the seven recommendations that ACAPLAN made within the same table format initially provided. As the committee will see, the department has successfully achieved the majority of the recommendations in terms of curriculum and program aids to students; recommendations for which we are grateful and believe helped our program and its robust nature. Despite these successes, since the date of the delivery of the ACAPLAN report, major financial and institutional changes have taken place at both Laurentian University and Huntington University. Enrollments have lowered across the campus and the funding model for which Huntington University receives payments for students from Laurentian University has drastically changed in a way that greatly affects programs like Communication Studies. In short, while the department and the administration at Huntington University recognize that faculty and administrative additions would aid the delivery of the program, this is no longer possible in the current financial and institutional crisis that the Federated Universities face. This is an important contextual preamble to the report that follows.

## ACAPLAN'S RESPONSE & RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Proposed Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline	Update at 18 Months
<b>1. Add one new full-time faculty to program</b>	Proposal to Huntington Budget Committee	Chair with Huntington President	August 2018	<b>Proposed</b> This was proposed, debated, and ultimately deemed impossible in the current financial and institutional crisis that Huntington University and the Communication Studies program presently face. Please see my preamble for more detail.
<b>2. The program [should] revisit the introductory courses to ensure continuity between those courses and the 2nd through 4th year courses</b>	An agenda item on a unit retreat	Chair	August 2018	<b>Completed</b> In the summer of 2018, and again in the summer of 2019, the Chair held a curriculum retreat in order to discuss what each faculty member was covering to ensure greater continuity and remove unnecessary overlap. Faculty members value these summer retreat experiences and the department will continue to do this moving forward.
<b>3. Revisit the COST pool of electives to ensure the relevance of existing offerings</b>	Agenda item at the unit retreat	Chair in consultation with other Program chairs	August 2018	<b>Completed</b> The department did revisit the COST pool of electives to ensure the relevance of existing offerings, both at the curriculum retreat and in various departmental meetings over the last year and a half. A revised list with updated course codes

				<p>was created. This was done in consultation with the many departments that offer courses that are on the list and took significant time. The Communication Studies department is waiting on pushing through any major curriculum changes at this time at the various institutional levels, however, until <i>we</i> have a better sense of where the program is heading in the near future.</p>
<p><b>4. Develop a part-time or full-time staff position to assist the program with current and future initiatives including a co-op program, resource-sharing possibilities, community partnerships, and classroom support.</b></p>	<p>Agenda item at the unit retreat</p> <p>Proposal to Huntington budget committee to hire staff . support</p>	<p>Chair in consultation with Huntington President</p>	<p>September 2018</p>	<p><b>Proposed</b></p> <p>Much like the hiring of a new faculty member, hiring a staff member was discussed but deemed impossible at present because of the current financial and institutional challenges Huntington University faces.</p>

<p><b>5. Examine the possibility of developing a set of grading guidelines with associated narratives.</b></p>	<p>An agenda item at unit retreat</p> <p>Add to syllabi and distribute with other communications and PR materials related to the program.</p>	<p>Chair in consultation with professors associated with program</p>	<p>August 2018</p>	<p><b>Complete</b></p> <p>The development of a set of grading guidelines was discussed at the COST curriculum retreat in the summer of 2018. Ultimately, the faculty decided against developing an explicit set of grading guidelines with associated narratives because of the difference in their pedagogical approaches and assessment means. The faculty did share their grading guidelines, rubrics, and assignment explanations with each other, however, so that commonalities could be better expressed.</p>
<p><b>6. Explore options for a mid-size (30-60 student) classroom for the COST program.</b></p>	<p>Examine availability of such space both in the other federated universities as well as Laurentian</p>	<p>Chair in consultation with Huntington administration</p>	<p>August 2018</p>	<p><b>Complete</b></p> <p>In consultation with Huntington administration, we examined other potential classroom options across the federated system. An adequate solution was found within our own institution and we have successfully managed to convert one of the larger classrooms at Huntington University into a classroom that works well for 30-60 students at present. The faculty members and students in the Communication Studies program seem much happier with this arrangement.</p>

<b>7. Develop a set of concise communication pieces for the program outlining the curriculum, learning objectives (and rationale) and transferable skills (career preparation).</b>	Agenda item for unit retreat	Huntington's Director of University Advancement in consultation with Chair.	August 2018	<b>In progress</b> The Director of University Advancement has been focusing on updating the Huntington University website as a first point of reference for Communication Studies students to understand their curriculum and transferable skills. Other external documents for distribution will be developed once this is complete.
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As stated above, I feel that as Chair of the Communication Studies program, I have sufficiently worked to address the recommendations that ACAPLAN proposed for our program, along with the support and assistance of our program faculty and the Huntington University administration. Together, we worked to integrate these changes as well as we could within the current financial, political, and institutional climate at Laurentian University.

Dean's response: I agree that the context of the original program review has changed dramatically, financial stability will be necessary before any real progress can be made on this program.