



Queen's University

Final Assessment Report: Executive Summary

Programs Reviewed: BA, BAH, MA, PhD in Economics; Graduate Diploma in Risk Policy and Regulation

In accordance with Queen's University Quality Assurance Processes (QUQAP), this Final Assessment Report provides a synthesis of the external evaluation, internal responses and assessment of the above programs. This report identifies the significant strengths of the program, and opportunities for program improvement. It sets out and prioritizes the recommendations that have been selected for implementation.

An implementation plan is attached that identifies

- who will be responsible for acting on and monitoring progress on the recommendations,
- any resource or governance implications resulting from the recommendations, and
- timelines for implementation of the recommendations.

Summary of Review

- 1) The department's self-study was reviewed by the Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science, Vice-Provost and Dean, School of Graduate Studies and the Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning). It was approved on 24 November 2016.
- 2) The review team visit took place on 12-13 January 2017. The review team members were
 - i. Dr. Michael Baker, University of Toronto
 - ii. Dr. Elizabeth Caucutt, Western University
 - iii. Dr. Jean de Bettignies, Queen's University
- 3) The visit included a tour of facilities and meetings with
 - i. Students (undergraduate and graduate)
 - ii. Faculty
 - iii. Staff
 - iv. Cognate Heads of Departments
 - v. Dean and Associate Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science
 - vi. Vice-Provost and Dean and Associate Dean, School of Graduate Studies
 - vii. Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning)
- 4) The review team reported on 10 February 2017. Responses to the review team report were provided by the Head of the Department of Economics, the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science and the Vice-Provost and Dean, School of Graduate Studies.

- 5) The Senate Cyclical Program Review Committee considered all the documentation at its meeting on 23 May 2017, and reported to the Provost on the programs' strengths, opportunities for enhancement, and recommendations for improvement.

The following strengths were noted:

- Strong reputation of faculty members (publishing, awards, grants)
- Small fourth year seminars in undergraduate major
- Successful fundraising and alumni relations
- Mapped courses, with clear hierarchical progression of course/skills/concepts
- Offers a Master's program that has a thesis

The following opportunities for enhancement were noted:

- Introducing new Politics-Philosophy-Economics degree program will cultivate cross-disciplinary perspectives, communication skills and global citizenship
- Addressing equity and diversity by possibly introducing course on Aboriginal Economics. This will appeal to broader student groups
- Exploring more online options – both fully online courses and using new methods in on-campus courses in undergraduate degree
- Investing in more post-docs
- Greater emphasis on student engagement/interaction
- Greater development on fundamental academic skills

The academic programs in the Department of Economics have been approved to continue.

Date of next review: 2024-2025.

Prepared by Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning)

June 5, 2017



Implementation Plan

| Recommendations | | Proposed Follow-up | Responsibility for Leading Follow-up | Responsibility for providing Resources | Timeline for Addressing Recommendation |
|-----------------|---|---|--|--|--|
| 1. | Due to the bottleneck problem in undergraduate honours seminars, reviewers suggest that the Department consider increasing honours seminar class sizes (even from 15 to 20). By their estimation, this move could have significant impact on costs, eliminate the bottleneck, and possibly generate more revenue by allowing more students into the program | Continue work with Department's curriculum committee | Department Head in conjunction with Associate Dean, Arts and Science | Human resources to be provided by Department | Summer 2017 with first changes taking effect in September 2018 |
| 2. | Since the two undergraduate economic history courses effectively serve as communications courses and | Continue working with Department's curriculum committee | Department Head in conjunction with | Human resources to be provided by Department | 2018-19 academic year |

| Recommendations | Proposed Follow-up | Responsibility for Leading Follow-up | Responsibility for providing Resources | Timeline for Addressing Recommendation |
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| <p>place great emphasis on reading and writing, the reviewers recommend converting one of those two courses into an actual communications course.</p> | | Associate Dean, Arts and Science | | |
| <p>3. Reviewers recommend that the Department take efforts to better understand the target employers of students graduating from the MA program, since they are currently not well identified nor understood.</p> | Coordinate data collection from the Graduate Program Outcome Survey (GPOS) | Associate Dean, School of Graduate Studies in conjunction with Office of Institutional Research and Planning | Human resources to be provided by the Office of Institutional Research and Planning | Implement poll in 2017-18 academic year |
| <p>4. In order to increase the course offerings for PhD students, reviewers recommend that the department make their existing graduate courses “dual” (i.e., both MA and PhD students). While the lecture content could be the same for both types of students the assessments could be different for MA and PhD students. Reviewers also suggested that the department consider making better use of Weatherall funds to bring in visitors to teach mini-courses.</p> | Continue discussions between Department and School of Graduate Studies | Department Head in conjunction with Associate Dean Graduate Studies | Human resources to be provided by Department | Ongoing |

| Recommendations | Proposed Follow-up | Responsibility for Leading Follow-up | Responsibility for providing Resources | Timeline for Addressing Recommendation |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| 5. Reviewers recommend a more even allocation of PhD students across faculty members for supervisory duties, as well as an increase in the size of the faculty. This recommendation considers the facts that those instructors who teach PhD seminar courses take on a greater share of PhD supervisory duties than their colleagues, and that supervising too many graduate students may affect time-to-completion. | Continue experimenting with ways to increase the number of faculty involved in PhD seminar courses | Department Head in conjunction with Associate Dean Graduate Studies | Human resources provided by Department | Ongoing |
| 6. Reviewers recommend that the department be supported in bringing visiting faculty in to teach core PhD courses if they are unable to staff them internally. | Department head to manage until core faculty complement can be increased | Department Head in conjunction with Associate Dean Graduate Studies | Human resources provided by Department | Ongoing |
| 7. Reviewers observed that dealing with the numerous and heterogeneous accessibility requests from students in the Department is difficult, logistically, because the Accessibility Office does not bear the full cost of the accessibility decisions it makes. | Department Head to work with the University to develop a department-wide strategy to respond to growing accessibility needs | Department Head | The University | Ongoing |

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| <p>Reviewers recommend that the department work with Queen's in the development of a departmental-wide strategy to respond to growing accessibility needs.</p> | | | | |
| <p>8. According to the Self-Study Report, the Department buildings "are minimally accessible to those with physical disabilities, and there is currently very inadequate wheelchair access to Dunning Hall," and the only way for these students to reach the upper floors in Dunning Hall is through an old elevator, which allegedly is frequently out of service. Reviewers suggest remedying these issues should be a top priority.</p> | <p>Faculty Office to alert PPS of issues</p> | <p>Associate Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science</p> | <p>The University</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> |
| <p>9. Reviewers recommend that the Department be provided with the necessary funds to renovate classroom Dunning 350. The room was once used to teach upper-year econometrics classes, but has become obsolete since class sizes increased; once</p> | <p>Department Head to continue to seek alternative sources of funding</p> | <p>Department Head in conjunction with Associate Dean, Arts and Science</p> | <p>The University</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> |

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| renovated, the room has the potential to play a key role in the Department's teaching and learning mission. | | | | |
| 10. Currently, all Commerce students are required to take Econ 110, a first-year economics course offered by the Economics Department. The Reviewers recommend that this current arrangement continues. | Department Head to continue to speak to the Smith School of Business | Department Head in conjunction with Associate Dean, Arts and Science | Human resources provided by Department | Ongoing |
| 11. Reviewers recommend that the Department be given the resources to increase its faculty complement in order to retain its reputation as one of the premier departments in the country. | Faculty Office to continue to assess department's needs | Department Head in conjunction with Associate Dean, Arts and Science | Human resources provided by Department | Ongoing |

The Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science and the Vice-Provost and Dean School of Graduate Studies shall be responsible for monitoring the implementation plan. The details of progress made will be presented in writing to the Provost and Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning) and filed in the Office of the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic). Monitoring reports will be posted on the university web site.

Final Assessment Report & Implementation Plan

June 12, 2017

Approval Date

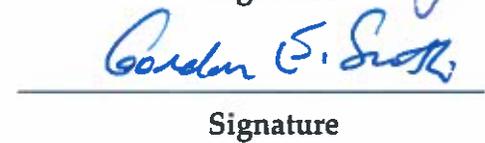
Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning)


Signature

Vice-Provost and Dean School of Graduate Studies


Signature

Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science


Signature

Final status of the Academic Programs in the Department of Economics

Approved to Continue

Date of next program review

2024/25 Academic Year