

ACADEMIC COUNCIL REPORT

ACTION REQUESTED:

Recommendation
Decision
Discussion/Direction
Information

DATE: 25 May 2021

FROM: CIQE

SUBJECT: Program Review 18-Month Follow-up Report – Bachelor of Arts in Political Science

COMMITTEE MANDATE:

In accordance with Article 11 of the Ontario Tech University Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP) Cyclical Program Review Procedures, eighteen months following the completion of a program review the Dean will prepare a brief follow up report and “A summary of the progress report will be approved by the appropriate standing committee of Academic Council”. This summary report will be reported to Academic Council for information and subsequently posted to the Ontario Tech corporate website.

BACKGROUND/CONTEXT & RATIONALE:

Eighteen months after the completion of a program review the Faculty is asked to report on the progress to date in implementing the agreed upon plans for improvement. The report is sent to the Academic Resource Committee for review. If outstanding items remain from the implementation plan at the time of the eighteen-month report, the Resource Committee will review these outstanding items with the Dean. The Committee may recommend further monitoring of these items on a case-by-case basis.

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

The Faculty’s plans to address any remaining resource needs are outlined in the 18-Month report. Information and support will be required from various areas of the University in order to implement the plan as originally agreed.

COMPLIANCE WITH POLICY/LEGISLATION:

The Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance (Quality Council), established by the Council of Ontario Universities in July 2010, is responsible for oversight of the Quality Assurance Framework processes for Ontario Universities. The Council operates

at arm's length from both Ontario's publicly assisted universities and Ontario's government. Under the Quality Assurance Framework, academic programs must undergo a cyclical review at least every eight years following their implementation. The purpose of the cyclical program review is to critically examine the components of a program with the assistance of outside reviewers with the goal of continuous improvement. A program review's purpose is not solely to demonstrate the positive aspects of the program, but also to outline opportunities that will lead to improvements for the future.

NEXT STEPS:

- Following the presentation to Academic Council for information the summary will be posted to the University's website

SUPPORTING REFERENCE MATERIALS:

- 18-Month Report Summary



**18-Month Follow-Up
FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT
January 21, 2021
Bachelor of Arts Political Science
Dean: Dr. Peter Stoett**

Under Ontario Tech University's Quality Assurance Framework, all degree programs are subject to a comprehensive review every eight years to ensure that they continue to meet provincial quality assurance requirements and to support their ongoing rigour and coherence. Program reviews involve several stages, including:

1. A comprehensive and analytical self-study brief developed by members of the program under review.
2. A site visit by academic experts who are external to and arm's length from the program who prepare a report and recommendations on ways that it may be improved based on a review of the program's self-study and supporting material, and a two day site visit involving discussions with faculty, staff and students and a tour of the facilities.
3. Development of a plan for improvement by the program and proposed timelines for implementation.

All programs that undergo a review must provide a report eighteen months after the completion of the review to gather information on the progress that has been made implementing the agreed upon plans for improvement.

In 2017-2019 a program review was scheduled for the Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, with a site visit on April 25 and 26, 2019. The program has submitted to the Provost's Office a comprehensive chart outlining the progress they have made relative to the action plans resulting from the review. A summary of this progress is provided on the following pages. The summary report is reviewed by the appropriate standing committee of Academic Council, and is subsequently reported to Academic Council and the Board of Governors.

Next Scheduled Program Review: 2025-2027

Additional comments:

Over half of the time since the Program Review took place in 2019 has occurred during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Most of the actions accomplished were either initiated or completed prior to the start of the pandemic (in Ontario, as of March 2020) when the Ontario Tech campus closed for in-person interactions. The campus will continue to be closed to all in-person activities, but for very few exceptions, over at least the next semester (Winter 2021). This means that any initiatives will need to be re-imagined for new modes of interacting with students on and off-campus. It is currently unclear what the next academic year will look like and progress on the action items is largely dependent on variables beyond the control of the program

Action Items	Process Status	Comments
<From FAR>		<From Faculty>
<p>POSC 1200 be transformed into a political theory course, providing students with a core education in theoretical concepts important to the discipline.</p>	Complete	<p>POSC 1200 has been renamed Introduction to Democracy in Theory & Practice and redesigned to explore broad themes in the history and theory of democratic ideas. It has been offered once in Winter 2020, partially face-to-face and partially online because of the university campus shut-down. Due to the pandemic, it will be offered online in Winter 2021.</p>
<p>Consideration be given at a program level to offer a flexible curriculum that would maximize course offerings throughout a student's experience of the degree in order to address student demand for more courses, especially in the third year.</p>	Complete	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Program map includes a rotation of 3rd year courses that can be taken in 2nd, 3rd or 4th year. This allows students the opportunity to take different courses in Political Science in each of these years. 2. New course POSC 3102 Race and Racism in Political Culture taught online for the first time in Fall 2020 3. Discussion continues regarding adding new 4th year courses. This has been disrupted by cut-backs within the university.

Consideration be given to create research practicum course at the fourth year to provide students opportunities to participate in faculty research programs.	Complete	<p>Creation of POSC 4104 – Political Science Directed Research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “This course is designed to allow students to conduct scholarly research under the guidance of a department faculty member. Student activities may include: preparing literature reviews, literature searches, assisting with the design of interview questions, organizing data, conducting data analysis, writing reports, and examining archival evidence. Interested students must obtain permission from a faculty supervisor and complete the application form prior to registering. Credit hours: 3 Prerequisite(s): Fourth-year standing in the Faculty of Social Science and Humanities, minimum B average (3.0 CGPA), and permission from the supervising instructor.”
Consideration be given to the way the program promotes itself both internally to the University and externally to ensure the fullness of its strengths be known to prospective students.	Continuous	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A new image for promotional material (e.g., postcards) has been selected and forwarded to Marketing and Communications 2. Participation in Open Houses, OUF, and other outreach activities has been disrupted by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. We will continue to promote the program using the tools available. We are actively participating in the Virtual Open Houses for our Faculty 3. Discussion of ways to reach out beyond the usual recruitment activities (e.g., consider the use of podcasts or guest speakers to broaden appeal)

		<p>continues. Plans for the Michael Starr Lecture Series is on hold for this academic year due to the pandemic.</p> <p>4. Anticipated support in promoting the program has been lost due to university-level cuts, which will reduce our ability to effectively promote the program using an FSSH communications assistant.</p>
<p>The program be consulted and given the opportunity to provide input on initiatives related to Internationalization and student life.</p>	<p>Continuous/In progress</p>	<p>1. Regular contact with the FSSH Advising office occurs regarding international student success and to promote new courses.</p> <p>2. Consultation with other offices (e.g., Alumni, Student Life, and International) will occur moving forward; however, it is uncertain what this will look like in the next year or so.</p> <p>3. Joint graduate program (Master of Arts in Social Practice and Innovation (MSPI), with Legal Studies and Communication & Digital Media) has been proposed and is working its way through the University's approval process.</p>

Process Status Legend:

Complete: Accomplished action item; no further steps required.

Continuous: Initial action item complete but requires ongoing monitoring and/or enhancement.

In Progress: Progress on action item has been initiated but is not complete at this time. Outline all steps taken in the comment's column.

On Hold: Unable to complete due to other dependent factor(s)

Cancelled: Item no longer relevant or resources unavailable