

## ACADEMIC COUNCIL REPORT

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### ACTION REQUESTED:

Recommendation   
Decision   
Discussion/Direction   
Information

**DATE:** 26 October 2021

**FROM:** Undergraduate Studies Committee

**SUBJECT:** Program Review Final Assessment Report 18-Month Follow-up –  
Bachelor of Education

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### 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 presentation at Academic Council the report summary will be sent to the Board of Governors for information, and to the Quality Council as required under the Quality Assurance Framework, and posted to the University's website.

**SUPPORTING REFERENCE MATERIALS:**

- 18-Month Report Summary



## **Eighteen Month Follow-Up Report – Undergraduate Program Review**

Faculty of Education

Program: Bachelor of Education

Date: July 19, 2021

This program review was completed in February of 2020. The chart below outlines the agreed upon plan for improvement following the review. The progress that has been made on the action items is provided in the 18-month follow-up comments column on the right.

### **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.

<b><u>Action Items</u></b>	<b><u>Timeline</u></b>	<b><u>Status</u></b>	<b><u>18 Month Follow-Up Comments</u></b>
<p>Provision of more solid succession planning in terms of the position of director of the B.Ed. program. It was clear from the discussions that the directorship of the program is absolutely key.</p>	<p>January - July 2020</p>	<p>Complete - but will continue to be updated as part of best practices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A comprehensive list of monthly director tasks and responsibilities was created for the incoming director and will continue to be updated</li> <li>● A review of the duties of the director was conducted with a view to reassigning some of the tasks to other administrative personnel and to LTFM instructors as part of their service requirements</li> <li>● A virtual B. Ed instructor manual was developed and updated throughout the semester</li> <li>● An additional support staff member from the university has been requested and is currently under budgetary review</li> </ul>
<p>Further development of doctoral-level instructors and potentially future faculty. The notion of “grow your own” is very critical here. Potential faculty should be encouraged, incentivized, and supported in the completion of doctoral programs in education.</p>	<p>January - December 2020</p>	<p>Complete - but will continue</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Continued to conduct hiring practices that attract committed, qualified, and open-minded sessional instructors</li> <li>● Included a doctoral degree as an asset in job postings</li> <li>● Sought university resources to increase the number of Limited Term Faculty Member contracts and increased LTFMs from 2 to 5 for 2020-2021 which is helping to build the infrastructure of the program and providing the program with additional individuals to participate in service activities</li> <li>● Provided opportunities for sessional instructors to integrate into our BEd program by offering professional development workshops such as the Teaching and Learning Conferences in 2020 and 2021</li> <li>● Encouraged sessional faculty to participate in research projects such as the OECD Critical Thinking and Creativity research project</li> </ul>

<p>The integration of digital technology across courses is supporting the STEAM focus of the program and successfully providing students with opportunities to develop digital literacy. This aspect of the program also promotes the reputation in the education community of Ontario Tech University as the leader in the field. This is something that could be marketed to educators and perhaps provide a window for professional development with local school boards in collaborative support for in-service teachers as well as the preservice teachers.</p>	<p>January - December 2020</p>	<p>Complete - but will continue</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed a marketing strategy for BEd program with the communications officer (e.g., videos, social media materials)</li> <li>• Expanded open house events and showcased our program by inviting our faculty/instructors and teacher candidates to demonstrate and/or share examples of our STEAM focus</li> <li>• Developed, implemented and widely promoted through social media and other means the Education &amp; Technology conferences for our local partners in summer and fall of 2020 and in summer of 2021</li> <li>• In the process of creating websites to showcase student work products that demonstrate STEAM learning</li> </ul>
<p>The online semester appears to be something students appreciate in terms of location (i.e., no need to commute to class) but there was less consensus among students about how many courses should be offered each day and for how many days. The need for synchronous class time does not take best advantage of online pedagogy. This aspect of the program continues to evolve, and the reviewers see this as an area of great potential to include collaborative inquiry and integrated experiential learning that is more differentiated and individualized during that spring term. What that online portion of the program looks like could morph based on a changing</p>	<p>January - July 2020</p>	<p>Complete - but will continue as best practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued to seek feedback from Semester 3 instructors and teacher candidates and made adjustments to the course formats. For example, in the spring of 2020 and the fall of 2020, teacher candidates were permitted to work in their professional learning groups on their own schedules instead of attending a synchronous class for some weeks of the course. When surveyed, the consensus was that they appreciated the flexibility of asynchronous learning for some components of the course</li> <li>• Scheduled courses over 3 days instead of 2 days based on feedback from previous year's teacher candidates</li> <li>• Met regularly with instructors during online semesters to discuss pedagogy, student issues and workload and to share best practices as a community of learners</li> <li>• Due to public health restrictions, we were unable to open up any classrooms for students on campus to assist those students who did not have access to high-speed Internet in their homes</li> </ul>

<p>vision, research, leadership, and reflection.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many courses included opportunities for students to meet in online professional learning communities to develop their collaborative inquiry skills</li> <li>• As the fall, winter and spring semesters of 2020-2021 were also conducted entirely online, instructors built their capacity for virtual learning by gathering frequent feedback from students, by collaborating with teaching partners, and by meeting regularly and sharing best practices</li> </ul>
<p>Efficiencies could be addressed in some areas, as noted above in relation to faculty and staff complement and the use of existing university supports.</p>	<p>January - April 2020</p>	<p>In Progress/Continuous</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our original report included the following: "University support to hire additional support staff for undergraduate programs (we have a full-time support person dedicated to the graduate programs in both FSSH and FED). Given the recommendations of this report, we propose a full-time support staff for our two undergraduate programs in the Faculty of Education to ease the intense workload of the directors."</li> </ul> <p>At this time, we do not have full time support staff for our two undergraduate programs in the Faculty of Education to ease the intense workload of the directors, however, existing support staff continue to support and some of the tasks of the Director have been reassigned as described above. This still requires oversight by the B.Ed. Director. It is also important to note that given the professional nature of the accredited B.Ed. Program, the responsibilities of the director expand beyond the scope of other undergraduate programs.</p> <p>We are currently in the process of hiring a 0.5 support person for the B.Ed.</p>

**Additional comments:**

The Bachelor of Education team is an incredibly committed group as a whole. It is important to note that because we only have a small number of full-time faculty in the program, we devote an enormous amount of time and energy to building capacity via LTFM and part-time instructors. Additional full-time faculty members would add to the

robustness of the program as we pride ourselves on basing our program on research-based practices and content. As noted above, the role of the B.Ed. Director is unique in that given the professional nature of the program there are many other stakeholders that interact with the program and specifically the B.Ed. Director (e.g., Ministry of Education, Teacher Federations, QECO, EQAO, school boards, associate teachers, faculty liaisons). In addition, given the overarching Standards of Practice and the Ethical Standards of the Profession, there are often other issues that the B.Ed. Director must address with teacher candidates and instructors that are not typically addressed in other undergraduate programs. We include this information to reiterate the importance of support staff or additional supports for the directors of professional programs (e.g., additional course release) in order to create programs that reflect best practices as per the growing body of teacher education research.