

ACADEMIC COUNCIL REPORT

ACTION REQUESTED:

Recommendation
Decision
Discussion/Direction
Information

DATE: 24 JANUARY 2022

FROM: Undergraduate Studies Committee

SUBJECT: Program Review Final Assessment Report 18-Month Follow-up – Bachelor of Science in Forensic Science

COMMITTEE MANDATE:

In accordance with Article 8 of the Ontario Tech University Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP) Cyclical Review and Auditing 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.

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 has been sent to the Academic Resource Committee for review and further follow-up.

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
SUMMARY REPORT
November 21, 2022
Bachelor of Science in Forensic Science
Dean: Dr. Greg Crawford**

Under Ontario Tech University's Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP) and the Ontario Quality Assurance Framework (QAF), all programs are subject to a comprehensive review at least/at minimum 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. The visit involves discussions with senior academic administrators, faculty, staff, and students.
3. Submission of an external reviewers' report including recommendations on ways the program may be improved based on a review of the program's self-study brief, discussions during the site visit and supporting material.
4. Internal responses to the external review and recommendations prepared separately by the Program and Dean.
5. Development of an Implementation Plan prepared by the Dean including resource requirements and a timeline for acting on and monitoring the implementation of the recommendations.

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 review was scheduled for the Bachelor of Science in Forensic Science program, with a site visit during November 30 to December 3, 2020. The program has submitted to the Provost's Office a report outlining the progress they have made relative to the implementation plan resulting from the review. A summary of this progress is provided on the following pages.

Implementation Plan Action Item(s) <i>(corresponding recommendation # from reviewers' report)</i>		Timeline	Status*	Comments from Dean
1. a)	Planning for a faculty retirement	2021 to present	In progress	<p>Progress was delayed until retirement plans for the faculty member in question were determined. It was recently determined (September 2022) that this faculty member will retire on August 31, 2023.</p> <p>Forensic Science faculty have identified specific courses in the program for which the present faculty complement do not have adequate expertise to teach. They will develop recommendations in consultation with the Dean for Oct. 31, 2022. These recommendations will be folded into the upcoming cycle of budget planning.</p>
1.b)	<p>Additional technical support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a review of current technician workload (possibly across Faculty) [need to understand better how techs are spending time currently] 	January 2022	In progress	<p>Information has been gathered regarding the roles of most technicians, however, this review has been delayed. It is hoped to be completed by January 2023. Nevertheless, base funding was secured for a net 8-month-per-year position (i.e., during the teaching portion of the academic year). The urgency of this task has therefore been reduced, although the Forensic Science faculty have indicated a full-time permanent position would be highly preferable for a number of reasons.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and prioritize any changes of tech workload in program/Faculty • If additional resource requests are warranted, include in budget submission for 2023 	March 2022	In progress	<p>Delayed (see above); expected to be completed by March 2023</p> <p>Delayed (see above); expected to be completed by November 2023</p>
2.	<p>Curricular changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and submit proposed curricular revisions (including potential new course proposal) 	December 2021	In progress	<p>This process has been delayed. A draft syllabus for a new proposed 2nd year course, "Forensic Foundations" has been drafted.</p> <p>Forensic faculty will meet in October 2022 to discuss inclusion of this course into the curriculum. The meeting will also include revisiting the number of chemistry courses and capstone courses, all in accordance with FEPAC standards.</p> <p>We do not anticipate pursuing the legal studies minor option at this time, due to the impending retirement of a key faculty member and the current lack of clarity around a replacement.</p>
3.	<p>Exploration of the development of a taphonomic research facility - Continue to pursue partnerships and funding model</p>	No timeline set for complex project	In progress	<p>Ontario Tech, led by Dr. Helene LeBlanc, has developed a partnership with the Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College (CMCC), with the ultimate goal of showing the value of collaborative forensic science research within the ethical framework set by the Anatomy Act. This was seen as a key step towards making the case for a taphonomic facility.</p>

				<p>We intend to re-engage with senior leadership at Ontario Tech this year, regarding potential partnerships, physical facilities, longterm funding, and the Anatomy Act.</p> <p><i>Note during Academic Resource Committee meeting on November 21, 2022: The success of the program does not hinge on this item. A business case has been put forward to the Provost and the Senior Leadership Team.</i></p>
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*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 the 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.

This summary report will be sent for approval to the appropriate standing committee of Academic Council (USC or GSC), and will subsequently be reported to Academic Council. It will then be posted on the Ontario Tech corporate website.

Next Scheduled Program Review: 2025 - 2027