

ACADEMIC COUNCIL REPORT

ACTION REQUESTED:

Recommendation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Discussion/Direction	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

DATE: 23 January 2024

FROM: Undergraduate Studies Committee

SUBJECT: Cyclical Program Review Executive Summary and Program Learning Outcomes – Bachelor of Arts in Legal Studies

COMMITTEE MANDATE:

In accordance with Article 8 of the Ontario Tech University Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP) Cyclical Review (CPR) and Auditing Procedures, the appropriate standing committee of Academic Council (USC or GSC) is responsible for approving the Final Assessment Report (FAR), Executive Summary, and Implementation Plan (IP) resulting from the Review.

Additionally, in accordance with Article 6 of the IQAP Curriculum Change Procedures, editorial revisions to Program Learning Outcomes are considered Minor Program Adjustments and are sent to the standing committee for approval.

BACKGROUND/CONTEXT & RATIONALE:

In academic years 2021-2023 a program review was scheduled for the Bachelor of Arts in Legal Studies. The site visit was conducted in late March/early April 2023. Following receipt of the External Examiners Report, the Dean and Program respond and an IP is prepared by the Dean. This IP is presented to the Academic Resource Committee for review and further follow-up. At the completion of a CPR the appropriate standing committee of Academic Council (USC or GSC) will review and approve the FAR, Executive Summary, and IP that synthesize the recommendations resulting from the review, identify the strengths of the program as well as the opportunities for program improvement and enhancement, and outline the agreed-upon plans for this improvement.

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

The Faculty's plans to address any resource needs are outlined in the action plan. Information and support will be required from various areas of the University in order to implement the plan. The Academic Resource Committee has reviewed the resources identified in the IP.

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.

CONSULTATION AND APPROVAL:

The Academic Resource Committee Reviewed the Implementation Plan on 21 August 2023. The Implementation Plan was presented to FSSH Faculty Council on 30 October 2023. The Final Assessment Report, Executive Summary, Implementation Plan, and revised learning outcomes were approved at Undergraduate Studies Committee on 21 November 2023.

NEXT STEPS:

- Following presentation of the Executive Summary and IP to Academic Council and the Board of Governors, a Final Assessment Report (FAR), the Executive Summary, and the IP will be sent to the Quality Council as required under the Quality Assurance Framework. A summary report is then posted on the Ontario Tech corporate website.
- The FAR, Executive Summary, and IP will be provided to the Faculty, through the Dean, to serve as the basis for the continuous improvement and monitoring of the program. A report from the program outlining the progress that has been made in implementing the recommendations will be put forward in eighteen months' time.

SUPPORTING REFERENCE MATERIALS:

- Executive Summary
- Implementation Plan
- PLO Enhancement



FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT Executive Summary Cyclical Program Review

Degree Program:	Bachelor of Arts in Legal Studies
Components:	Alternative Dispute Resolution; Human Rights Law; Information Law; Legal Studies
Dean:	Dr. Peter Stoett
Date:	July 11, 2023

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.

In academic years 2021-2023 a program review was scheduled for Legal Studies. This is the second program review for this program. A timeline of the review is provided below.

Program Review Timeline	Date
Program Review start date:	Sept 24, 2021
Self Study submitted/approved:	Jan 13, 2023
Site Visit:	Mar 30–Apr 3, 2023
External Reviewers Report received:	May 11, 2023
Program Response received:	June 12, 2023
Decanal Response received:	June 29, 2023

The Legal Studies program is a high-quality program with productive researchers working in a very collegial environment to ensure student success. Despite the small size of the teaching complement, they deliver innovative and distinctive courses and curriculum. The Reviewers recommend that the program reconsider some of the

program requirements and specializations, in order to make the specializations more flexible and attractive for students and to lighten the load on faculty.

During the virtual site visit, the reviewers met with the following groups and individuals: members of the Faculty as well as key stakeholders at the University including Dr. Lori Livingston, Provost; Dr. Peter Stoett – Dean of Social Sciences and Humanities; Dr. Jen Rinaldi – Undergraduate Program Director; Stephen Thickett – Director of Planning and Operations (Student Life); Sarah Rasile – Director, Student Success (Student Life); Emily Tufts – Associate University Librarian; members of the internal assessment team and a number of faculty, staff, and students.

The external reviewers identified 5 recommendations identifying specific steps to be taken to improve the program. The reviewers make recommendations regarding program structure, specializations and faculty complement, reviewing the diversity of needs across different cohorts. The prioritized list of recommendations is available in the Implementation Plan.

A Final Assessment Report (FAR) has been prepared to synthesize the reports and recommendations resulting from the review, identifying the strengths of the program as well as the opportunities for program improvement and enhancement. The Implementation Plan (IP) presents a timeline of the follow-up and resource requirements addressing the recommendations from the external reviewers’ report. Both documents, accompanied by this Executive Summary (ES), were delivered to the appropriate standing committee of Academic Council (USC/GSC) and approved on November 21, 2023.

Governance	Document(s)	Type of review	Date
Faculty Council	IP	Feedback	<i>October 30, 2023</i>
Resource Committee	IP	Resource review	August 21, 2023
USC/GSC	FAR, ES, IP	Approval	<i>November 21, 2023</i>
Quality Council	FAR, ES, IP	QAF requirement	
Academic Council	ES, IP	For information	
Board of Governors	ES, IP	For information	
Corporate Website	ES, IP	QAF requirement	

Due Date for 18-Month Follow-up Report: January 12, 2025

Date of Next Cyclical Review: 2029-2031
Timeframe for associated site visit: Fall 2030



IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
June 26, 2023
Bachelor of Arts in Legal Studies
Program Review
Dean: Dr. Peter Stoett

The Implementation Plan is a critical outcome of the Cyclical Program Review process. The Dean solicits feedback on the Implementation Plan through Faculty Council and the plan is reviewed by the Provost, through the Resource Committee, to examine resource implications and allocations. A Final Assessment Report (FAR) and Executive Summary are prepared synthesizing the program review reports and responses, following review of the Implementation Plan by the Resource Committee. The plan proceeds through Ontario Tech’s governance process and is posted on the corporate website.

The table below presents a timeline of the follow-up and resource requirements addressing the recommendations from the external reviewers’ report.

Recommendation <i>(corresponding # from reviewers’ report)</i>	Action Item(s)	Specify role of person responsible	Timeline for action and monitoring	Resource Requirements
1. Re-evaluate specializations within the program	Consult with UPD on specializations and possible changes; consultations with students; explore summer course options.	UPD and Dean	Over the 2023-2024 academic year	Nothing immediate

2/3.	Addressing the unique challenges facing Advanced Entry students	Create a taskforce to identify the challenges advanced entry students face, develop a plan to address the challenges, and monitor/report on the results.	UPDs of all programs Associate Dean, Undergraduate Student Experience Academic Advising Manager Student Life representatives	Over the 2023-2025 academic years	Nothing immediate; could entail a new course offering (perhaps via Continuing Ed); some retraining of academic advisors
5	Adding to Faculty complement with new hires.	Appointment of Teaching Faculty hire to do the work of an ongoing LTFM and allow for another service contributor.	Provost and Dean	2023-24	TF Position in Legal Studies

*The Dean shall be responsible for monitoring and reporting on the Implementation Plan.

Recommendations not Addressed and Rationale

#	Recommendation not Addressed	Rationale
4	Student choice menu	We have just renovated first-year requirements and want to see how this plays out over the next three years

Due Date for 18-Month Follow-up Report: January 12, 2025

Date of Next Cyclical Review: 2029-2031



Cyclical Program Review: Summary of program learning outcome enhancements

[This form should be used in cases where program learning outcomes have been enhanced for an existing undergraduate or graduate program as the result of a cyclical program review. The program and course learning outcomes must be reviewed and revised using resources provided by CIQE and the Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC). This form will be appended to the Final Assessment Report and presented at the appropriate standing committee of Academic Council (USC or GSC) for approval.]

Faculty: Faculty of Social Science and Humanities	
Program: Bachelor of Arts in Legal Studies	
Review year: 2021-2023	
Undergraduate: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Graduate: <input type="checkbox"/>

Original program learning outcome(s): (Provide all of the initial program learning outcomes)

- 1) Acquire and express an understanding of how law operates, including:
 - a) Grasp of structural elements of law;
 - b) A plural understanding of law;
 - c) Critical perspectives on the forms and functions of law;
 - d) Critical attention to how the lens of law illuminates social phenomena
- 2) Apply acquired knowledge (as outlined above) to interpret legal phenomena and developments from a variety of critical perspectives
- 3) Conduct legal and interdisciplinary research and interpret research results
- 4) Communicate effectively in written, spoken, and visual form with both academic audiences and members of the general public
- 5) Recognize and demonstrate an appreciation of diverse perspectives
- 6) Develop and demonstrate strong work and professional ethic that approaches problems with enthusiasm and intellectual rigour
- 7) Cultivate and strengthen capacity to engage in analysis, reasoning, and critical self-reflection

Total number of original outcomes: 7

Proposed enhanced learning outcomes: (Updated outcomes as a result of the program review learning outcome workshops)

1. Identify and explain how law operates, including:
 - a) the structural elements of law;
 - b) the plural forms of law;
 - c) critical theories on the forms and functions of law;
 - d) how the lens of law illuminates social phenomena
2. Interpret socio-legal and legal phenomena and developments from a variety of theoretical perspectives
3. Conduct and analyze research through a variety of legal and interdisciplinary research methods and theories
4. Communicate socio-legal and legal issues effectively in written, spoken, and visual form with academic audiences and members of other diverse communities
5. Recognize and demonstrate an appreciation of diverse perspectives on socio-legal and legal topics
6. Develop and demonstrate professionalism and a strong work ethic. Approach socio-legal and legal problems with enthusiasm and intellectual rigour
7. Cultivate and strengthen capacity to engage in analysis, reasoning, and critical self-reflection in relation to the structures, forms, theories, and lens of law

Total number of enhanced outcomes: 7

Have the enhanced outcomes been mapped to the degree-level expectations (DLEs)?

Yes **No**

If no, this should be completed no later than:

Type of curricular change: **Minor Program Adjustment** **Major Program Modification**
(editorial change) (significant– [IQAP Article 7.1](#))

Are you providing any additional supporting documents? **Yes** **No**

If yes, which (list all)?

DLE map available upon request

CIQE INTERNAL APPROVAL

Appended to FAR	
FAR, Outcomes, Executive Summary, Implementation Plan approved by USC/GSC	
Final Approved FAR, Outcomes, Executive Summary and Implementation Plan sent to Faculty, through the Dean, as primary owner	
Outcomes entered into Curriculog	