

***SUBMITTED TO OUCQA FOR INFORMATION – June 5, 2023***

***APPROVED BY TRENT UNIVERSITY’S SENATE COMMITTEE – April 18, 2023***

# Final Assessment Report & Implementation Plan – Executive Summary

# BA Child & Youth Studies

# Completed by the Cyclical Program Review Committee (CPRC)

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| **Degree Programs Being Reviewed** | Bachelor of Arts in Child and Youth Studies |
| **External Reviewers** | Dr. Shauna Pomerantz, Brock UniversityDr. Sam Frankel, King’s University College |
| **Internal Representative** | Dr. Brenda Smith-Chant, Department of Psychology |
| **Year of Review** | 2021-2022  |
| **Date of Site Visit** | March 3, 2022 |
| **Due Date for Implementation Report from the Program** | April 1, 2024 |
| **Date Prepared by CPRC** | March 15, 2023 |
| **Date Approved by Provost & VP Academic** | March 29, 2023 |
| **Signature of Provost & VP Academic** | **\\habitat\home\rebeccadickson\Desktop\Michael's signature.jpg** |

Offered exclusively at Trent’s Durham GTA campus, the Child & Youth Studies (CHYS) program is a unique multidisciplinary program focusing on child and youth development. The program provides students with a strong theoretical background in child and youth emotional and cognitive development, professional ethics, research methods, child rights, and children’s social justice issues.

Knowledge gained from lively and interactive in-class discussions is complemented and enhanced by opportunities to gain hands-on work experience with community partners. Students have the option of completing a full-year field placement course in fourth year that provides the opportunity for practical experience in a variety of organizations and settings, such as elementary and secondary schools, alternative school programs, youth advocacy groups, social justice organizations, bereavement centres and various research laboratories.

Another key feature of the program is the direct pathway into Trent’s Bachelor of Education (BEd) program. The BEd program reserves a limited number of places for students in the Child and Youth Studies program.

**Overview**

During the 2021-2022 academic year, the BA in Child and Youth Studies program underwent a review. Two arm’s-length external reviewers, Dr. Shauna Pomerantz, Brock University, and Dr. Sam Frankel, King’s University College were invited to review the self-study documentation. The virtual visit took place on March 3, 2022. Dr. Brenda Smith-Chant, internal representative, from the Department of Psychology, participated in the virtual visit.

This Final Assessment Report (FAR), in accordance with Trent University’s Institutional Quality Assurance Policy (IQAP), provides a synthesis of the cyclical review of the degree programs. The report considers: the Self-Study, the External Reviewers’ Report, the Program Response, and the Decanal Response.

A summary of the review process is as follows: the academic unit completed a self-study that addressed all components of the evaluation criteria as outlined in Trent’s IQAP. Appendices included: Curriculum Vitae, Course Syllabi, Data Tables, Student and Alumni Surveys and a Library Statement of Support. Qualified external reviewers were invited to conduct a review of the programs that involved a review of all relevant documentation (self-studies, appendices, and IQAP policy) and participation in a virtual visit. During the virtual site visit, reviewers met with senior administration, faculty, students and staff.

The External Reviewers’ Report identified four (4) recommendations with the primary focus being to provide a program that is both sustainable and of high quality. Ideally, recommendations will focus on a culture of ongoing and continuous improvement, and prioritizing student-centred learning and experiences.

Following receipt of the External Reviewers’ Report, the Program and Dean provided responses to the Report. Based on the four review documents, the Cyclical Program Review Committee (CPRC) then reviewed and assessed the quality of the degree programs and reported on significant program strengths, opportunities for improvement and enhancement, and the implementation of recommendations.

The Implementation Plan identifies four (4) recommendations for implementation and specifies the proposed follow-up and the person(s) responsible for leading the follow-up. The Academic Unit, in consultation with their Dean, will submit an Implementation Report in response to the recommendations identified for follow-up. The Report is due April 1, 2024.

**Significant Program Strengths**

Child and Youth Studies is a multidisciplinary program that provides a diverse curriculum to its students. Curriculum is innovative and relevant and encompasses contemporary issues in diversity, social justice, laws and rights, and traditional topics in education, and emotional and cognitive development.

Moving beyond theory, the program places considerable emphasis on providing students with real-world, hands-on experience. The fourth year field placement allows student to put theory into practice; students learn how to build positive relationships with organizations to examine and investigate current issues affecting and impacting our children and youth. Faculty are strong advocates of this aspect of the program and the significance of how placements help prepare students for a diverse range of careers related to children and youth.

External Reviewers commended the faculty and staff on their efforts to ‘maintain such high-quality courses and student satisfaction’, as well as ‘actively contributing to the wider discourse in the field through innovative course development’. Students who met with reviewers cited high levels of support, excellent faculty-to-student ratios and a feeling of camaraderie. According to the external review team, the Program ‘excels in providing an intimate and supportive student experience’. The Durham GTA campus is a relatively small campus, and students enjoy being part of a close-knit community. With smaller class sizes and workshops, students can take a leadership role in their own learning and have ample opportunities to engage one-on-one with instructors and their peers.

Many different pathways are available to CHYS students, in addition to the opportunity to transition into Trent’s Bachelor of Education (BEd) program. CHYS is structured in a way that enables students, by the time of graduation, to acquire and develop valuable professional and transferable skills suited for advanced degrees and various workplace settings.

**Opportunities for Program Improvement and Enhancement**

As a function of continuous improvement, the Program is encouraged to regularly monitor and assess the level of student satisfaction and success to ensure curriculum remains relevant, current and effective within the discipline. It would be beneficial to begin to offer exit surveys to recent graduates at some point in the future. As a newer program it will be important to engage with students to determine their needs.

As a young program that has experienced substantial growth, the Program is encouraged to develop long term plans that considers academic priorities and available resources, and identifies any risks to maintain the quality of the program and sustaining further growth. As recommended by the External Reviewers, part of this review, should consider the Program’s strong ties to education and how the Program could promote ‘itself as more than a pathway to education’.

The Program is urged to find ways to offer more research-related opportunities to students, whether this be advanced research methodology or statistics courses, organized units within existing courses, or the chance to work directly with faculty as a Research Assistant. This kind of experience would benefit graduates seeking employment and those pursuing graduate degrees.

In the future, there may be opportunities to develop and offer additional elective courses; innovative programming that builds on areas of faculty expertise, including social justice, mental health, clinical based courses on trauma, exceptionalities, and a senior practicum.

**Implementation Plan**

The Implementation Plan identifies those recommendations that require action by the academic unit. The Chair or Director, with members of the academic unit, will be responsible for leading the follow-up in consultation, and where appropriate, with Dean(s) and other university departments.

The Academic Unit will report on actions taken and the status of each recommendation by the due date provided. The Dean will be responsible for reviewing the Implementation Report and submitting the final report to the Office of the Provost.

**DUE DATE FOR IMPLEMENTATION REPORT: April 1, 2024**

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| **Recommendation** | **Proposed Follow-Up**If no follow-up is recommended, indicate ‘No follow-up report is required’ and provide rationale | **Specific Timeline**For addressing or completing recommendation | **Position Responsible for Leading Follow-up** |
| **Recommendation 1**That the faculty complement be increased to offer needed and relevant research methodology courses to contribute to the viability and maintenance of the program. | No follow up required.Hiring requests are included in Annual Department/Program Staffing plans, and approved in the budget process. |  |  |
| **Recommendation 2**That the program holds a retreat to review and reflect upon the program, to ensure that the foundations are in place to support current operations and any future growth. The program should consider current and future resourcing, and determine target areas for development including:* research methodologies
* offering of electives
* community-based

opportunities* courses in technology/social media and other forms of youth culture
* increased spring/summer offerings
 | While hiring requests are dealt with as noted above, the Program is required to work on a multi-year plan as part of Trent’s academic planning process. This planning should include ongoing curriculum review.The Program is encouraged to hold a Retreat to review and reflect on those aspects of the Program identified in the External Reviewers’ Report, including curriculum review.Curriculum changes, along with other program changes or modifications should be indicated in the Implementation Report.The Implementation Report should outline outcomes following the retreat:* Current areas of development
* Current and future resource needs
* Curriculum revisions
* Research methodologies and how the program will build this across curriculum
* Community-based opportunities
* Development of courses in technology/social media and youth culture
* Decision around increasing spring/summer offerings
 | Curriculum changes should be implemented for September 2024.Status of Recommendation will be reported in the April 1, 2024 Implementation Report. | Chair |
| **Recommendation 3**That the Program review its relationship to and dependence on Education, and consider promoting itself as more than a pathway to education. The program should consider marketing the Program away from education to highlight and identify career goals, and to diversify its student body. | Spaces in Education seem sufficient to meet current demand. Program will use retreat and other planning to investigate ways to promote career goals beyond teacher education and alternative pathways.The Program should consider working with Marketing and Recruitment.The Implementation Report will identify initiatives undertaken. | New marketing approach in place for September 2024. | Chair |
| **Recommendation 4**That the Program place increased focus on research as part of student learning and as faculty professional development, and consider how research methods and methodological instruction can be incorporated across the program, specifically focussing on where this training happens and at what level. | Faculty are encouraged to seek further research grants, internally and externally, and to include students as part of research teams where possible.An increased focus on research methodologies can be considered as part of curriculum review.The Implementation Report should:* Indicate faculty grant applications and success, and research activities involving students
* Describe how curriculum will be revised to incorporate research methods and methodological instruction
 | Curriculum revisions should be in place for September 2024 and reported in the April 2024 Implementation Report. | Chair |