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***SUBMITTED TO OUCQA FOR INFORMATION – December 7, 2018***

***APPROVED BY TRENT UNIVERSITY’S SENATE COMMITTEE – October 30, 2018***

**CYCLICAL PROGRAM REVIEW COMMITTEE (CPRC)**

**FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT & IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

**BA/BSc ECONOMICS & BSc MATHEMATICAL ECONOMICS**

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| **DEGREE PROGRAMS BEING REVIEWED** | **BA/BSc Economics**  **BSc Mathematical Economics** |
| **EXTERNAL REVIEWERS** | **Dr. Livio De Matteo, Lakehead University**  **Dr. Herb Emery, University of New Brunswick** |
| **INTERNAL REPRESENTATIVE** | **Dr. Stephen Bocking, The School of the Environment, Trent University** |
| **YEAR OF REVIEW** | **2017-2018** |
| **DATE OF SITE VISIT** | **January 29th & 30th, 2018** |
| **DUE DATE FOR IMPLEMENTATION REPORT BY ECON** | **October 1, 2019** |
| **DATE OF NEXT CYCLICAL REVIEW** | **2025-2026** |
| **DATE PREPARED BY CPRC** | **October 3, 2018** |
| **DATE APPROVED BY PROVOST & VP ACADEMIC** | **October 3, 2018** |
| **SIGNATURE OF PROVOST & VP ACADEMIC** | Provost Signature |

Economics is one of Trent University's original departments with programs focused on engaging students personally, through small classes and through faculty-student interaction in and out of class. The program also aims to provide analytical and technical (mathematical and statistical) grounding to prepare students for a future in the workplace or for graduate studies in economics. In Economics, students study problems through a systematic and logical framework for analyzing how a society solves issues. A knowledge of economics is necessary for students to understand current topics and contemporary social issues, while developing a variety of useful career skills.

**SUMMARY OF PROCESS**

During the 2017-2018 academic year, the BA/BSc Economics and BSc Mathematical Economics program underwent a review. Two arm’s-length external reviewers (Dr. Livio De Matteo, Lakehead University and Dr. Herb Emery, University of New Brunswick) and one internal member (Dr. Stephen Bocking, The School of the Environment, Trent University) were invited to review the self-study documentation and then conducted a site visit to the University on January 29-30, 2018.

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 undergraduate degree programs. The report considers four evaluation documents: the Program’s 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(s) completed a self-study that addressed all components of the evaluation criteria as outlined in Trent’s IQAP. Appendices included: Curriculum Vitae; Course Syllabi; Learning Outcomes; Enrolment, Retention and Student Data; Calendar Copy, Program and University Degree Requirements; Library Report; Student Surveys, Departmental Policies and Trent University Mission Statement and SMA. Qualified external reviewers were invited to conduct a review of the programs that involved a review of all relevant documentation (self-study, appendices, IQAP) in advance of the site visit. A two-day site visit took place where reviewers met with senior administration, faculty, and students.

Once the external reviewers’ report was received both the Program and Dean provided responses to the report. The Cyclical Program Review Committee (CPRC) reviewed and assessed the quality of the degree programs based on the four review documents and reports on significant program strengths, opportunities for improvement and enhancement, and the implementation of recommendations.

The Implementation Plan identifies those recommendations selected for implementation and specifies: proposed follow-up, who is responsible for leading the follow-up, and the specific timeline for addressing the recommendation, if applicable. Academic units, in consultation with the respective Dean(s), will submit an Implementation Report in response to the recommendations identified for follow-up. The Report is due October 1, 2019.

**SIGNIFICANT PROGRAM STRENGTHS**

* The Economics program provides an exceptional and personalized student experience within a collegial and diverse learning community.
* Economics students do very well at finding employment after graduation, illustrating the value of the quality of education students are receiving.
* The programs focus on excellence, innovation and creativity in scholarship and teaching, providing students with the drive to continue life long learning and provide positive social change.

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT AND ENHANCEMENT**

* The programs should develop additional outreach activities with other departments, and the local and Indigenous community to better acquaint them with what Economics has to offer.
* A more aggressive marketing strategy should be developed to increase the number of students majoring in economics.
* More problem based questions and writing skills should be integrated into course assessment and evaluation to ensure students fully understand material.

**COMPLETE LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

**RECOMMENDATION 1**

**That the department clarify whether its priorities and objectives to deliver a high quality disciplinary focused degree program align with the strategic direction of the University.**

Program Response

The program’s first step is to introduce a course that will attract interest from across other disciplines. Specifically, the program is looking to introduce a course in program evaluation that would be of interest to Health Sciences, particularly nursing, and to Environmental Sciences/Studies. Both Nursing and the Environment are areas of focus within the Strategic Mandate Agreement, both of which would generate a more interdisciplinary focus and engagement in intra-university collaborations.

Decanal Response

The proposed departmental plan is one that the Dean would support, in terms of both helping to maintain the quality of instruction students have come to expect, and allowing for additional breadth in course offerings.

**RECOMMENDATION 2**

**That the department focus primarily on its core constituency – the single economics degree majors.**

Program Response

The department continues to support a core single-major honours program. While the program includes joint-majors and students in the Law dual degree, curriculum is designed to best serve the interests of the single major honours students. The department is also committed to providing support for the Business degree by offering three half-credit courses that are required for several of their specializations.

Decanal Response

The Dean acknowledges that a balance must be struck between meeting breadth and quality amongst the core constituency within the Department (single majors), as well as meeting the needs of Business.

**RECOMMENDATION 3**

**That a plan for faculty renewal be developed to address retirements over both the short and medium term.**

Program Response

There a number of faculty that may retire in the next five years and curriculum in the program has been revised to address future staffing shortages. The program is also exploring opportunities to collaborate on the offering of specific courses with the Department of Mathematics.

Decanal Response

The Dean will continue to work with the Department, within budgetary constraints, to meet the quality, and breadth, that students have come to expect from their degree at Trent. While mathematics is one avenue worth pursuing to help alleviate the in-house requirement of teaching some degree courses, the Dean would recommend working with Business to see if instruction could be provided on a rotational model.

**RECOMMENDATION 4**

**That more support be offered for students through tutorials, teaching assistants, etc.**

Program Response

The 2019-20 budget plan will include requests for CUPE stipends to hire dedicated tutorial leaders and teaching assistants.

The second year course ECON-ADMN 2250H—Mathematics for Business and Economics is supported by a special program offered through the Trent Academic Skills Centre called PASS (Peer-Assisted Study Sessions). This program is the model used for offering peer-tutoring in first-year Economics’ courses. The Academic Skills Centre has reported that students having had access to PASS attain good grades.

Decanal Response

The Dean is willing to explore additional pathways to help students achieve learning objectives, improve retention, student experience and quality of the program, in conjunction with the Department.

**RECOMMENDATION 5**

**That room GCS 346 be maintained as general space available to the Department.**

Program Response

The room has been assigned to Research and is no longer available to us. GCS 355 has been converted for use by Business and Economics, and will also include use by the Trent Business Students’ Association.

Decanal Response

A decision to return this room a general space is not within the discretion of the Dean’s Office.

**RECOMMENDATION 6**

**That the prime recruiting strategy focus on the first year student experience by including more seminars, experiential learning opportunities and ensuring that first year courses are taught by the most effective instructors.**

Program Response

The Department assigns instructors who feel comfortable with, and have demonstrated effectiveness in teaching first year. The programs are exploring how to include experiential learning into the first year course, through a program called CORE (core-econ.org) and publisher innovations in course support. The program hopes to implement these ideas for the 2019/20 academic year.

Decanal Response

The Dean is willing to listen to alternatives to help with the suggested prime recruiting strategy. Once resource requirements are known, alternatives can be explored more fully.

**RECOMMENDATION 7**

**That staffing needs and advertising be planned for in advance.**

Program Response

Staffing needs are planned for a year in advance with built in contingencies. The department adjusts the plans as necessary upon receiving approval.

Decanal Response

The University strives to make budgetary decisions as early as they can every year.

**RECOMMENDATION 8**

**That the Department make more of an effort to communicate their activities and worth to the broader community within Trent as well as the Peterborough/Eastern Ontario region.**

*A more explicit communications strategy via the department website and newsletters to students and other faculty could be part of this. As well, reaching out to other programs and making them aware of economics courses and program links of mutual benefit is another strategy.*

Program Response

The Department is pursuing linkages with the Office of the Peterborough & The Kawarthas Economic Development (PKED and a plan will be developed to maintain a continuing relationship. More information will come from future meetings and planning. The program will be more pro-active in posting news to the Departmental webpage and placing announcements on the University online bulletin board. Faculty are regularly contacted by local media and often speak at local business events.

Decanal Response

The Department’s ongoing plan sounds promising.

**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

**The applicable Dean, in consultation with the Department Chair/Director of the relevant Academic Unit shall be responsible for monitoring the Implementation Plan. The Reporting Date for submitting a follow-up Implementation Report is indicated below and is the responsibility of the Academic Unit in consultation with the Dean.**

**DUE DATE FOR IMPLEMENTATION REPORT: October 1, 2019**

The Implementation Report should be submitted to the applicable Dean(s) who will then forward the Report to the Office of the Provost.

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| **Recommendation** | **Proposed Follow-Up**  *If no follow-up is recommended, please clearly indicate ‘No follow up report is required’ and provide rationale.*  *Indicate specific timeline for completion or addressing recommendation if different than Due Date for Implementation Report* | **Position Responsible for Leading Follow-up** |
| Recommendation 1  That the department clarify whether its priorities and objectives to deliver a high quality disciplinary focused degree program align with the strategic direction of the University. | Department to provide an update. | Departmental Chair |
| Recommendation 2  That the department focus primarily on its core constituency – the single economics degree majors. | No follow-up required.  Program’s response provided details of efforts to focus on the single economics degree major, while supporting students in Business and the dual degree in Law. |  |
| Recommendation 3  That a plan for faculty renewal be developed to address retirements over both the short and medium term. | No follow up is required.  This is a faculty resource issue and is part of annual staffing plan discussions; under the purview of the Dean. |  |
| Recommendation 4  That more support be offered for students through tutorials, teaching assistants, etc. | Department to follow up on alternative ways to offer more support to students and provide an update. | Departmental Chair |
| Recommendation 5  That room GCS 346 be maintained as general space available to the Department. | No follow up is required. |  |
| Recommendation 6  That the prime recruiting strategy focus on the first year student experience by including more seminars, experiential learning opportunities and ensuring that first year courses are taught by the most effective instructors. | Department to provide an update on new experiential learning opportunities for students and its plan to include more seminars.  An update should be provided on first year student experience and student satisfaction. | Departmental Chair |
| Recommendation 7  That staffing needs and advertising be planned for in advance. | No follow up is required.  The programs already plan staffing needs and advertising in advance. CUPE hires are directly dependent on student enrolment and sometimes take place closer to the beginning of term. |  |
| Recommendation 8  That the Department make more of an effort to communicate their activities and worth to the broader community within Trent as well as the Peterborough/Eastern Ontario region. | Department to provide update on internal and external outreach with respect to activities and the value of economics. | Departmental Chair |