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***SUBMITTED TO OUCQA FOR INFORMATION – May 31, 2017***

***APPROVED BY TRENT UNIVERSITY’S SENATE COMMITTEE – May 2, 2017***

# CYCLICAL PROGRAM REVIEW COMMITTEE (CPRC)

# FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT & IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

**INDIGENOUS STUDIES**

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| **DEGREE PROGRAMS BEING REVIEWED** | **BA Indigenous Studies**  **BA Indigenous Environmental Studies**  **BSc Indigenous Environmental Science**  **PhD Indigenous Studies** |
| **EXTERNAL REVIEWERS** | **Dr. Daniel Salée, Concordia University**  **Dr. Celia Haig-Brown, York University** |
| **INTERNAL REPRESENTATIVE** | **Dr. Paul Shaffer, International Development Studies, Trent University** |
| **YEAR OF REVIEW** | **2015-2016** |
| **DATE OF SITE VISIT** | **March 17th & 18th, 2016** |
| **DUE DATE FOR IMPLEMENTATION REPORT BY BIOL** | **November 1, 2017** |
| **DATE OF NEXT CYCLICAL REVIEW** | **2023-2024** |
| **DATE PREPARED BY CPRC** | **April 12, 2017** |
| **DATE APPROVED BY PROVOST & VP ACADEMIC** | **April 19, 2017** |
| **SIGNATURE OF PROVOST & VP ACADEMIC** | Provost Muldoon |

Indigenous programming has been a part of the university’s stated direction since its inception in 1966 and commitment to and respect for Indigenous Knowledge, peoples and issues continues to be an institutional strength. The Report of the external reviewers can be summarize through

A quote from the external reviewers provides an segue into Indigenization at the university, ‘… the level of engagement with Indigenous knowledges, histories, peoples, cultures and languages is unparalleled in any departments that we know of across the country. This feature alone, developed over the many years since the inception of the first courses in Native Studies, sets Trent apart and makes it a leader in the area and an exemplar for other universities working to address their curricula similarly.’ Trent University’s commitment to Indigenous knowledges alongside standard western approaches provide ‘students with challenges and insights into the possibilities and limitations of accepting singular systems of thought. Engaging hearts, minds, spirits and bodies of the students is the goal of the various programs’.

**SUMMARY OF PROCESS**

During the 2015-2016 academic year, the following degrees underwent a review:

* BA Indigenous Studies
* BA Indigenous Environmental Studies
* BSc Indigenous Environmental Science
* PhD Indigenous Studies

Two arm’s-length external reviewers (Dr. Daniel Salée, Concordia University and Dr. Celia Haig-Brown, York University) and one internal member (Dr. Paul Shaffer, Trent University) were invited to review the self-study documentation and then conducted a site visit to the university on March 17th and 18th, 2016.

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 program. The report considers four evaluation documents: the Program’s Self-Study, the External Reviewers’ Report, the Program Responses, and the Decanal Responses.

A summary of the review process is as follows: the academic unit(s) completed a self-study which 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; University Calendar Copy; University Degree Requirements; TUFA Collective Agreement; and a number of additional documents. Qualified external reviewers were invited to conduct a review of the two degree programs which 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. Reviewers also toured the First People’s House, Nozem Theatre Space and the Bata Library.

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

The undergraduate and graduate degree programs are linked closely through faculty, advisory and administrative connections thus the Committee opted to develop one comprehensive Final Assessment Report.

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 November 1, 2017.

**SIGNIFICANT PROGRAM STRENGTHS**

* The intense focus on Indigenous knowledges throughout the programs reviewed is significantly innovative within the academy. Reviewers commented on the level of commitment to innovative modes of delivery of the programs, including: inclusion of orality as an acceptable form of representing knowledge; the importance given to land-based learning as integral to an immersion in Indigenous thought; and the focus on community engagement both within the department, university and beyond to local Indigenous communities. Guest speakers and films add dimensions to the contemporary understandings of and debates in the field of Indigenous knowledges.
* Trent ‘recognizes that Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing are as valuable as Western models of knowledge and learning’. The involvement of elders and knowledge holders is an invaluable resource in providing instruction and intellectual guidance to students both at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Expectations for each program are developed with direction from the Aboriginal Education Council and/or the Elders Council. This guidance ensures that the learning outcomes reflect respectful commitment to Indigenous knowledge as an integral part of the development of degree level expectations.

* The unparalleled level of commitment by faculty and staff offering these programs contribute to the programs’ success.
* General space devoted to the advancement of Indigenous Studies, the First Peoples House of Learning, the Gathering Space, the Performance Space, the stone teaching circle and the Traditional Area, is innovative and speaks to the university’s willingness to showcase Indigenous Studies as one of its flagship fields of study.
* Reviewers noted strengths of each program:
  + - BA Indigenous – creation of a new and emerging discipline of Indigenous knowledge. Since the last review, the program has initiated the Traditional Teaching Program, the Indigenous Performance Studies Stream and the Gilbert Montour Oral History Centre;
    - BA/BSc Indigenous Environmental Studies/Science – an innovative and multidisciplinary program that brings the principles of both Indigenous knowledge and Western science ‘together to inform and challenge one another’;
    - PhD Indigenous Studies – incorporation of Indigenous Knowledge into content delivery, land-based courses, apprenticing with an Elder, and the community-based practicum where students are provide with innovative opportunities to offer their skills to an Indigenous organization

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT AND ENHANCEMENT**

It is evident from the review that the Indigenous degree programs at Trent are considered to be exceptional and are considered to be a cornerstone of the university. Two minor improvements mentioned during the review included:

* Details of the comprehensive exam, regarding expectations, process and requirements, although included in the Handbook, could also be placed in the Graduate Calendar.

* During the site visit, students commented to the reviewers that they would like to see more content on other Indigenous cultures and traditions, specifically international content.

**COMPLETE LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

**RECOMMENDATION 1**

**That the current level of faculty be maintained.**

Undergraduate Program Response

The Department is in support of this recommendation as the current level of staffing is at the minimum necessary for the effective delivery of the programs. A succession plan should be put in place to enable the program to make admission decisions for the PhD program. Part of this succession planning should be the appointment of traditional knowledge holders to enable the program to continue to effectively fulfill its academic mission.

Graduate Program Response

The Graduate Program supports this recommendation. The success of the PhD program into the future depends upon the replacement of retiring faculty with tenure-track faculty.

Decanal Response(s)

The importance of maintaining a critical mass of tenure-stream faculty is acknowledged. A succession plan that addresses expected retirements, and the specific areas in which those retirements are likely to occur, must be prepared by the Department Chair and the Social Sciences Dean. The plan must ensure uninterrupted programming and supervision at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

**RECOMMENDATION 2**

**That department meetings be held on a regular basis.**

Undergraduate Program Response

The Department governance structure consists of two major committees, among others: the program committee which meets four times per year and a faculty committee which meets as needed. This structure evolved when the FPHL and the department were one unit and a forum was needed for the discussion of academic issues separate from student support issues.

The Program will review the governance structure in the fall of 2016 to determine if we wish to continue with it as we now have both graduate and undergrad committees that deal with academic issues.

Graduate Program Response

No specific response.

Decanal Response(s)

The Department should schedule regular meetings and it should review its governance structure.

**RECOMMENDATION 3**

**That tracking mechanisms for retention and graduating students be instituted.**

Undergraduate Program Response

More robust enrolment reports will be included as part of the department and faculty meetings. Reports will include enrolment by course (start, and finish), and follow up with students who drop courses. For graduating students, the Program will work closely with the alumni office and the FPHL on maintaining a database of graduates including contact information.

Graduate Program Response

The department recognizes the need to formalize student tracking and will work toward establishing a database for this purpose.

Decanal Response(s)

The Department should work with the Administration to track retention and graduate experiences.

**RECOMMENDATION 4**

**That the reading list for the general doctoral comprehensive exam be reviewed.**

Undergraduate Program Response

The reading list is under review. It is updated tri-annually to ensure that it reflects a constantly evolving set of new and emerging scholarship that is built upon a set of foundational texts.

Graduate Program Response

The review process has already been initiated.

Decanal Response(s)

The PhD program should review the curriculum as is being done. The program should report back on whether or not they are revising the reading list for the program.

**RECOMMENDATION 5**

**That tenure track appointments for Indigenous intellectuals/knowledge-keepers be reinstated in recognition of the call for reconciliation by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.**

Undergraduate Program Response

The program is pleased to learn of this recommendation that acknowledges the important contribution that Trent has made to reconciliation, particularly in the important area of Indigenous Knowledge. Trent has had a practice of appointing Traditional Knowledge Holders to academic positions since 1976. This practice placed us at the forefront of developments in this area and the practice of appointing Indigenous Knowledge holders must be restored.

Graduate Program Response

The Program fully supports this recommendation, which is consistent with the Indigenous Studies PhD Program and the importance to fully recognize Indigenous knowledges in the academy. The Program will continue to advocate for granting tenure to the Knowledge-holders who are integral to our program.

Decanal Response(s)

Elders play a vital and unique role in the Department’s undergraduate and graduate programs. The Dean will work with the Chair to consider models of respectful and appropriate recognition.

**RECOMMENDATION 6**

**That a search for a female Elder be initiated.**

Undergraduate Program Response

The presence of male and female Elders as part of the teaching faculty is important due to the gendered nature of some aspects of Indigenous Knowledge. While the visiting Elder program, administered now by the FPHL, ensures that female Elders are included as part of the traditional teaching program, the Elders who visit Trent for short periods of time, usually 2 weeks, attend classes as guest lecturers and workshop leaders rather than lead classes as faculty members. When Elders are permanently on campus, they perform important mentorship and support roles for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and faculty. It is important to point out that more than 80% of Indigenous students are female. For 2016-17, the FPHL will ensure that female Elders are included as part of their programming. The program will include the need for female Elders in its succession planning.

Graduate Program Response

A gap was left in the faculty complement, from which the Program has not recovered, when two female tenured Elders were required to retire upon attaining the age of 65. The PhD program has struggled to represent both the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee knowledges from these local territories, and to offer both men’s knowledges and women’s knowledges. Having a woman Knowledge-holder on faculty would strengthen considerably the capacity of the PhD program in its teaching and support functions.

Decanal Response(s)

The Dean is committed to working with the Department to ensure that any pressing staffing needs are met, subject to financial constraints. The targeted recruitment of an Elder may compose part of the succession plan that is to be developed (see recommendation #1). Any new hiring decisions must consider financial constraints.

**RECOMMENDATION 7**

**That graduate teaching and supervision be officially recognized and compensated.**

Undergraduate and Graduate Program Response

The Programs support this recommendation. Adequate compensation is needed to recognize faculty contributions in the PhD program. Graduate Studies is in the process of developing a compensation template for departments to adapt.

Decanal Response(s)

The Department should work with the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Dean of Social Sciences to develop a Department-specific model for providing credit for contributions to graduate teaching and supervision that, when coupled with undergraduate teaching assignments, ensures workload equity across INDG Department faculty.

**RECOMMENDATION 8**

**That the Development Office fundraise to support research chairs for the new Indigenous School.**

Undergraduate Program Response

The Program supports this recommendation and will forward this recommendation to the Senate Committee on Indigenous Education for consideration.

Graduate Program Response

No specific response

Decanal Response(s)

The Department should explore external fundraising opportunities with the VP, External Relations and Advancement.

**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: NOVEMBER 1, 2017**

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 current level of faculty be maintained.  Recommendation 5  That tenure track appointments for Indigenous intellectuals/knowledge-keepers be reinstated in recognition of the call for reconciliation by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.  Recommendation 6  That a search for a female Elder be initiated. | No follow up report is required.  These recommendations are faculty resource issues and do not directly relate to current quality. |  |
| Recommendations 2  That department meetings be held on a regular basis. | Update on frequency of meetings to be provided; provide a schedule of meetings for the 2017-2018 academic year. | Undergraduate Chair and Graduate Director |
| Recommendation 3  That tracking mechanisms for retention and graduating students be instituted. | Update on tracking plan to be provided. | Undergraduate Chair and Graduate Director |
| Recommendation 4  That the reading list for the general doctoral comprehensive exam be reviewed. | Update to be provided. | Graduate Director |
| Recommendation 7  That graduate teaching and supervision be officially recognized and compensated. | No follow up report is required. Compensation for graduate teaching is being addressed at the university level. |  |
| Recommendation 8  That the Development Office fundraise to support research chairs for the new Indigenous School. | No follow up report is required.  This is not considered to be a quality issue. |  |