Health Science
Update on Unit Response to External Reviewers' Report & Action Plan
Programs Being Reviewed: Undergraduate Programs
Completed by: Martin Holcik, Chair/Joerg Overhage, UG Chair/Laura Pickell, Teaching Mentor
Approved by Dean: D. Amundsen (on behalf of M.DeRosa), November 13th, 2025

Note: This document is made available for public posting on the Vice- Provost's website.

*** Denotes items that SQAPC would like the unit to pay particular attention to based on their past review of the original action item.

External Reviewer Recommendation	Original Action Item and Unit response	Owner & Timeline	Progress Update DATE	Have calendar changes been initiated or completed (Not applicable/Yes/No), if Yes, when
1. Re-articulation of Program-Level Learning Outcomes. **Weakness.**	**2-Agreed to if additional resources permit (describe resources)** With support from OQI and TLS, we will develop and execute an environmental scan to assess if the PLO are current, how they reflect BHSc program needs, and how they compare to similar programs in Ontario. The environmental scan results will inform action toward recommendations #2, 3, and 4. To this end, we have established an Undergraduate Curriculum taskforce to lead this initiative.	UG taskforce, UG committee, whole Department, OQI, TLS/ **16-18 months**	*An undergraduate curriculum taskforce was established, meeting regularly and organizing several department-wide workshops. These sessions, guided by TLS personnel and departmental teaching mentor, facilitated reflective discussions. An environmental scan of similar programs in Ontario was completed, supporting the rearticulation of our PLOs to more accurately reflect our program's strengths and distinctive character. We also conducted a current student and alumni survey that is informing PLO development. This is relevant to points below as well. These new PLOs are now the foundation for ongoing work in curriculum mapping and concentration modifications, directly informing the implementation of recommendations 2, 3, and 4*	*No*

2. Curriculum Mapping and Alignment (alignment of activities/assessments with PLOs). **Weakness.**
 	
  a) Identify gaps and overlaps in curriculum map.
  b) Re-organize curriculum to address 2nd year workload concerns.
  c) Reduce the number of lab courses and/or the number of labs required in some courses (this may help with item b. above).
  d) Introduce flexibility in course selection. *e.g.* in place of MATH 1007, students have the option to take one of a list of "selectives" (e.g., Data Science or Computer Science).
	2 except for recommendation 2c, for which our response is 4
	
	We have established an UG taskforce that will conduct mapping of our existing curriculum. This activity will also be supported by environmental scan findings (recommendation #1). This will lead to the proposal of an updated curriculum addressing the issues of course overlap/gaps, course load distribution, and electives. In addition, curriculum mapping will inform concentration streamlining (recommendation 3a).
		UG Task force, UG committee, whole Department, Dean, OQI/ This action depends on the completion of #1
		
		18-24 months
			Work is ongoing on a-c, with departmental workshops scheduled for October and November to conclude concentration redesign (see also #3 below) and subsequent course mapping.
			
			D) We have initiated some changes to address this, but the bulk of the changes will be made once 2a-c is completed. For example, we have replaced STAT2509 with HLTH 2201 Applied Health Statistics. This change will allow for better servicing our students' curricula needs:
			• Improved course sequencing: It will better prepare students for HLTH 3201 (Epidemiology), which builds on statistical concepts. It will allow for more vertical integration between HLTH 3201 required topics and topics currently covered in HLTH 4201 like visualization of missing data patterns, logistic regression, censored data, more health science related datasets, connection via examples to research topics that faculty in our department do research on, etc. It will also allow for changing HLTH 3201 to incorporate R-based analysis, which hadn't been possible until now.
			• Reduced content overlap: There is considerable duplication between STAT2509 and HLTH 4201, which this change will eliminate.
			• Curricular flexibility: It opens 0.5 credit space in upper years for students to pursue breadth and elective courses.
			• Enhanced preparation for advanced work: Students will have a stronger statistical
				No
				
				Yes (September 2025)

			foundation earlier, including knowledge of R, supporting their success in directed studies and capstone courses in the third and fourth years, as well as fourth year theses. *In addition, four faculty members teaching core courses related to methods met and created a shared Excel document to map concepts taught in four courses across three years. We discovered gaps and overlaps that we are working to address, and are improving the sequence and scaffolding for greater student success.*	
3. Review/Revise/Reduce Concentrations Offered. **Weakness.** a) Streamline (merge or reduce) the number of concentrations offered to align with the newly-articulated PLOs and faculty expertise, with consideration of enrolment reflecting student interest b) Delay selection of a more limited number of concentrations until after 2nd year, with deliberate exposure to those areas in the common curriculum of Yrs 1-2.	**2- Agreed to if additional resources permit (describe resources)** Completing recommendations 1 and 2 in conjunction with historical enrollment data will inform the streamlining of concentrations to align with student needs and PLO. We have already engaged with the admissions office about exploring the possibility of delaying the concentration selection until after 1st year (since this also impacts OUAC selection) and will continue these discussions.	UG Task force, UG committee, whole Department, Dean, OQI, Admissions, RO/ This action depends on the completion of #1 **18-24 months**	*a) Work in progress. Please see response to 1 and 2a-c* *b) Completed. We have delayed the selection of concentrations until after completion of the 1st year. We have changed the advising language in the calendar, recruitment documents, and the OUAC application website.*	*No*
4. Undertake a comprehensive review of learning outcomes, course content and student assessment. **Weakness.**	**2- Agreed to if additional resources permit (describe resources)** This will be done along with recommendation #2 once	UG taskforce, UG committee, whole Department, OQI**/ 18-24 months**	*Work in progress. This will be done along with recommendation #2 now that recommendation #1 is completed .*	*No*

	recommendation #1 is completed and will require input from OQI.			
5. Consider developing a holistic admissions procedure that considers additional non-cognitive attributes in addition to grade 12 academic performance. **Opportunity.**	4. **Not agreed to** While this is an excellent suggestion in principle, it should be a broader university initiative that we support and agree on but don't have the resources to act on. Nevertheless, we will explore if this might be an option at Carleton.	UG curriculum committee, Department Chair, Admissions Office, Dean/ **Ongoing**	*Not agreed to. However, ongoing discussions with Admissions and the Dean about the feasibility of this approach.*	*No*
6. Consider developing an admission pathway for Black and Indigenous students. **Opportunity.**	4. **Not agreed to** See response to #5 above	UG curriculum committee, Department Chair, Admissions Office, Dean/ **Ongoing**	*Not agreed to.*	*No*
7. Hire an additional 2-3 teaching-track academic appointments to reduce reliance on contract instructors. **Weakness.**	2- **Agreed to if additional resources permit (describe resources)** The Department Chair will work with the Dean to identify strategies to hire additional faculty to reduce reliance on contract instructors.	Department Chair, Dean/ **1-3 years**	*Although no faculty positions were allocated to the Department to support the BHSc program, we have recently hired one teaching-stream faculty for the newly launched Professional MSc in Clinical Trials and Regulatory affairs. This helped with redistributing some of the administrative burden within the department. The Chair will continue to request appropriate justifiable positions in each budget cycle to reduce reliance on contract instructors.*	*No*
8. Stagger future sabbatical leaves to minimize program disruption and reliance on contract instructors. **Concern.**	1- **Agreed to unconditionally** The large number of core faculty on a sabbatical leave was due to COVID-19 pandemic, which impacted planned	Department Chair, Dean/**Ongoing**	*Completed.*	*No*

	sabbaticals. It was an unusual situation that is likely not to happen in the future, especially given the growth of the Department.			
9. Fund additional summer research internships and/or health sciences research internships. This could also be an identified focus for philanthropy. **Opportunity.**	2. **Agreed to if additional resources permit (describe resources)** Department Chair will continue to work with advancement to identify new donor opportunities to support additional HSRI spots. In addition, the faculty will consider increasing their financial contribution to existing awards to support larger numbers of students.	Department Chair, Advancement Office, whole Department/ **Ongoing**	- *Ongoing.* - *In addition, we created a second Directed Study course (HLTH2901) to allow students to do research for course credit to increase student hands-on research training.*	*Yes Summer 2025*
10. Establish a capital/maintenance fund to plan for regular maintenance and as-needed replacement for equipment in teaching laboratories. **Concern.**	3. **Agreed to in principle** Our teaching laboratories rely on sophisticated and expensive instrumentation to provide students with real-world up-to-date hands-on training. While this infrastructure is relatively new, it will require regular maintenance and, in the future, repair and replacement. Until recently, the Department had contingency funds that were meant to cover these unexpected expenses. However, this is no longer the case. We agree that it is critical to have access to capital/maintenance funds for teaching laboratories and will work with ODS toward this goal.	Department Chair; Dean/ **Ongoing**	*No regular maintenance funds were allocated to the Department. However, support has been provided by Dean's office as needs arise. The Chair will continue to request appropriate justifiable funds in each budget cycle.*	*No*

11. Establish a more transparent communications system between the department-level units and University-wide units (such as the physical plant and facilities management) to address needs more effectively. **Weakness**	**3. Agreed to in principle** Agreed. However, many of these issues are systemic and will require action by others than the Department. The Department Chair will work with Dean and others toward implementing this recommendation.	Department Chair, Dean, FMP/ **Ongoing**	*Ongoing, but largely outside Departmental purview.*	*No*
12. Review the position of laboratory coordinator to determine if it would be better suited as an instructor-rank appointment. **Concern.**	**3. Agreed to in principle** Given the key role our teaching labs coordinators play in our curriculum, we wholeheartedly support this idea. However, this is entirely beyond the purview of the Department.	Department Chair, **Dean, CUPE**	*Outside Departmental purview*	*No*
13. Establish KPIs on student performance, program attrition and post-graduation pathways. Data may be collected by survey. **Concern.**	2. **Agreed to if additional resources permit (describe resources)** Although some data is available through CUBES, we will develop student surveys to assess KPI and student success. Part of this will also be done under recommendation #1 (environmental scan).	Department Chair, OQI, UG committee, Curriculum taskforce, entire Department/ **Develop within 12 months and then ongoing**	*Ongoing. We did survey the students to collect feedback on our program performance to inform curricular changes (see also above)*	*No*
14. Provide additional career information to current and incoming students. **Opportunity.**	2. **Agreed to if additional resources permit (describe resources)** In addition to ongoing initiatives, we will develop resources for students. These will include in-class information sessions as well as extra-curricular events.	UG committee, UG taskforce, SSSC, HSSS/ **9-12 months**	*Ongoing*	*No*