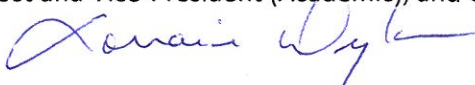




DATE: April 20, 2018

TO: Senate

FROM: Dr. Lorraine Dyke Vice-Provost & Associate Vice-President (Academic) for Dr. Jerry Tomberlin, Acting Provost and Vice-President (Academic), and Chair, Senate Academic Program Committee 

RE: Final Assessment Report and Executive Summary: Undergraduate programs in Religion

The purpose of this memorandum is to request that Senate approve the Final Assessment Report and Executive Summary arising from the cyclical review of the undergraduate programs in Religion.

The request to Senate is based on a recommendation from the Senate Academic Program Committee (SAPC), which passed the following motion at its meeting of April 19, 2018:

THAT SAPC recommends to SENATE the approval of the Final Assessment Report and Executive Summary arising from the cyclical program review of the undergraduate programs in Religion.

The Final Assessment Report and Executive Summary is provided pursuant to articles 4.2.5-4.2.6 of the provincial Quality Assurance Framework and article 7.2.23 of Carleton's Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP). Article 7.2.23.3 of Carleton's IQAP (passed by Senate on June 26th, 2015 and ratified by the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance on September 25th, 2015) stipulates that, in approving Final Assessment Reports and Executive Summaries 'the role of SAPC and Senate is to ensure that due process has been followed and that the conclusions and recommendations contained in the Final Assessment Report and Executive Summary are reasonable in terms of the documentation on which they are based.'

In making their recommendation to Senate and fulfilling their responsibilities under the IQAP, members of SAPC were provided with all the appendices listed on page 2 of the Final Assessment Report and Executive Summary. These appendices constitute the basis for reviewing the process that was followed and assessing the appropriateness of the outcomes.

These appendices are not therefore included with the documentation for Senate. They can, however, be made available to Senators should they so wish.

Major modifications described in the Action Plan, contained within the Final Assessment Report, are subject to approval by the Carleton University Committee on Quality Assurance, the Senate Committee on Curriculum, Admission, and Studies Policy, the Senate Academic Program Committee (SAPC) and Senate as outlined in articles 7.5.1 and 5.1 of Carleton's IQAP.

Once approved by Senate, the Final Assessment Report, Executive Summary and Action Plan will be forwarded to the Ontario Universities' Council on Quality Assurance and to Carleton's Board of Governors for information. The Executive Summary and Action Plan will be posted

on the website of Carleton University's Office of the Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President (Academic), as required by the provincial Quality Assurance Framework and Carleton's IQAP.

Senate Motion April 27, 2018

THAT Senate approve the Final Assessment Report and Executive Summary arising from the Cyclical Review of the undergraduate programs in Religion.

**CARLETON UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON
QUALITY ASSURANCE**

**Cyclical Review of the undergraduate program in Religion
Executive Summary and Final Assessment Report**

This Executive Summary and Final Assessment Report of the cyclical review of Carleton's BA program in Religion is provided pursuant to the provincial Quality Assurance Framework and Carleton's Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The BA program in Religion is administered by the University's College of the Humanities, an academic unit in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

As a consequence of the review, the program was categorised by the Carleton University Committee on Quality Assurance (CUCQA) as receiving **GOOD QUALITY** (Carleton's IQAP, articles 7.2.12 and 7.2.13.2).

The External Reviewers' Report, submitted to the College of Humanities on January 4, 2016, offered a positive assessment of the programs and made a number of recommendations for the continuing enhancement of the programs. These recommendations were addressed by the Director of the College of Humanities and the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, in a response to the External Reviewers' Report that was submitted to CUCQA on April 27, 2016. Concerns raised by CUCQA were addressed in a second report provided by the unit on June 16, 2017.

An Action Plan detailing how, when, and by whom the recommendations will be implemented was received and approved by CUCQA on February 28, 2018.

FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

Introduction

The BA program in Religion is administered by the University's College of Humanities, an academic unit of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. This review was conducted pursuant to the Quality Assurance Framework and Carleton's Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP). As a consequence of the review, the program was categorised by the Carleton University Committee on Quality Assurance (CUCQA) as being of **GOOD QUALITY**. (Carleton's IQAP 7.2.12).

The site visit for this cyclical program review took place on November 9th and 10th, 2016 and was conducted by Dr. Richard S. Ascough, Queen's University, and Dr. Arthur McCalla, Mount Saint Vincent University. The reviewers met with Dr. André Loiselle, Assistant Vice-President (Academic), Dr. Catherine Khordoc, Interim Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Dr. Farhang Rajaei, Director of the College of the Humanities, Dr. Zeba Crook, Program Coordinator, Program Faculty, Contract Instructors and undergraduate students.

This Final Assessment Report provides a summary of:

- Strengths of the programs
- Challenges faced by the programs
- Opportunities for program improvement and enhancement
- The Outcome of the Review
- The Action Plan

This report draws on eight documents:

- The Self-study developed by members of the College of Humanities (Appendix A)
- The Report of the External Review Committee (Appendix B).
- Communication from CUCQA regarding the outcome of the external review (Appendix C)
- The response from the Director and Assistant Director, and the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences to the Report of the External Review Committee (Appendix D).
- The internal discussant's recommendation report (Appendix E).
- The communication from CUCQA regarding the outcome of the review (Appendix F).
- The program's Action Plan (Appendix G)
- The acceptance by CUCQA of the Action Plan (Appendix H)

Appendix I contains brief biographies of the members of the External Review Committee.

This Final Assessment Report contains the Action Plan (Appendix G) agreed to by the Director of the College of Humanities and the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, regarding the implementation of recommendations for program enhancement to have been advanced as a consequence of the cyclical program review process.

The Action Plan provides an account of who is responsible for implementing the agreed upon recommendations, as well as of the timelines for implementation and reporting.

Strengths of the programs

General

CUCQA noted from the External Reviewers' Report that: "the learning outcomes for the various programs are clearly stated, appropriately designed and structured, and meet University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations." The Committee also noted from the report that: "our visit leaves us in no doubt that the Program provides its students with a good educational experience."

Faculty

The External Reviewers' Report indicates "the faculty complement status quo is sustainable but to thrive as a combined teaching and research unit will require additional FT faculty."

Students

The external reviewers' commented "the student survey responses and our face-to-face interview with undergraduates during our visit leave us in no doubt that the Program provides its students with a good educational experience."

Curriculum

The External Reviewers noted that "the revitalized BA and the new minors made possible by the renewal of Program faculty over the last decade are structured by a blend of 'tradition-based' courses and 'thematic courses'."

Challenges faced by the programs

The principal concerns raised by the external reviewers were: the number of courses offered by the program; an overly heavy reliance on contract instructors; the structure of the program and the manner in which the curriculum is determined on an annual basis; and student advising. The external reviewers viewed these issues as being integrally related.

Opportunities for program improvement and enhancement

A memo provided to the unit by the Office of the Vice- Provost and Associate Vice-President dated January 4, 2016 identified the following recommendations based on the External Reviewers' report:

1. *That there be greater financial transparency in how resources are allocated across the College of Humanities.*
2. *That the Religion Faculty move towards including clearly stated Learning Objectives and linked Outcomes in all undergraduate syllabi as the mechanism through which student learning is assessed and monitored.*
3. *That the Program's website delineate undergraduate courses offered on a regular basis (annually or biannually) from courses offered occasionally or rarely. The Program should aim to reduce or eliminate many of the latter courses and with particular attention to reducing dependence on C/S.*

4. *That the Program improve student engagement by upgrading advising, communication, and the Program's web page.*
5. *That the Program expand the dedicated Religion Program Writing Lab.*

The second report, requested by CUCQA, required the unit to address the following items:

1. *The program's learning outcomes should be revisited to ensure that they are appropriate to a program that is structured 'from the perspective of its students,' and not predominantly according to the teaching preferences of faculty.*
2. *The structure of the program should then be revisited to determine if it should be more focused than is currently the case in order to effectively achieve the program-level learning outcomes. It may be that the number of required courses could be increased, or it may be that more guidance through the program could be afforded students in terms of concentrations or identified pathways.*
3. *A curriculum mapping exercise should then be undertaken to ensure that all courses adequately serve the program's learning outcomes and attendant structure, and are necessary and desirable for these outcomes to be achieved.*
4. *The number of courses thus identified should ensure that the courses can be offered on a regular basis during the lifetime of a student in the program. In thus determining the character and number of courses, attention should be paid to the number of contract instructors required to deliver the program. It is expected that the number of contract instructors necessary to deliver the program will be reduced significantly as a consequence of this exercise.*

The Outcome of the Review

As a consequence of the review, the BA in Religion was categorised by the Carleton University Committee on Quality Assurance (CUCQA) as being of **GOOD QUALITY** (Carleton's IQAP 7.2.12).

The Action Plan

The recommendations that were put forward as a result of the review process were addressed by the Director of the College of Humanities and the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences in a response to the External Reviewers' Report that was considered by CUCQA on April 27, 2016. Concerns raised by CUCQA were addressed in a second report provided by the unit on June 16, 2017. An Action Plan detailing how, when and by whom the recommendations will be implemented was received and approved by CUCQA on February 28, 2018. The unit responded to all of the recommendations and issues, and has provided an ongoing plan for action and consideration on all items except for recommendation #1 and #5. Regarding recommendation #1, the Religion Program is administered in the same manner as all programs in the College of the Humanities. The specific resource issue identified by the External Reviewers, supplying faculty for two BHum courses, has been resolved; these courses are now open to Religion students. Regarding recommendation #5, the College of the Humanities is able to continue the Religion Program Writing Lab, however, will not expand the program, as additional resources are not available for expansion currently.

It is to be noted that Carleton's IQAP provides for the monitoring of action plans. A joint report will be submitted by the academic unit(s) and Faculty Dean(s), and forwarded to CUCQA for its review. In the case of the BA program in Religion the majority of monitoring will be achieved by means of an update on the Action Plan, which is expected by June 30th, 2019.

The Next Cyclical Review

The next cyclical review of the BA program in Religion will be conducted during the 2021-22 academic year.

DATE: January 31, 2018

TO: Dr. Lorraine Dyke, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President (Academic); Chair,
Carleton University Committee on Quality Assurance

FROM: Dr. Shane Hawkins, Director, College of the Humanities

CC: Dr. Wallace Clement, Interim Dean of FASS
Dr. Richard Mann, Associate Dean of FASS (Curriculum, Programs and Planning)
Christina Noja, Manager, Office of the Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President
(Academic)
Tiffany Douglas, Program Review Officer, Office of the Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-
President (Academic)

RE: **Religion BA Action Plan**

As requested in the September 7, 2017 memo from Dr. Lorraine Dyke, this Action Plan takes into account the issues identified by the external review and those subsequently identified by CUCQA, particularly in the memo of May 16th, 2016 from Dr. John Shepherd. We have also taken to heart a suggestion made in the same September 7, 2017 memo: "CUCQA also recognizes that Religion has already made progress on many of the recommendations, as outlined in their reports. This should allow the Action Plan to be succinct on such items, summarizing the steps taken."

Recommendations made by the external reviewers:

1. Recommendation: That there be greater financial transparency in how resources are allocated across the College of Humanities.

This recommendation was made in the context of College governance. The specific items noted by the external reviewers were: "The Religion Program has no control over its budget; it can be difficult to obtain accurate data for the Religion Program alone; and the necessity of supplying faculty for two BHum courses (from which Religion students are excluded) is a drain on faculty resources." It is true that the current Director of the College does not come from the Religion program, and it might be said therefore that Religion does not control the budget for the Religion program. Since, however, Religion is housed in the College and is administered, like the other College programs, by a Director whom it has recommended to the Dean through a collegial selection process, there is really no question of it controlling this budget. On the other hand, the Religion Program does have access to a significant endowment (Davidson Fund), and faculty members do control its funds. The issue of supplying faculty for two BHum courses has now been resolved by opening those courses to Religion students.

Steps to be taken: None

Personnel responsible: N/A

2. Recommendation: That the Religion Faculty move towards including clearly stated Learning Objectives and linked Outcomes on all undergraduate syllabi as the mechanism through which student learning is assessed and monitored.

Steps to be taken: The exercise of formulating Learning Objectives and linked Outcomes for the BA program was included in our June 16th Report to CUCQA. We will now move toward the goal of including these as a part of the undergraduate syllabi in the program, with a goal of including them in all most of our syllabi for the 2018-19 academic year.

Personnel responsible: Religion undergraduate coordinator, Religion faculty

3. Recommendation: That the Program's website delineate undergraduate courses offered on a regular basis (annually or biannually) from courses offered occasionally or rarely. The Program should aim to reduce or eliminate many of the latter courses with particular attention to reducing dependence on CIs.

Steps to be taken: None. This list has been created and is now posted on our website: <https://carleton.ca/religion/undergraduate-courses/> Courses rarely offered have been removed from our Calendar entry through the curriculum changes process. Courses to be offered in the 2018/2019 academic year have been carefully chosen to reflect those most necessary for meeting the degree requirements.

Personnel responsible: N/A

4. Recommendation: That the Program improve student engagement by upgrading advising, communication, and the Program's web page.
In the June 16th report we outlined two actions for meeting this recommendation. One was a process of mandated individual March advising, and the other was fostering an active Religion Student Society.

Steps to be taken:

- 1) We will divide up the students among our faculty members and have each member contact the students to set up advising meetings in March. At the meetings, faculty members will let students know what courses will be offered in the coming year, and ensure that the students understand the state of their audit and what is required for them to graduate. We will also encourage Religion minors to attend such meetings.

- 2) We will actively look for students who might take the initiative with faculty support to form a student society for Religion. Such a society would help students develop a sense of community with each other and facilitate interaction between students and faculty.

Personnel responsible: Religion undergraduate coordinator, Religion faculty

5. Recommendation: That the Program expand the dedicated Religion Program Writing Lab. The College has been able to continue this program, which is funded almost entirely through ODFASS, but there are not resources available to expand the program at this time.

Steps to be taken: None.

Personnel responsible: N/A

In the May 16, 2016 memo sent on behalf of CUCQA from Dr. John Shepherd regarding the Outcome of the Cyclical Program Review for the BA Program in Religion, the CUCQA committee identified several issues of concern to which it asked the program to respond in our report of June 16, 2017. These issues were the following:

Issue #1: Structure of the program and the manner in which the curriculum is determined on an annual basis

As related in the June 16, 2017 Religion report, (under “4. Structure of the Program,” p. 10-15) the Religion program proposed a series of steps to restructure the Religion BA and thereby ensure breadth of knowledge, achieve program-level learning outcomes, respond to student requests regarding course content, and to regularize course offerings. This initiative involved numerous changes to the calendar. All of the proposed changes have been made and the program has been restructured as indicated in the report. Calendar changes are currently working their way through the university’s system for approval.

Steps to be taken: none
Personnel responsible: N/A

Issue #2: Curriculum mapping of Program Learning Outcomes

Steps to be taken: None. This exercise was completed and included in the June 16th report.
Personnel responsible: N/A

Issue #3: The number of courses in the calendar

One of CUCQA’s major concerns was the large number of courses offered by the program. We responded in the June 16th report: We conducted a review of all the courses that have been taught in the BA over the last five years, and determined which courses could not be offered by existing full-time faculty in a meaningful timeframe. We have identified 19 such courses to be removed from the calendar. A further 6 language courses can be subsumed under a generic language tutorial course code. The proposed changes will bring the total number of RELI courses in the calendar down from 89 to 64. An additional 5 of these are cross-listed courses, which are therefore neither controlled nor taught by the Religion Program. This brings the number of courses in the Religion BA down to 59.

Steps to be taken: None.
Personnel responsible: N/A

Issue #4: Reliance on contract instructors

As noted in the June 16th report, we are pleased to note that the program received two limited-term Instructors (Jewish Studies: one year; East Asian Studies: two year), whose teaching load will be 3/4. Our CI request for 2018-19 has been reduced to 4.5 credits from 8.5 the previous year (2016-17) and 7.5 in 2015-16.

Steps to be taken: None
Personnel Responsible: N/A

Recommendation	Steps to be taken and timeline	Personnel responsible
1. That there be greater financial transparency in how resources are allocated across the College of Humanities.	None.	N/A
2. That the Religion Faculty move towards including clearly stated Learning Objectives and linked Outcomes on all undergraduate syllabi as the mechanism through which student learning is assessed and monitored.	The exercise of formulating Learning Objectives and linked Outcomes for the BA program was included in our June 16 th Report to CUCQA. We have now move toward the goal of including these as a part of the undergraduate syllabi in the program, with a goal of including them in all of our syllabi for the 2018-19 academic year.	Religion undergraduate coordinator, Religion faculty
3. That the Program's website delineate undergraduate courses offered on a regular basis (annually or biannually) from courses offered occasionally or rarely. The Program should aim to reduce or eliminate many of the latter courses with particular attention to reducing dependence on CIs.	None.	N/A
4. That the Program improve student engagement by upgrading advising, communication, and the Program's web page. In the June 16 th report we outlined two actions for meeting this recommendation. One was a process of mandated individual March advising, and the other was fostering an active Religion Student Society.	1) We will divide up the students among our faculty members and have each member contact the students to set up advising meetings in March. At the meetings, faculty members will let students know what courses will be offered in the coming year, and ensure that the students understand the state of their audit and what is required for them to graduate. We will also encourage Religion minors to attend such meetings. 2) We will actively look for students who might take the initiative with faculty support to form a student society for Religion. Such a society would help students develop a sense of community with each other and facilitate interaction between students and faculty.	Religion undergraduate coordinator, Religion faculty
5. That the Program expand the dedicated Religion Program Writing Lab.	None. The College has been able to continue this program, which is funded almost entirely through ODFASS, but there are not	N/A

	resources available to expand the program at this time.	
Issue #1: Structure of the program and the manner in which the curriculum is determined on an annual basis.	None.	N/A
Issue #2: Curriculum mapping of Program Learning Outcomes.	None.	N/A
Issue #3: The number of courses in the calendar.	None.	N/A
Issue #4: Reliance on contract instructors.	None.	N/A