

Year 1 (2026) - FAR Implementation Report

Applied Disability Studies

Graduate Programs

(reviewed 2024/25)

Recommendation #1: Curricular Integration & Representation. Ensure that the courses required by both ABA and LDCC students are inclusive to students from both programs and have application within both fields.

Supporting/clarifying text: A strength of this program is the overlapping experiences of ABA and LDCC students. Learning together can help both groups within their professions as they are learning how each other can impact and improve the lives of individuals with intellectual and developmental disability. It is important for their combined courses to celebrate both disciplines to avoid inadvertent messages that one program is prioritized over the other program. To help achieve this, we recommend (1) Faculty collaboration on course design. Encourage the co-development or guest lectures across faculty from ABA and LDCC to ensure mutual representation in required coursework. (2). Cross-program case studies and readings. Ensure syllabi reflect contributions from both disciplines and that assignments require students to apply concepts from both lenses. (3). Offer optional cross-disciplinary projects or symposia where students explore intersections between ABA and LDCC. (4) Consider utilizing the Centre for Pedagogical Innovation to provide feedback on course syllabi/learning objects in the promotion of content from both fields. (5) Consider offering more professional development opportunities in LDCC content so there is similar representation between the two programs.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee expects that the Department will move forward as appropriate to enhance curricular integration and representation.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2025-26.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Short action statements for each				
Action #1 Update and improve our MA Proseminar course (ADST 5N01).	Department	C		
Action #2 Offer shared courses (e.g., ADST 5P00, ADST 5P50, ADST 5P10) where students from both disciplines can learn together and from each another.	Department	C		

Action #3 Develop an ADS Graduating Students Conference Day for LDCC and ABA graduating students.	Faculty members teaching the ABA and LDCC capstone courses	T		
Action #4 Discuss professional development opportunities for ABA and LDCC students to foster cross-specialization learning (e.g., symposia, review of course syllabi learning objectives, directed studies courses).	Department	O		

*On Target (T), Delayed (D), Complete (C), Complete and Ongoing (O)

Comments 2026:

ADST 5N01, a now required and on-load course for our ABA & LDCC students, was updated and improved to enable ABA and LDCC students to share knowledge and learn about the two unique disciplines in ADS.

For students in the final year of their programs, we developed an ADS Graduating Students Conference Day for LDCC and ABA graduating students to have an opportunity to foster cross-specialization learning. The first conference was on April 25, 2026.

The Department discussed professional development opportunities to foster cross-specialization learning at the ADS Annual Retreat on June 19, 2025, and will continue to do so at future annual retreats and department meetings.

Recommendation #2: Strategic Planning. Develop and disseminate strategic plans for ABA and LDCC programs.

Supporting/clarifying text: The review team would like the program to (1) Dedicate time to developing a 5-year strategic planning for the growth of ABA and LDCC programs (e.g., expansion of undergraduate program, hiring faculty, additional services in the community). (2) Use data from this review process (e.g., this report, self-study, student feedback) to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats within each program to help develop the strategic plan. (3) After developing the plan, host sessions with students, faculty, adjunct faculty, and instructors, reviewing the process, program developments, and rationales for immediate and future investments. (4) Host sessions at regular intervals (e.g., annually) to report progress and any changes to the strategic plan.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee expects that the Department will move forward, as appropriate, to develop and disseminate strategic plans.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2025-26.

Actions Short action statements for each	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Engage a strategic visioning session with CPI at the ADS Annual Retreat on June 19, 2025.	Chair, Department	C		
Action #2 Continue strategic planning work at the upcoming ADS Annual Retreat on June 18, 2026.	Department	T		
Action #3 Continue strategic planning work at the 2027 ADS Annual Retreat.	Department	T		

*On Target (T), Delayed (D), Complete (C), Complete and Ongoing (O)

Comments 2026:

The ADS Chair worked with CPI to lead an academically focused strategic planning session at our 2025 retreat, during which CPI guided the department through strategic road mapping, with a specific focus on our master’s programs.

For our department’s 2026 annual retreat, the Chair has already met with the Communications Officer, Strategic Initiatives from the FOSS Dean’s Office for resources and support to develop a plan to formalize a strategic planning session at the retreat. The four-year plan exercise recently implemented by the Provost entails planning ahead.

Recommendation #3: Be transparent internally with resource allocation as decisions are made.

Supporting/clarifying text: The review team would like the program to continue to work with department and university leadership to ensure that all faculty and students have adequate resources and space (e.g., office, clinic space, lab space) to be successful. As decisions are made consider the following ways of being transparent in how decisions are made. Clarify the basis for new resources. When one program receives more funding (e.g., due to external grants or accreditation needs), explain this openly and share plans for future investments in other programs. Be mindful so that students/faculty from one program are not consistently getting fewer resources (e.g., forgoing lab space, sharing spaces). The responses from the student survey that was submitted in Volume III include statements that suggest that ABA students/faculty needs are prioritized.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted. Although resources are outside of the purview of the Committee, ARC believes that the Department in consultation with the Dean is best positioned to determine appropriate strategies to ensure more transparency around resource allocations.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2025-26.

Actions Short action statements for each	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Continue work toward developing the ADS “clinic”.	Department	T		
Action #2 Faculty members to use bookable space (BRIC & Burlington campus) for additional research needs (e.g., clinical/community research).	Department	O		
Action #3 Work with the Dean’s Office to ensure that faculty office and lab space needs are met.	Department Chair and Dean	C		

*On Target (T), Delayed (D), Complete (C), Complete and Ongoing (O)

Comments 2026:

The department continues to work toward developing the ADS “clinic” (currently named BRIDGE Services) with continued support and direction from the Dean’s Office. ADS faculty members (department chair, BRIDGE committee co-chairs) and the Associate Dean Graduate and Research in the Faculty of Social Science met throughout Year 1 of the FAR to discuss the upcoming launch (challenges, opportunities, logistics, financial support). We will continue to meet with the Associate Dean to discuss the BRIDGE as a setting for students across both specializations to access experiential learning opportunities (clinical practica and community internships), to help mitigate any perceived imbalance in resource allocation. All faculty members now have designated office space.

Recommendation #4: Continue to foster student/faculty cohesion and recognition by creating opportunities for collaboration.

Supporting/clarifying text: One benefit of having an interdisciplinary program like yours is that graduate students are engaged in interdisciplinary collaboration and learn how others are choosing to impact the field of disability. Fostering collaboration (e.g., research, class projects) and cohesion among students as they go through the program may lay a foundation for them to work together after graduation to advocate and change policies/services for individuals with disabilities. A cross-program mentorship group (e.g., monthly/quarterly meetings for professional learning, well-being activities, discussion/dissemination of current activities, professional advisement) may further help to build relationships among students and faculty from each program. Consider expanding the LDCC conference day that showcases graduating LDCC students to include graduating ABA students, perhaps making it a Disability Studies conference bringing together all students.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee expects that the Department will determine appropriate strategies to foster cohesion and cross-specializations collaboration, noting that this recommendation is closely related to that of number 1.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2025-26.

Actions Short action statements for each	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Continue supporting the Student Engagement and Wellness (SEW) committee.	Department	O		
Action #2 Continue to develop and offer cross-specialization opportunities for students and faculty members.	Department	O		

*On Target (T), Delayed (D), Complete (C), Complete and Ongoing (O)

Comments 2026:

As described in our self-study, our Student Engagement and Wellness (SEW) committee is a student-driven and faculty-supported initiative designed to promote student wellness and participation as students progress through their respective programs. The SEW committee includes students from both specializations to foster cohesion.

ADS faculty members who teach across both specializations also continue to collaborate and support interdisciplinarity in the department (e.g., cross-specialization co-supervisions, ADS Graduating Students Conference Day).

Recommendation #5: Ensure representation in departmental decision-making activities (e.g., hiring committees) and departmental events (e.g., invited speakers) from faculty/instructors and students from all programs.
<i>Supporting/clarifying text:</i> Comments within the student surveys and interviews indicated that invited speakers are primarily working in the field of Applied Behavior Analysis. Although content from these talks were still applicable to the LDCC students, we recommend ensuring some invited talks each year are from individuals whose work and research would be closely aligned with the LDCC students.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee expects that the Department will determine appropriate strategies to ensure representation from all programs.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)	
Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2025-26.

Actions Short action statements for each	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Post ADS Hangout announcements (e.g., speaker events) to students and faculty members for opportunities relevant to ABA, LDCC, and both specializations.	Department	O		
Action #2 Involve faculty members and students across both specializations in decision-making activities (e.g., program committees, event planning, speaker engagements) relevant to the department.	Chair/Department	O		

*On Target (T), Delayed (D), Complete (C), Complete and Ongoing (O)

Comments 2026:

Throughout the year, ADS has informed students about various speakers and training opportunities that were expected to be of interest to a specific or both specializations. The department will continue to seek speakers more closely aligned with LDCC student interests as a way to address perceived equity issues between the ABA and LDCC specializations.

Recommendation #6: The department should continue to support faculty and leadership development and consider requiring faculty and instructors to take targeted professional development through the Centre of Pedagogical Innovation to ensure their courses are accessible and utilize principles of universal design for learning.

Supporting/clarifying text: Some faculty have utilized Brock’s Centre of Pedagogical Innovation (CPI) to improve their instructional methods. Students reported in their survey that was included in Volume III of the Self-Study that some of their coursework and required technology were inaccessible and didn’t follow principles in universal design. We recommend working with faculty to offer professional development on equity when teaching in interdisciplinary programs, including how perceptions of value and importance are shaped. Additionally, consider identifying and requiring specific professional development offered through the Centre and/or other entities for the promotion of accessible teaching and learning (e.g., universal design) so that faculty are prepared to provide an environment that better meets the needs of all students.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted. The Committee encourages the Department to work with the Centre for Pedagogical Innovation to determine appropriate strategies to move forward on this issue while recognizing Collective Agreements.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2025-26.

Actions Short action statements for each	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Organize a departmental Universal Design for Learning (UDL) session with CPI.	Chair/Department	C		
Action #2 Share CPI resources and professional training opportunities with part-time instructors.	Chair	O		

*On Target (T), Delayed (D), Complete (C), Complete and Ongoing (O)

Comments 2026:

CPI facilitated a session at a 2025-26 department meeting on Universal Design for Learning. Upcoming sessions to support continued engagement with enhancing course design will be discussed. In our ABA and LDCC committees and department meetings, further discussion of individual course design will further promote accessible teaching and learning.

Recommendation #7: Faculty should revisit the learning objectives of quantitative statistics for students completing a thesis.

Supporting/clarifying text: Students described different experiences when taking the quantitative statistics course, with some being required to learn how to use SPSS to answer research questions and others understanding the history of the development of statistics. Students also expressed concern in not having the necessary prerequisites to use SPSS prior to the course, making the course more challenging. We recommend re-evaluating the learning objectives of the course and ensuring that students have the necessary pre-requisites to be successful. If the learning objective for both ABA and LDCC program students is to build fluency and understanding of quantitative statistics, and using SPSS to conduct computations, we recommend offering an introduction to SPSS so that all students have the prerequisite skills to utilize SPSS in the course. This could be offered in pro-seminar prior to the students needing to take the course. Additionally, if this is the goal for students from both programs, the course should include examples/problems within both fields of study so that both students are learning the application to both fields.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted. The Committee advises the Department to work with the Centre for Pedagogical Innovation to determine appropriate strategies to revisit the learning objectives of quantitative statistics.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean, with the support of CPI
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2025-26.

Actions Short action statements for each	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Enhance ADST 5P10 to promote cross-specialization connection to course content.	Department/ Faculty member teaching 5P10	C		
Action #2 Review ADST 5P10 learning objectives with CPI.	Department	T		

*On Target (T), Delayed (D), Complete (C), Complete and Ongoing (O)

Comments 2026:

From our departmental response on the FAR:

“Our core ADS faculty member, who regularly teaches the course, provides examples and problems spanning both areas of study. However, she mentioned that, previously, she included more ABA examples, as she featured examples from some of her own published and in-progress research. At the same time, students are regularly asked to share their research experiences, allowing for varied examples to be incorporated into class activities. That said, the instructor has made significant attempts to increase the examples and data sets for projects to focus on more generic issues. These recent changes may not be reflected in the feedback provided if students from the current year course were not part of the interviews, as they would not have been in the program at the time of the surveys.”

Recommendation #8: Faculty and instructors should ensure that all students are receiving and completing adequate prerequisites to utilize the library.

Supporting/clarifying text: Require all new students to Brock to complete the Brightspace tutorial on library resources (perhaps a part of orientation or a pro-seminar), so that they are aware of how to use library resources, including consultation from the librarian.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee encourages the Department to continue its efforts in moving forward on this issue recognizing that it is related to the implementation of recommendation 9.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving: Department
 Responsible for resources: Department/Dean
 Responsible for implementation: Department/Dean
 Timeline: Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2025-26.

Actions Short action statements for each	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Post the ADS Library Tutorial on the ADS Hangout (Brightspace).	Department	C		

Action #2 Include the ADS Library Tutorial as a required task for all ABA and LDCC students in their first semester (5P70 and 5P14 for ABA and LDCC students, respectively).	Department	C		
Action #3 Discuss other opportunities for students to engage with library resources (e.g., in-class session from Librarian, complete library tutorials) at key points in their program beyond the first semester ADS Library Tutorial expectation.	Department	T		

*On Target (T), Delayed (D), Complete (C), Complete and Ongoing (O)

Comments 2026:

Our ADS Library Tutorial continues to be a required component of our master’s programs across both specializations, which was created with members of the Library team. In line with the Dean’s response, we will consider other critical points in students’ programs when intentional contact with library resources is helpful to students’ skill development.

Recommendation #9: Faculty and instructors should ensure that all students receive syllabi, assignments, grading criteria in a uniform and timely manner.

Supporting/clarifying text: Students raised concerns that syllabi and assignments were not available in a timely manner prior to weekend classes, making it challenging for them to prepare adequately. Additionally, in the survey included in the self-study, 23% of the surveyed students disagreed with the statement that “Grading is generally fair and well explained.” The following steps are recommended (1) Consider having a standard syllabus for all courses taught by adjunct and part-time faculty/instructors to ensure that all students, no matter who the instructor, are accessing the same content and achieving the same learning objectives. This may also help ensure that if there is difficulty filling a position to teach a course, the students still receive the syllabus at the beginning of the semester and are able to prepare for the weekend in-person courses within a reasonable time frame. (2) Be transparent with students when there is a teaching assistant in the course who is completing the grading. Continue to forbid masters-level students from the same cohort grading their peers’ assignments. (3) On each syllabus, remind students of tools available to help them access library resources (e.g., tutorial on Brightspace, Research Guide for Applied Disabilities Studies) and a method for utilizing the consultation resources in the library.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee expects that the Department will move forward, utilizing the supports mentioned by the Dean, to ensure that all students receive syllabi, assignments, grading criteria in a uniform and timely manner.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2025-26.

Actions Short action statements for each	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Provide students will course syllabi and assignment information with adequate time to prepare.	Department	T		
Action #2 Communicate with part-time instructors to ensure students receive course syllabi and assignment information with adequate time to prepare.	Chair	T		

*On Target (T), Delayed (D), Complete (C), Complete and Ongoing (O)

Comments 2026:

“Adequate time” depends on various factors, including the format of the class (e.g., weekly format vs. intensive weekend format) and the expectations for the first class (e.g., pre-class work or not). Timely posting of course syllabi continues to be discussed among ADS faculty members.

Timing for hiring part-time instructors and their experience with Brightspace may create barriers to students’ access to course materials, including the timing of when students receive the syllabus before the first class. Generally, faculty members in our department who teach the same course across different course sections kindly offer support. The Chair regularly directs part-time instructors to resources (e.g., CPI-developed self-paced Brightspace tutorials and workshops).

Recommendation #10: Faculty and instructors should consider gathering mid-course feedback from students on their experiences in the course.

Supporting/clarifying text: We applaud the faculty and course instructors for gathering feedback from students at the end of the semester. We recommend that faculty and course instructors also consider gathering feedback from their students during the semester so that students have an anonymous method for voicing strengths of the course and their concerns with the course, and the instructor can consider addressing concerns to improve the experience of the student.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted. The Committee believes that the Department is best positioned to determine appropriate strategies to move forward on gathering student feedback during the semester.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2025-26.

Actions Short action statements for each	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Encourage faculty members to implement formative assessments in their courses.	Department	T		
Action #2 Encourage faculty members to attend CPI professional development opportunities focused on formative evaluation methods.	Department	T		
Action #3 Discuss use of formative assessments at an upcoming department meeting.	Department	T		
Action #4 Include a section on formative assessments in our ADS part-time instructor manual.	Chair	T		

*On Target (T), Delayed (D), Complete (C), Complete and Ongoing (O)

Comments 2026:

As described in our FAR report, many faculty members incorporate formative assessments into their courses. We will continue to discuss these evaluation approaches in upcoming departmental discussions and encourage ADS faculty members’ participation at relevant upcoming CPI sessions.

Recommendation #11: Consider dissemination of outcomes of this innovative program.
<i>Supporting/clarifying text:</i> To our knowledge, Brock holds the only interdisciplinary ABA and Disability Studies program. This should be celebrated and disseminated for other higher education programs to learn from. To assist with this, we recommend summarizing outcome data for the ABA and LDCC programs (e.g., graduation rates, employment rates, where employed, professional service after graduation, satisfaction surveys). Disseminating how the program came to be and recommendations for beginning a joint ABA-Disabilities Studies program could be beneficial to our professional communities.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted. The Committee believes that the Department, in consultation with the Dean’s office, is best positioned to determine opportunities to disseminate outcomes.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)
Responsible for approving: Department
Responsible for resources: Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation: Department/Dean
Timeline: Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2025-26.

Actions Short action statements for each	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Disseminate department highlights on our unique programs to current and prospective students and community organizations and members.	Marketing & Recruitment Committee	T		
Action #2 Organize a 20-year ADS celebration.	ADS 20 th anniversary committee	T		

*On Target (T), Delayed (D), Complete (C), Complete and Ongoing (O)

Comments 2026:

As per our FAR, we are considering our 20-year anniversary in 2026 as a potential celebration of our department and could use this opportunity to update and share promotional materials with alumni, community members, and prospective students.

Recommendation #12: Solicit Community/practitioner input by creating a community advisory board. Consider inviting representatives, clients, and/or practitioners to be a part of this community advisory board.

Supporting/clarifying text: As another avenue for supporting Brock having an in-house clinic and ensuring that the program is meeting the needs of the community, we recommend revisiting creating an advisory board. They should meet twice a year to review program activities, assess liaisons with the community agencies to make certain the program services community needs and the agencies serve the program needs, and promote communication with community agencies and policy agencies. This activity could also be a great learning experience for both masters-level and doctoral-level graduate students as they may be able to help under the supervision of department leadership with organizing, hosting discussions, etc.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted for consideration. The Committee believes that the Department, in consultation with the Deans, is best positioned to determine whether to move forward with establishing a community advisory board.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2025-26.

Actions Short action statements for each	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Establish a community advisory board.	Chair/Department	T		

*On Target (T), Delayed (D), Complete (C), Complete and Ongoing (O)

Comments 2026:

We have had departmental discussions throughout this first year about the importance of a community advisory board, particularly as we plan to launch community-facing services and supports at the BRIC (BRIDGE Services). The upcoming year (year 2 of FAR) will be an opportune time for the department to develop the Advisory Board Terms of Reference and plan for recruiting and engaging community members to advise and provide recommendations on our department’s short- and longer-term objectives.