



## Four Year Report (2022)

### Labour Studies Undergraduate Programs (reviewed 2017/18)

#### A. Summary of Review

This review was conducted under the terms and conditions of the IQAP approved by Senate on May 25, 2016.

1. The academic programs offered by the Department of Labour Studies which were examined as part of the review were:

- BA (Honours) in Labour Studies

- BA with Major in Labour Studies

- BA (Pass) in Labour Studies

- Minor in Labour Studies

- Certificate in Labour Studies

- Combined Honours and Pass in Labour Studies with: Economics, Geography, History, Political Science, Sociology, Women's and Gender Studies

- Combined BA with Major in Labour Studies with: Political Science, Sociology

2. The Review Committee consisted of two external reviewers: Kendra Strauss (Simon Fraser University) and Elaine Bernard (Harvard University) and an internal reviewer, Lynn Arner (Brock University).
3. The site visit occurred on February 11-13, 2018.
4. The Final Assessment Report was approved by Senate on Nov 14, 2018.

5. The reviewers assigned the programs the following outcome categories:

Program (s)	Excellent Quality	Good Quality	Good Quality with Concerns	Non-Viable
BA (Honours) in Labour Studies	X			
BA with Major in Labour Studies		X		
BA (Pass) in Labour Studies		x		
Minor in Labour Studies		X		
Certificate in Labour Studies			X	
Combined Honours and Pass in Labour Studies with: Economics, Geography, History, Political Science, Sociology, Women’s and Gender Studies		X		
Combined BA with Major in Labour Studies with: Political Science, Sociology		X		

6. The next review of the undergraduate programs in the Department of Labour Studies will be in 2025/26.

## B. Recommendations

### Recommendation #1

Departmental growth through expansion into new areas--health, environment, humanities, technology and the future of work--and faculty positions to support this new growth.

#### ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to explore departmental growth through expansion into new areas to be accepted. ARC considers the recommendation for additional faculty positions to lie outside the Committee’s jurisdiction and expects that the Department will proceed through normal channels of advocacy for these resources.

#### Implementation Plan (2<sup>nd</sup> Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2019/20

Actions	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Offer new course 'Psychology of Work' in spring 2019 and FW 2019-2020.	YEAR 1	YEAR 2
Action #2 Consider possible new course on Labour and Health at department retreat June, 2019; consider other additions and next steps, including possible cross-list of Psychology of Work course.	YEAR 2; YEAR 4	YEAR 2; Approval pending YEAR 4

### Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

A major curriculum review in the wake of the external review led to significant changes, including the introduction of LABR 2Q96 Labour and Health in 2020 and LABR 3P94 Psychology of Work in 2019. An initiative to cross-list LABR 3P94 with PSYC is pending approval at UPC as of December 2021. Both courses enjoy strong enrolments and the Department is continuously seeking opportunities to cross-list courses in order to expand offerings in new and novel ways. Recent cross-lists have been tentatively approved with History, Sociology, Canadian Studies, and Communications, Popular Culture and Film.

### Recommendation #2

Consultation on future and role of Program Committee (including governance structure and regulations)

#### ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation.

#### Implementation Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2018/19

Actions*	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Consultation with core faculty members.	YEAR 1	YEAR 1
Action #2 Revision of Rules and Procedures.	YEAR 1,2	YEAR 2,3

### Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

At its first retreat after the external review, the Department Committee discussed the role of faculty on the Department committee housed in Labour Studies versus the role of members of the Department committee housed in other units. The Department Committee determined that in keeping with the letter of the Collective Agreement and the spirit of collegial governance, that both groups shared the same rights and responsibilities. Rules and Procedures were revised to reflect the process for faculty members whose home department is not Labour Studies to serve on the Department Committee. The Department's governance structures were later revised in 2021 to incorporate provisions for determining teaching allocation and to establish four subcommittees to carry out the work of the Department. These subcommittees are 1) Timetable; 2) Resource; 3) Recruitment; and 4) Curriculum. The subcommittee structure has greatly enhanced the participation of faculty in the governance of the Department.

### Recommendation #3

Higher qualifications for instructors: PhD in hand preferred, or ABD (but currently enrolled in a doctoral program)

#### ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be not accepted as it lies outside the Committee's jurisdiction and has implications with respect to Collective Agreements between Brock University and its various labour groups.

#### Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted.

**Recommendation #4**

Higher educational credentials for T.A.s (MA students, including those beyond the first year of their MA programs, or MA in hand if not current graduate students)

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers the recommendation to be not accepted as it lies outside the Committee’s jurisdiction and has implications with respect to Collective Agreements between Brock University and its various labour groups.

**Implementation Plan**

Recommendation not accepted.

**Recommendation #5**

Development of student research skills (engagement with and integration of library and information services; methods and methodology, strategy on integrating methods and methodology, especially for Honours)

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted. It is expected that the development of student research skills will be addressed as part of the ongoing curriculum review by the Department.

**Implementation Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Priority)**

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2018/19

Actions*	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 New fourth year Honours seminar with significant research skills development component.	YEAR 1	YEAR 1
Action #2 Discuss additional strategies for implementing this recommendation at June, 2019 department retreat.	YEAR 2	Ongoing

**Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:**

The Department started discussing additional strategies for implementing this recommendation at its June 2019 department retreat and discussions continue at the level of the Curriculum sub-committee. In terms of concrete actions, the Department has introduced one additional 400-level honours course (LABR 4P41 Labour Law and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms) with advanced research skill training and expectations. The Department also continues to offer LABR 3P91 Labour Studies Theory and Methods on an annual basis.

**Recommendation #6**

Development of a fourth-year variable topics course to enhance fourth-year course offering

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted. It is expected that the development of a fourth-year variable topics course will be addressed as part of the ongoing curriculum review by the Department. It is noted that “variable” in this case does not refer to current Brock calendar language.

**Implementation Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Priority)**

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2018/19

Actions*	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 New fourth year course was created and offered.	YEAR 1	YEAR 1; ongoing

**Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:**

As noted, the Department has introduced a third 400-level course housed in Labour Studies, LABR 4P41 Labour Law and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. While the Department certainly requires additional 400 level options given that cross-listed courses housed in other Departments have been discontinued in recent years, budgetary constraints have prevented us from mounting a fourth-year variable topics course. We continue to lobby the Dean to allocate resources in a way that will allow the Department to take action on this recommendation.

**Recommendation #7**

Strategic review of certificate program and its purpose and audience

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted. It is expected that the review of the certificate program will be addresses as part of the curriculum review by the Department. The Department is expected to proceed through normal channels of advocacy for the resources to support this recommendation.

**Implementation Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Priority)**

Responsible for approving: Department  
 Responsible for resources: Department  
 Responsible for implementation: Department  
 Timeline: Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2018/19

Actions*	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Calendar changes made.	YEAR 1	YEAR 2
Action #2 Revived Certificate announced.	YEAR 2	YEAR 2

**Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:**

The Department completed a review of the Certificate and enacted changes for its revival through UPC. The Department also established the necessary internal ‘infrastructure’ (discussions with Admissions and Registrar, web site with Q & A for prospective students) and began to market the revived Certificate which allows greater flexibility for students, including those interested in part-time and/or online learning. A three-year ILTA was appointed July 1, 2019, as part of this initiative, and has become integral to the success of both the Certificate and the Department’s broader program offerings. In 2020, the Department also introduced a micro-certificate on Human Rights at Work to complement the full Certificate.

**Recommendation #8**

Build on initiatives on high school entry to create strategy for longer-term growth in direct entry (ambassadors)

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted. The Department is encouraged to work with other groups on campus (e.g. Recruitment, Marketing and Communications) in order to move this forward.

**Implementation Plan (2<sup>nd</sup> Priority)**

Responsible for approving: Department  
 Responsible for resources: Department  
 Responsible for implementation: Department  
 Timeline: Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2018/19

Actions*	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Discuss the role of students as ambassadors.	YEAR 1	YEAR 1
Action #2 Involve students at University recruitment events.	YEAR 1	YEAR 1; ongoing

**Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:**

The Department does not support asking students to perform unpaid labour. The Department has, however, made use of the Dean’s Discretionary Fund to hire student ambassadors to communicate with current and prospective majors for purposes of recruitment and retention and to attend open houses to speak directly with prospective students and their families.

**Recommendation #9**

Better information for student pathways after graduation

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation.

**Implementation Plan (2<sup>nd</sup> Priority)**

Responsible for approving: Department  
 Responsible for resources: Department  
 Responsible for implementation: Department  
 Timeline: Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2018/19



Actions*	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Web site updated to provide details.	YEAR 1	YEAR 2
Action #2 Collaborating with Co-op, Career & Experiential Education (CCEE) office.	YEAR 1	YEAR 3

### Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

The Department reorganized its website to include clear information about career paths for students and uses its social media channels to promote career opportunities. The Department has also worked constructively with CCEE staff to create new positions and tailored events for Labour Studies students.

### Recommendation #10

Long-term growth and retention needs long-term, dedicated, contiguous accessible space. This includes dedicated space for students to gather, which could help facilitate student engagement with other students.

#### ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be not accepted as it lies outside of the Committee's jurisdiction. It is expected that the Department will proceed through normal channels of advocacy for space resources.

#### Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted.

### Recommendation #11

Clear and timely information on funding and grant opportunities for faculty

#### ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be already current practice.

#### Implementation Plan

No action required.

## **C. Unit Summative Analysis and Evaluation**

### **1. To what extent has the Unit achieved the improvements suggested by the reviewers?**

The Department has enacted all but one of the improvements suggested by the reviewers. The one exception, the introduction of a 400-level variable topics course, has been stymied by budgetary constraints beyond our control.

### **2. What overall impact has it had on the Unit's programs?**

The review process and subsequent action items have unquestionably helped to improve the quality of the Department's programs. Curricular changes have enhanced student pathways and reinforced the Department's multidisciplinary strengths, internal governance reforms have helped to build more collegial and robust decision-making structures, and strategic UPC changes have led to greater enrolments.

### **3. Is the Unit adopting a process of continuous quality improvement for its programs?**

In 2020, the Department introduced a curriculum sub-committee and formalized its existence in 2021. We believe the establishment of this sub-committee contributes to a process of continuous quality improvement by structurally focusing attention on issues of curriculum and program coherence on a regular basis as opposed to once a year as part of the Department's UPC submission.

### **4. How well do the programs now align with Brock University strategic priorities?**

The programs offered by the Department of Labour Studies offer a transformational and accessible academic experience in line with the university's strategic plan. The co-op program, the multidisciplinary and social justice focus of our course offerings, the integration of experiential components into our programs, and the flexibility of degree pathways make our programs both accessible and unique in the province.

### **5. How does this review and its results position the programs as the Unit moves into the next review cycle?**

The external review process provided many great opportunities for introspection and quality improvement. We approached the process with an open mind and acted swiftly to implement all recommended changes within our purview. Overall, the experience was positive and our enrolments are at their highest levels in history. This bodes well for the future health of the Department and positions us well as we enter into the next review cycle.

## **D. ARC Final Summary**

In final summary of the 2017/18 cyclical academic review of the programs offered by the Department of Labour Studies, ARC will determine the following:

- 1. Have the Reviewers' Recommendations have been addressed satisfactorily?**  
YES
- 2. Has the Unit established a direction for next steps as it prepares for the next review cycle?**  
YES
- 3. Has the Unit achieved a broad-based, reflective and forward-looking self-assessment?**  
YES