

Political Science

Graduate and Undergraduate Review

Year 2 (2020) - FAR Implementation Report

(reviewed 2017/18)

Recommendation #1

Strategize hiring priorities

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. It is expected that the Department will work through normal channels of advocacy for any new faculty resources identified as a result of the strategic planning.

Implementation Plan (1st 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	Responsibility	Year One*	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Hold retreats on graduate and undergraduate program to consider ways of aligning program to university priorities.	Department	T	O	
Action #2 Craft Indigenous politics job ad to attract scholar with teaching and research interests in several key areas of the discipline.	Recruitment Committee	T	C	

Comments 2019:

The department held a retreat on the undergraduate program on August 22, 2018. The department held a retreat on the graduate program on January 11, 2019. These retreats have enabled the department to assess areas of priority for hiring new faculty. We have prepared a job ad for departmental approval. We will request other positions in the coming year.

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

Comments 2020:

The department has met several times this academic year to craft position requests in line with the University’s strategic priorities. Two probationary faculty position have been approved for posting. One is a Caribbean/Latin American specialist, partly to align with the creation of the Canada-Caribbean Institute at Brock. The other is an Indigenous politics scholar position. Both positions will enable the department to offer a wider breadth of courses. Further, the university wide goal of internationalization and make progress on decolonization, through mounting a certificate program in Indigenous Governance, for example.

Recommendation #2

Develop and promote a consistent Departmental “brand” that reflects current program strengths.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee understands that reflection on the Departmental identity in terms of strengths, sub-specialties, thematic areas and marketing would address this recommendation.

Implementation Plan (1st 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*	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Hold discussions about development of a departmental brand.	Department	0	0	
Action #2 The department will continue to review undergraduate and graduate programs with goal of crafting a distinct departmental identity.	Department	0	0	

Comments 2019:

First meeting to discuss this held August 22, 2018. Department will continue to make use of FOSS communications resources (e.g., Brock News, promotional materials, website.) This will also be the topic of our next retreat.

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

Comments 2020:

In this current period of faculty renewal, the department has not completed the branding exercise. With two retirements and two new faculty joining us in July, we anticipate much more progress on developing a departmental brand in the coming year.

Recommendation #3

Adopt a more holistic approach to curriculum planning.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

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

Implementation Plan (2nd 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	Responsibility	Year One*	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 The department is discussing the undergraduate program and the need to better integrate various subfields and create scaffolded course selection patterns	Department	0	0	

Comments 2019:

First discussion at retreat on August 22, 2018.

Comments 2020:

The department held a retreat on February 12, 2020 to consider changes to the undergraduate program to address this recommendation. We will be making revisions to the calendar to make explicit connections between courses.

Recommendation #4

Review the first-year course offerings to ensure that the twin mandate of recruitment into the program and the introduction of core concepts and ideas are met.

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

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The department is encouraged to undertake an ongoing process of curriculum review and revision, utilizing the curriculum map that was prepared for the cyclical review.

Implementation Plan (2nd 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	Responsibility	Year One*	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Meeting of first year course instructors held in fall term to discuss coordination of course content, requirements and new course development.	Chair	O	O	
Action #2 Department retreats will discuss first year offerings in context of broader discussion of undergraduate program.	Chair	O	T	

Comments 2019:

Department retreat held August 22, 2018 discussed first year offerings.

Comments 2020:

The Chair of the department met with some first year instructors individually to discuss course content and development. Our retreat on February 12, 2020 discussed first year offerings. We have explored the development of a first year course on Indigenous Politics in our interviews with candidates.

Recommendation #5

Continue to expand experiential learning options in current and new courses.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee understands that experiential learning opportunities are already embedded in both the undergraduate and graduate programs. Increased awareness of the wide range of experiential learning options would benefit both faculty and students.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving: Department

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

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

Actions	Responsibility	Year One*	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Amend course calendar descriptions to highlight courses with experiential elements.	Department	O	O	
Action #2 Investigate creation of a 2 nd year fall course that Model UN students could take to prepare them formally for Model UN meetings in March (annually).	Department	T	O	

Comments 2019:

None

Comments 2020:

Calendar descriptions are being altered to reflect addition of experiential components. We have not yet developed a course related to the Model UN.

Recommendation #6

Increase flexibility and experiential learning opportunities in graduate program[s] for graduates who do not intend to pursue academic careers.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted for consideration by the Department. The Committee understands that experiential learning opportunities benefit students in the graduate program who move on to both academic and non-academic careers.

Implementation Plan (1st 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

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

Actions	Responsibility	Year One*	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 The department will hold retreat to fully consider this recommendation	Department	T	T	

Comments 2019:

The incorporation of experiential learning in new graduate courses, or incorporated within existing ones, will be discussed at a department meeting in May. We will be seeking advice from Graduate Studies on best practices in graduate experiential learning.

Comments 2020:

We have not yet come to a consensus on wholesale changes of the graduate program to incorporate experiential learning. Instructors do so individually. We are also in a period of transition and renewal and such deliberations will continue.

Recommendation #7

Increase flexibility in the graduate program by expanding on cross-listed, transdisciplinary courses.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation as part of the curriculum review.

Implementation Plan (1st 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	Responsibility	Year One*	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Links maintained with other programs, especially the Humanities cross-disciplinary doctoral program.	Recruitment Committee	O	O	

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

Action #2 Hold retreat to discuss graduate program flexibility and cross-listing of courses.	Chair	T	O	
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Comments 2019:

None

Comments 2020:

We continue to maintain links with the Humanities doctoral program. Further discussion about changes to the graduate program will take place when we welcome out new colleagues in July.

Recommendation #8

Increased TA training and improved TA feedback.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation not to be accepted as it lies outside the jurisdiction of the Committee and has implications with respect to the Brock University/CUPE Collective Agreement. The Committee expects that improved TA training and feedback would be of benefit to the programs and encourages the use of existing University resources and programs in place to help facilitate this.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted.

Recommendation #9

Nominate outstanding staff.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to reflect existing practice.

Implementation Plan

No action required.