



# Four Year Report (2020)

## Recreation and Leisure Studies Undergraduate Programs (reviewed 2015/16)

### A. Summary of Review

This review was conducted under the terms and conditions of the IQAP approved by Senate on June 6, 2011.

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

Bachelor of Recreation and Leisure Studies (Honours and Pass) with specializations of Community Recreation, Outdoor Recreation or Therapeutic Recreation

2. The Review Committee consisted of Linda Caldwell (Pennsylvania State University), Corey Johnson (University of Waterloo) and Nancy Cook (Brock University).
3. The site visit occurred on January 27-29, 2016.
4. The Final Assessment Report was approved by Senate on October 5, 2016.
5. The reviewers assigned the programs an outcome category of “Good Quality with Concerns”.

Excellent Quality	Good Quality	Good Quality with Concerns	Non-Viable
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6. The next review of the undergraduate programs in the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies will be in 2023/24.

## B. Recommendations

### Recommendation #1.1

As a foundation for improving departmental climate, encourage and support faculty members to celebrate their clear, robust and shared passion for and commitment to student learning and praxis.

#### ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee recognizes the importance placed on this recommendation by the Reviewers, Department and Dean as foundational to the future success of the Department and the programs offered by the Department.

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

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean of Applied Health Sciences
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean of Applied Health Sciences
Timeline:	Dean of Applied Health Sciences to report by end of academic year 2016/17

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Explored appropriate / preferred ways to resolve emerging issues during Departmental Retreat	2016	2016
Action #2 Sought assistance from Dean, AD, BUFA, HR, OHRES on matters requiring intervention.	2016	2017
Action #3 Externally- led climate review	2018	Interim report received in Spring 2019

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

Addressing Departmental climate has been a highly sensitive and long-drawn process. In 2016, the FAHS AD (Undergraduate) was invited to the Departmental retreat to facilitate a discussion and strategy session on climate and curriculum-related issues. Unfortunately, this retreat did little to address the issues identified and experiences of faculty members in a substantive way. Issues of poor collegiality and disrespect continued through 2016 and 2017, with members and the Chair approaching OHRES with major concerns and members also showing little enthusiasm for participating in additional internally-led (Chair, AD) attempts to address issues.

In 2018, the Dean endorsed the initiation of an externally-led Climate Review and the process was undertaken beginning summer 2018, and was met with high engagement and hopefulness from members of the Department. The Climate Review process began to have a positive impact on Departmental culture within a few months. In March 2019, an interim report was released to the Department, which offered some analysis of the issues at hand and directions for moving forward. Since this time, the Department has continued to make significant progress in establishing a Departmental climate that is a safer, more respectful, and more collegial place to work. It is fair to say that compared to 2015, the Departmental climate has improved.

### Recommendation #1.2

Cultivate an overarching departmental identity among faculty and students, while at the same time nurturing more differentiated identities related to the three concentrations and the core.

#### ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee recognizes that this recommendation is closely aligned to #1.1.

#### Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving: Department

Responsible for resources: Department

Responsible for implementation: Department

Timeline: Dean of Applied Health Sciences to report by end of Academic year 2016/17

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Curriculum mapping - Departmental retreat	2016	2016
Action #2 Program revision submitted to APC	2016	2016
Action #3 College Articulation Agreements updated	2018	Ongoing
Action #4 Fulsome curriculum review facilitated by CPI	2019	2020

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

The recommendation of ‘cultivate an overarching departmental identity among faculty and students, while at the same time nurturing more differentiated identities related to the three concentrations and the core’ rightly suggests that in a program with multiple program concentrations there exists a balancing act between being identifying with the ‘whole’ versus

the various specialty areas. The listing of this item as a recommendation also reflects the tendency for the focus on specialty areas to overshadow the whole, and a need to find a more common ground.

This recommendation was addressed with a revision to the undergraduate curriculum that was submitted to APC in 2016, in which the program requirements were changed such that students were required to take courses in more than one concentration area prior to ‘branching off’, with course restrictions being revised to allow for this to happen more feasibly. Also, since 2016 the Department has not introduced any new courses to the undergraduate program that are intended to be ‘concentration-specific’. The elective courses that are scheduled are ones that appeal to the broad interests of students, which allows for greater student mixing and sharing of ideas and perspectives. We know that from a student perspective, these elective courses are appreciated for how they bring students with different interests and future goals together in ways that foster interesting dialogue and intellectual connections.

A smaller ongoing project that has also supports this recommendation is the updating of College Articulation Agreements so that the students who are admitted to the program are freer to choose the concentration area that is of interest to them and change concentrations if they so desire.

As of fall 2019, the Curriculum Committee has spearheaded a more fulsome review of the undergraduate curriculum, with the guidance and support of the Centre for Pedagogical Innovation. Through this review, we hope to produce an undergraduate program and curriculum that better serves the 21<sup>st</sup> Century student while also ensuring that learning objectives and experiential opportunities are scaffolded well. The Department anticipates a completion date of Spring 2020.

### **Recommendation #2.1**

Formalize which decisions should be made by senior administrators in the department and which should be made collectively, involving all faculty members.

#### **ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to describe current practice as found in the Faculty Handbook and Collective Agreement. The Committee believes that a review of Department governance documents in order to codify practices and improved communication around decision-making would address the intention of the reviewers in this recommendation.

#### **Implementation Plan (1st Priority)**

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Applied Health Sciences to report by end of academic year 2016/17

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

On the whole, Departmental procedures have remained fairly similar to how they were written at the time of the self-study. They are reviewed, submitted, and approved by the Department on an annual basis.

All decisions continue to be made at the full Departmental level, based on recommendations made by sub-committees. This is an approach that is well-suited to the expectations of collegial governance at Brock and the cultural norms of the unit.

**Recommendation #2.2**

Develop decision-making policies and procedures so that decisions are transparent and collectively made whenever possible. Focus in particular on policies and procedures relating to resource allocation, work-load distribution, sessional hiring and personnel issues.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to describe current practice. The Committee believes that a review of Department policies and procedures would address the intention of the reviewers in this recommendation.

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

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Applied Health Sciences to report by end Of academic year 2016/17

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

Departmental policies and procedures are at times onerous but workable. Some practices that were newly introduced and contentious in 2016 (e.g., e-voting) have since become clearer in how they are to be applied.

Efforts are being made to ensure that the processes set out for important Departmental matters (e.g., hiring, workload assignment) are clearly understood prior to embarking on any Departmental voting, for example by circulating materials to the Department with enough advance notice to allow for discussion and clarification to take place.

There has been an effort in the last year to improve the storage and retrieval of various Departmental materials, using the OneDrive and SharePoint platforms, and it has facilitated the Department's ability to work productively in its sub-committees and as a full Department.

The procedural issue that has recently arisen is conflict of interest and what this entails, however this is understandable given the vagueness of guiding policy and the changing university context. Disagreements are being resolved through the appropriate channels and the Department continues to move forward with conducting its business.

**Recommendation #2.3**

Support and provide developmental opportunities to the chair so they are strongly positioned to lead the department through this and other administrative processes.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to describe current practice. The Department is encouraged to take advantage of the support and developmental opportunities available to the chair.

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

Responsible for approving: Department  
 Responsible for resources: Department/Dean of Applied Health Sciences  
 Responsible for implementation: Department/Dean of Applied Health Sciences  
 Timeline: Dean of Applied Health Sciences to report by end of academic year 2016/17

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

Over the four years since the program review there have been two Departmental Chairs. Both have met with the Dean on a regular basis to discuss and resolve issues. The Associate Dean(s) have also been a source of support and information, as well as the other Chairs in the Faculty.

**Recommendation #3.1**

Identify gaps and overlaps in the curriculum.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee recognizes that recommendations 3.1 to 3.8 are linked as they all relate to curriculum review. The Committee would like to encourage the Department to undertake an ongoing process of curriculum review and revision.

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

Responsible for approving: Department  
 Responsible for resources: Department  
 Responsible for implementation: Department  
 Timeline: Dean of Applied Health Sciences to report by end of academic year 2017/18

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Undergraduate curriculum review and UPC changes submitted	2016	2016

Action #2 Integration of library resources into curriculum	2017	2017
Action #3 Undergraduate curriculum review	2019	2020

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

A review and revision of the undergraduate curriculum was one of the first undertakings upon receipt of the program review report. In 2016, the curriculum committee engaged in significant curriculum review and gaps and overlaps were identified as part of this process. Six courses were recommended for deletion. UPC changes related to curriculum gaps and overlap were submitted and approved during the fall of 2016 through the UPC process. These changes have had a positive impact on the program.

In 2017, we strategized our use of library services in our undergraduate curriculum, to ensure coverage without duplication.

The major undertaking of 2018/19 was been the climate review, and so any discussions of curriculum were set aside pending the results of this process, as there was a sense that the climate review recommendations would be tied to curriculum and specifically the program concentrations.

In fall 2019, the Department re-embarked on a more fulsome curriculum review with the leadership of the Centre for Pedagogical Innovation. We anticipate wrapping up this review in late spring 2020, with a submission to UPC in fall 2020.

### Recommendation #3.2

Identify redundancies in course content in the core curriculum (i.e. social psychology of leisure and sociology of leisure).

#### ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. See also the ARC Disposition for recommendation 3.1.

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

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Applied Health Sciences to report by end of academic year 2017/18

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Undergraduate curriculum review and UPC changes submitted	2016	2016
Action #2 Undergraduate curriculum review	2019	2020

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

As noted in the comments above, the curriculum committee engaged in significant curriculum review in 2016 and has recently embarked on another curriculum review. The core curriculum is considered to be strong and pedagogically sound, in the areas of theory, practice, and research. There may be some changes made to when these courses are offered to students as a result of the review.

**Recommendation #3.3**

Strive for greater efficiency of core delivery across and within concentrations and the core. In this vein, consider staggering course offerings so some are not offered every year.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. See also the ARC Disposition for recommendation 3.1.

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

Responsible for approving: Department  
 Responsible for resources: Department  
 Responsible for implementation: Department  
 Timeline: Dean of Applied Health Sciences to report by end of academic year 2017/18

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Undergraduate curriculum review and UPC changes submitted	2016	2016
Action #2 Undergraduate curriculum review	2019	2020



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

The curriculum revisions submitted in 2016 have been in the vein of adding efficiencies to program delivery and have been positive.

Effective course scheduling continues to be a priority, particularly given the changing enrolments in the program.

**Recommendation #3.4**

Develop a plan to partner with librarians, with the goal of integrating library skills into each year of the curriculum.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. See also the ARC Disposition for recommendation 3.1.

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

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Library
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Library
Timeline:	Dean of Applied Health Sciences to report by end of academic year 2017/18

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Integration of library resources into curriculum	2017	2017

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

In 2017, the designate library representative was invited to the department retreat to solicit and exchange information on possibility and modality options available to faculty members for partnering. At the retreat, members committed to access the representative to customize services and programs for specific courses.

Following this, a task force was struck, to work with the Library representative for the discipline (Library representative for the Dept.) in order to propose a sequence of activities that could be integrated into core courses in the program with the objective of scaffolding skills. The work of this taskforce led to two direct results: (a) generation of 2 seminars being held in the library for RECL 1P90 with a view to ensuring desired outcome in learning, and (b) skill oriented modules have been created for TA's to facilitate during seminars.

**Recommendation #3.5**

Consider integrating more co-curricular activities in year 3 or 4 that build on the 2<sup>nd</sup> year programming course camping trip to develop a stronger departmental identity among students.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. See also the ARC Disposition for recommendation 3.1.

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

Responsible for approving: Department  
 Responsible for resources: Department  
 Responsible for implementation: Department  
 Timeline: Dean of Applied Health Sciences to report by end of academic year 2017/18

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Addition of RECL 3V60 (since deleted)	2017	2019

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

This suggestion was discussed by the curriculum committee in 2016 and the decision was made to postpone action. In 2017 the Department proposed RECL 3V60, which is an elective year 3 course that involves students in the delivery of a March Break camp through the YMCA. This course was very successfully delivered however only attracts a small number of students, which suggests that the student desire for more co-curricular activities may in reality be more tempered than was suggested by students in during the program review process.

The recommendation is being revisited in the 2019-20 curriculum review, and it is expected that a proposal will be brought to the Department to add a required agency practicum at the Year 3 level.

**Recommendation #3.6**

Consider how students can explore the focus and content of all concentrations before having to commit to one.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. See also the ARC Disposition for recommendation 3.1.

<b>Implementation Plan (2<sup>nd</sup> Priority)</b>	
Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Applied Health Sciences to report by end of academic year 2017/18

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Undergraduate curriculum review and UPC changes submitted	2016	2016
Action #2 Undergraduate curriculum review	2019	2020
Action #3 Update and revision of college articulation agreements`	2018	Ongoing

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

The curriculum committee engaged in significant curriculum review and recommended revisions during the summer of 2016. Areas to create more openness in course and concentration options were identified as part of this process and were reflected in the recommendations. UPC changes were submitted and approved during the fall of 2016 through the UPC process that gave students additional options to explore more than one concentration’s content at the second year.

Discussions regarding concentrations continue to be fraught, however the interim climate review report offers continued incentive to address the perceived or real concerns regarding students the too-early streaming of students into areas of concentration. The issue has also been identified in the 2019 curriculum review process.

In addition, college articulation agreements are being updated in ways that facilitate incoming students’ ability to change their areas of concentration with greater ease.

**Recommendation #3.7**

Become a more interdisciplinarily focused department, and find common ground with regard to helping students realize how to serve and problem solve via multiple pathways (e.g., therapeutic and outdoor recreation working together around wellbeing for individuals with physical limitations or outdoor and community recreation working together to provide youth development programming).

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. See also the ARC Disposition for recommendation 3.1.

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

Responsible for approving: Department  
 Responsible for resources: Department  
 Responsible for implementation: Department  
 Timeline: Dean of Applied Health Sciences to report by end of academic year 2017/18

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Undergraduate curriculum review and UPC changes submitted	2016	2016
Action #2 Undergraduate curriculum review	2019	2020

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

The curriculum submission of 2016 worked toward this recommendation to some degree but it continues to be an area that is contentious as it requires collaborative discussion and visioning. Currently - in 2019 - there is a stronger felt need in the Department to act on this recommendation, given the changing student enrolment in the program and our smaller faculty complement. Currently the Department is addressing this recommendation through scheduling, for example by scheduling electives that draw students from across concentration areas.

**Recommendation #3.8**

Structure more flexibility across the concentrations so that students can develop expertise in more than one concentration. Using the minor option may be one pathway to doing so.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. See also the ARC Disposition for recommendation 3.1.

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

Responsible for approving: Department  
 Responsible for resources: Department  
 Responsible for implementation: Department  
 Timeline: Dean of Applied Health Sciences to report by end of academic year 2017/18

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Undergraduate curriculum review and UPC changes submitted	2016	2016
Action #2 Approval of a Minor in Recreation and Leisure Studies	2018	2018
Action #3 Undergraduate curriculum review	2019	2020

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

See responses to recommendations above regarding efforts to add flexibility into the undergraduate program. Note: In 2018, the Department approved the addition of a Minor in Recreation and Leisure Studies.

#### Recommendation #4.1

Market to, recruit and select students whose first choice is RECL Studies.

#### ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee encourages the Department to enhance existing recruitment efforts and continue to develop new initiatives that will serve to attract more first-choice applicants to the program.

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

Responsible for approving: Department  
 Responsible for resources: Department/Dean of Applied Health Sciences  
 Responsible for implementation: Department/Dean of Applied Health Sciences  
 Timeline: Dean of Applied Health Sciences to report by end of academic year 2016/17

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Enhance Alumni presence	2017	Ongoing
Action #2 Enhance social media presence	2017	Ongoing

Action #3 Serve working degree-seeking student	2016	Ongoing
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#### **Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:**

This recommendation rests largely with the Decanal and University promotions office. The Dean's office has facilitated revamping of the Department brochures and web page (among other efforts). Members of the Department continue to participate in university recruitment activities including Open Houses, Ontario University Fair, etc.

The Registrar's office is also enhancing admission procedures, timing of acceptances and targeting first choice and local applicants to enhance acceptance rates. However, the option of selecting applicants is not in the control of the Department.

Since 2016, a number of efforts have been made to market our program in different ways. These efforts include: (1) enhancing involvement of RECL alumni in the program (speakers in class, profiled on social media, Alumni Day), (2) expanding social media presence particularly on Instagram; and (3) continuing our involvement with key provincial professional associations (Parks and Recreation Ontario; Therapeutic Recreation Ontario).

A very important undertaking of the Department in the last few years has been the Professional Degree Completion Program, not only for what this program has offered in terms of further educational opportunities but also for the marketing and promotional benefits it has offered the program in terms of visibility and 'buzz' in the sector. The 'students' who have been involved in the program are current leaders in the field, and they actively promote the program to others in their workplace.

A high priority for the Department is to continue to serve the 'working professional degree-seeking student' that is sustainable, attractive, and innovative.

#### **Recommendation #4.2**

Develop mechanisms for strengthening transfer students' critical thinking and writing skills and their theoretical knowledge without marginalizing them. Consider partnering with the library to help transfer students develop some of these skills.

#### **ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee recognizes that the Department is exceptional in the number of articulation agreements that exist with Colleges for all three streams of the program.

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

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Applied Health Sciences to report by end of academic year 2016/17

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Focus groups with transfer students	2017	2017
Action #2 Hold transfer student orientation and social	2018	Ongoing
Action #3 Identification of class (RECL 2P11) as support for transfer students	2017	2017

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

Our interest in supporting transfer students is longstanding and we continue to seek out ways to connect with transfer students to support them in areas of need. We currently hold a transfer student orientation and social event early in the fall term. We also have identified a fall-term course that is typically a course that all new transfer students enroll (RECL 2P11) as a site to establish contact and offer support.

We have made use of the Office of Student Services Transfer Success Program (for students transferring from an Ontario institution - <https://brocku.ca/learning-services/transfer-students>).

#### Recommendation #4.3

Provide a multi-faceted RECL transfer student orientation to help them acclimatize and understand how their knowledge base intersects with their future coursework.

#### ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee recognizes that this recommendation is closely aligned to #4.2.

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

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Applied Health Sciences to report by end of academic year 2016/17

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Focus groups with transfer students	2017	2017
Action #2 Hold transfer student orientation and social	2018	Ongoing
Action #3 Identification of class (RECL 2P11) as support for transfer students	2017	2017

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

Please see notes above.

**Recommendation #4.4**

Develop creative ways to get all RECL students familiar with the library and all that it has to offer.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee recognizes that this recommendation is closely aligned with #3.4.

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

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Library
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Library
Timeline:	Dean of Applied Health Sciences to report by end of academic year 2017/18

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Curriculum mapping of library resources	2018	2018
Action #2 RECL-specific research guide created	2017	2017



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

As noted above, the Department mapped the library resource into the undergraduate curriculum.

In addition, a RECL Research Guide has been generated for dissemination via Sakai for RECL courses since the 2017 Fall term.

**Recommendation #5.1**

Develop a coherent experiential learning plan or strategy that cuts across all concentrations and the core. Current strategies appear piecemeal and concentration specific.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee recognizes that work has already begun to integrate and enhance experiential learning strategies in the Department and Faculty. It is also understood that experiential learning components in the curriculum will be addressed during the curriculum review.

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

Responsible for approving:	Department/Dean of Applied Health Sciences
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean of Applied Health Sciences
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean of Applied Health Sciences
Timeline:	Dean of Applied Health Sciences to report by end of academic year 2017/18

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Undergraduate curriculum review and UPC changes submitted	2016	2016
Action #2 Undergraduate curriculum review	2019	2020
Action #3 Experiential Education Coordinator hired	2017	2017

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

It is hard to believe that we did not have an Experiential Education Coordinator (EEC) at the time of the program review as the position was filled in 2017. The positive impact of this position cannot be overstated! With this support person/position in place, we have been much more equipped to support our current experiential learning sustainably and at a high quality.

Experiential learning is also a top priority of the 2019 curriculum review. To date, we have mapped experiential learning across the program and concentration areas and are strategizing

how we can better scaffold and diversify experiential learning opportunities through the program.

### **Recommendation #5.2**

Strengthen professional placement and internship opportunities and offer them to all students. This expansion would require that appropriate educational supports are in place during placements and that qualified instructors and appropriate community partners be identified.

#### **ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee understands that this recommendation is closely aligned to #5.1.

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

Responsible for approving:	Department/Dean of Applied Health Sciences
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean of Applied Health Sciences
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean of Applied Health Sciences
Timeline:	Dean of Applied Health Sciences to report by end of academic year 2017/18

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

As mentioned above, the continued and expanded presence of the EEC has been hugely beneficial to our program. It has contributed to greater consistency in experiential learning planning processes across courses, expanded the number and quality of experiential learning opportunities for students, and has been particularly beneficial in situations where courses are taught by new or part-time instructors. The consistent presence of an EEC has had a remarkable and positive impact on our program.

### **Recommendation #5.3**

Use RECL's strategy of integrating curricular and co-curricular activities as a model of experiential learning across the Faculty and University.

#### **ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be not accepted as it lies outside the scope of this review. The Committee recognizes that the recommendation is an acknowledgement of the Department's strength in incorporating experiential learning throughout its program.

#### **Implementation Plan**

Recommendation not accepted.

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

As noted in the RECL Final Assessment Report, this recommendation is directed to benefit other programs across the faculty and the university and we appreciate the reviewers' acknowledgement of our experiential learning activities. Hence this recommendation does not require further elaboration.

**Recommendation #5.4**

Add and disperse experiential components throughout the TR [Therapeutic Recreation] curriculum, not just at the end.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted for consideration by the Department during the curriculum review. The Committee understands that there is a wide range of activities which are considered experiential components at Brock.

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

Responsible for approving: Department  
 Responsible for resources: Department  
 Responsible for implementation: Department  
 Timeline: Dean of Applied Health Sciences to report by end of academic year 2017/18

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Experiential learning opportunity added at Year 2	2018	ongoing

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

2018/19 saw the introduction of a successful experiential learning component to a Year 2 course that focuses on therapeutic recreation. It is also being revisited in 2019-20 curriculum planning discussions.

**Recommendation #5.5**

Develop a plan for evaluating the efficacy of experiential learning efforts, and use it to assess resource allocation, especially the modification or elimination of particular experiences.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted for consideration by the Department during the curriculum review. The Committee understands that the Vice-Provost, Teaching, Learning and Student Success is already engaged in measuring the efficacy and impact of experiential learning components and the Department is strongly encouraged to seek assistance from this Office as it implements this recommendation.

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

Responsible for approving: Department/Vice Provost, Teaching, Learning and Student Success  
 Responsible for resources: Department/ Vice Provost, Teaching, Learning and

Responsible for implementation:	Student Success Department/ Vice Provost, Teaching, Learning and Student Success
Timeline:	Dean of Applied Health Sciences to report by end of Academic year 2017/18

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #3 Experiential Education Coordinator hired	2017	2017

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

As previously mentioned, the long-term presence of a program experiential education coordinator has been integral to our experiential education quality assurance processes. Our EE Coordinator is well connected with the broader community at Brock and both contributes to and benefits from the broader efforts to coordinate and assess EE at Brock.

**Recommendation #6.1**

Consult alumni in curriculum planning, department direction and resource development.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee recognizes that the Department already has good relations with alumni which could be further developed and utilized in the areas suggested by the reviewers.

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

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Applied Health Sciences to report by end of academic year 2017/18

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Alumni Day event established	2018	2018

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

We have benefited from increased alumni engagement via our annual Alumni Day event. We also maintain strong relationships with Alumni who supervise RECL interns. At this point, consultation with Alumni on curriculum planning remains informal. The felt need in the Department for a more formalized strategic planning process is growing, and there would be valued role for Alumni in offering insight into this process.

**Recommendation #6.2**

Engage alumni in mentoring activities with current students.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee understands that this recommendation is closely aligned to #6.1.

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

Responsible for approving: Department  
 Responsible for resources: Department  
 Responsible for implementation: Department  
 Timeline: Dean of Applied Health Sciences to report by end of academic year 2017/18

Actions Taken	Year Action Started	Year Action Completed
Action #1 Alumni Day established	2018	2018
Action #2 Mentorship through placement and internship supervision	2016	Ongoing

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

As noted above, we have instituted an Alumni Day that has been extremely beneficial in achieving this recommendation. Additionally, alumni continue to support students as placement and internship supervisors. Many of our part-time instructors are Alumni from the program. We also regularly invite alumni into classes for the purposes of introducing students to ‘real life’ practitioners and ‘real life’ issues.

## C. Unit Summative Analysis and Evaluation

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

The improvements suggested by the reviewers were in the following major areas: departmental climate and identity, student curricular pathways, experiential education, and alumni connections. The Unit has made progress in all of these areas and is positioned to make further advancements over the next few years.

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

Overall, the program review had a significant impact on the Unit.

**Departmental Climate:** The departmental climate review has had a major impact on the Unit both in terms of working conditions and personnel changes and collegiality has improved tremendously. On the whole the Unit is much more collaboratively and productively working together to address program-related concerns and implement improvements.

**Curriculum:** After an initial focus on curriculum revision, which produced positive outcomes, the Department then entered a period in which most program development was stalled due to issues of poor collegiality, trust, and conflicting visions. However, the outcome of the climate review process has been positive, and in 2019 the Department re-engaged in a review of the undergraduate curriculum with the goal of improving student flow-through and improving the scaffolding of experiential education, with a proposal to be reviewed by UPC in fall 2020.

**Experiential Education:** The hiring/replacement of an Experiential Education Coordinator (EEC) in the Department has also had a tremendous positive impact on the program. The EEC has relieved faculty members of the significant burden of managing and coordinating the logistics of coordinating student placements in agencies, which include 20-hr placements in year two courses, agency consultations in year three, 50 and 100-hour student placements at year four, and 560-hour capstone internships. With a designated EEC we have been able to expand placement offerings, improve their quality, stay up on EE trends and issues, and more effectively manage department-agency relationships.

**Alumni Engagement:** The last four years has also seen tremendous development in the area of Alumni engagement, most notably with the introduction of an annual Alumni Day. Although Alumni have long been invited back to campus to talk to students, the consolidation of these visits into an Alumni Day has also enabled us to strengthen our Alumni network and celebrate their successes. We also maintain a connection with Alumni via social media (Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn).

**New Program Development:** At the time of the program review, the Department was just about to begin to offer a new Degree Completion for Recreation Professionals Program, which is a program that helps experienced working professionals complete their degree via the offering of blended and online courses, on weekends in Toronto. More information about the program is available [here](#). Due to this timing, the Degree Completion Program is not reflected in the recommendations of the program review as the Unit had already completed its planning. However, implementing this innovative program has been a major departmental undertaking

over the past four years. We are very pleased with how this new program has enabled us to serve a cohort of students who are not easily able to access our traditional degree program. This program has proven to be beneficial to the Department in not only reaching new students but enhancing its reputation and influence in the field.

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

It appears so. The accountability built into the IQAP process has been effective in ensuring that the Unit acted on the recommendations listed above. Beyond this, the Unit is continuing to look toward an improved future, as evidenced by the Unit's recent re-engagement in an undergraduate curriculum review.

There is room for further work in this area. As noted in the report, there is a growing interest in engaging in a more formal strategic planning process, which is a process that would benefit from the assistance of external planning consultants.

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

The programs of the Unit have always been oriented toward experiential education and student experience. Further, the Unit's new Degree Completion for Professionals program aligns very well with Brock's strategic priority of accessibility, as the program design facilitates access to university education for the working professional.

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

As previously mentioned, the attention directed toward Departmental climate has been effective. However, the process is not yet finished. The report that was presented to the Department in March 2019 was an interim report with the intention that further restorative work was to be undertaken and a final report would be received at a later date. From the Unit's perspective, the climate review process seems to be in a holding pattern and members of the unit are not clear on where the review goes from here. It would be beneficial to move this process forward, either by way of an update or a final report.

As mentioned, in fall 2019 the Unit embarked on an undergraduate curriculum review that is reaching the final stages and is well positioned to produce positive results in terms of offering a more flexible and better streamlined program for students. We are pleased with the outcomes of this year's review however we have also parked some issues for future years, to allow the current proposed changes to come to fruition. We anticipate tackling some of the remaining issues over the next couple of years.

Our next step as a Unit is to engage in a strategic planning process to help us assess our current context and strengths and identify our opportunities for future growth and development and better align with industry needs. This is an undertaking that is complementary to yet distinct from the program review process as it aims to not only improve the current program but to set a path forward for new program development.

## **D. ARC Final Summary**

In final summary of the 2015/16 cyclical academic review of the programs offered by the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies, ARC has determined the following:

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