

Final Assessment Report

MA in Social Justice and Equity Studies Graduate Program (reviewed 2019-21)

A. Summary

1. The Department's Self Study was considered and approved by the Senate Academic Review Committee on April 14, 2020.
2. The Review Committee consisted of two external reviewers: Daiva Stasiulis (Carleton University) and Lynne Siemens (University of Victoria), and one internal reviewer, Tim Conley (Brock University).
3. The virtual review occurred on October 19-21, 2020.
4. The Reviewers' Report was received on November 20, 2020.
5. The Program response was received on December 7, 2020.
6. The Senate Graduate Studies Committee response was received on December 10, 2020.
7. The Dean of Graduate Studies response was received on January 7, 2021.
8. The Dean of Social Sciences response was received on January 18, 2021.
9. The revised Dean of Graduate Studies response was received on Jan 27, 2021.

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

Program Outcome Categories:

Based on their knowledge of the discipline, the content of the Self-Study and the interviews conducted during the site visit, the Review Committee gave the program the following Outcome Category:

Program(s)	Excellent Quality	Good Quality	Good Quality with Concerns	Non-Viable
MA in Social Justice and Equity Studies	X*			

*with concerns flagged in recommendations below

Executive Summary:

The Reviewers wrote:

In alignment with the university's strategic priorities, Social Justice and Equity Studies (SJES) is a high-quality interdisciplinary graduate program administered by the Faculty of Social Sciences. It has over 50 affiliated faculty who undertake community-based research, teach, supervise and mentor students, and participate in administering the program and committee work. The diverse student body has an activist focus and attracts students from across the province and country; its international students represent over five countries. The curriculum reflects cutting-edge scholarship and pedagogy with courses in the environment, labour relations, animal rights, disability studies, critical race studies, Indigenous justice, and others. The faculty ensure that the courses and modes of assessment meet degree level expectations. The class size is kept small to ensure discussion-based learning. One highpoint of the program is its organization with community groups of the almost annual Niagara Social Justice Forum (SJF), an all-day event focused on social justice in the Niagara region. The faculty is exploring a certificate/diploma in social justice as a way to attract non-traditional students and provide a pathway for students who encounter difficulty completing the thesis or Masters Research Project (MRP).

While the program is of excellent quality and has been well-managed, there are several areas of concern. First, there has been high turnover in the Graduate Administrative Coordinator position, which has placed pressure on the Graduate Program Director and students. Second, the students also express concern over the small number of available electives and their content. Third, given the program's interdisciplinary nature, faculty must negotiate support from their respective Deans and Chairs to teach in the program, something that is not always forthcoming. Finally, the organization of the Social Justice Forum relies on a half-credit course structure for its resources, something that is not sustainable in the long run.

The recommendations focus on maintaining areas of strengths and addressing areas of concern.

B. Strengths of the Program

The reviewers noted the following strengths:

1. The SJES Master's program is a long-standing program that has brought a social justice orientation to Brock and is highly aligned with the university's strategic goals.
2. SJES is characterized by a distinctive interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity that does not exist in other MA programs at Brock*. The program grew out of the Social Sciences, particularly Sociology and Geography, but also includes the humanities and increasingly draws from non-social science disciplines such as Health Sciences. In comparison with other social justice Master's programs in Canada, it has the largest number of affiliated faculty (over 50).
3. The program continues to draw a large number of applications and has no problems meeting its targets. Many of these applications come from other Ontario universities, as well as from strong international students. Students are highly motivated and diverse in their social justice interests and backgrounds.
4. The program is academically rigorous and research-based, offering three program streams - thesis, MRP, and MRP with Coop. The longer duration of the program (16 to 24 months) permits students to conduct and be mentored in individualized student research. Students interested in social justice get a solid grounding in social justice theory as well as research methodology.
5. Faculty are very invested in the program and they invest a lot in making the program a success. It is not uncommon for some faculty members to serve as GPD, serve on committees, teach in the program and supervise students. The social justice focus also draws people to apply for Brock faculty positions and faculty are very keen to align themselves with SJES. Students in the program have the opportunity to select supervisors and advisors from a broad array of intellectually diverse faculty across disciplines.
6. The program has built a social justice community within Brock. It offers a very important collegial space among faculty and opportunity to build research-based networks focused on different social justice issues and topics.
7. The Graduate Program Directors received a lot of praise; the author of the self-study was seen to be one in a long line of excellent GPDs.
8. There is a symbiosis of SJES with some other graduate programs. As one example, SJES students can be relied upon to add to the enrolment of some graduate courses in Critical Sociology.

*The Academic Review Committee recognizes that the reviewers were not presented with information on other MA programs at Brock which were outside the scope of the review. While the Committee appreciates the distinctive interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary characteristics of the SJES program, it should be considered one of several innovative, interdisciplinary graduate programs at Brock.

C. Opportunities for Improvement and Enhancement

Recommendation #1

Support Brock's initiatives to hire more Indigenous and underrepresented faculty members (e.g., racialized communities) who could be affiliated with SJES

The Program stated:

The program endorses this recommendation. However, as the program itself has little influence over new faculty hires, our support is mainly in principle. The SJES program will continue to encourage Indigenous and underrepresented faculty members with research agendas tied to social justice studies to affiliate with the program. Also, we seek to be a collegial, supportive scholarly community where Indigenous and underrepresented members can locate friends and accomplices to make fulfilling careers together in this predominantly white, heteronormative institution.

The Senate Graduate Studies Committee responded:

This is in keeping with Brock's exploring ways to hire more members from Indigenous and racialized communities.

The Dean of Graduate Studies responded:

I fully endorse this recommendation, however, hiring and position requests fall outside of the domain of FGS.

The Dean of Social Sciences responded:

This recommendation is compatible with Faculty and University goals of hiring more Indigenous and under-represented faculty. Faculty position requests are subject to Faculty and University- wide approval processes.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be not accepted as hiring initiatives lie outside of its jurisdiction. The Committee understands that principles of equity, diversity and inclusion are strongly endorsed in the Brock Institutional Strategic Plan. ARC expects that the Program will proceed through normal channels of advocacy for more indigenous and under-represented faculty resources.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted.

Recommendation #2

Maintain class size of 11-14

The Program stated:

The program supports this recommendation, which is the current practice.

The Senate Graduate Studies Committee responded:

Optimum class size is a pedagogic matter for the program to decide, but this must be balanced with the availability of instructors (difficult in programs that rely on faculty hired into other units) and with financial viability. As such, it is beyond our purview

The Dean of Graduate Studies responded:

This is a pedagogical decision that falls under the program's purview. That said, I do support the program's decision to maintain this class size.

The Dean of Social Sciences responded:

Intake targets for the MA program are developed through consultation with the Program Director, the Associate Dean Graduate Studies representing the Faculty of Social Sciences and the Dean of Graduate Studies. Decisions on numbers of students to admit (which influences class size) include considerations such as program capacity, applicant pool, and available resources.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be not accepted as stated. The Committee recognizes that class size is based on a pedagogical rationale within the context of institutional policies and resources, and that it is subject to consultation with the Deans. ARC expects that the Program is best-positioned to negotiate final class size within this context.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted.

Recommendation #3

Increase number of international students

The Program stated:

The program sets targets for admission of international students in consultation with the FoSS Associate Dean and Dean of Graduate Studies. We would be pleased to admit up to one more international student (from two to three) but could only do so if the funding package were increased. We support the university reducing the differential tuition fee or introducing a larger funding package that fully covers tuition fee for international graduate students.

In our experience, international students from the Global South often live on tight budgets and have few economic resources while students in the program. Unanticipated events, such as currency depreciation in their home country, unexpected expenses in Canada, or a family emergency requiring a trip home, can mean serious financial difficulty for students. At times, it is difficult for the program to muster resources to support even one or two international students. The program ends up fundraising for the SJES bursary and drumming up other forms of support such as research assistantships paid from faculty members' PER accounts. Individual students' financial need can place pressure on supervisors. With that said, we value international students and recognize how much their involvement enhances the experiences of students, faculty and supervisors.

The Senate Graduate Studies Committee responded:

This is in keeping with Brock's policies supporting increasing internationalization.

The Dean of Graduate Studies responded:

Diversity is a key component of the Brock's strategic plan and the inclusion of international students, especially in a program such SJES, is key to bringing a range of perspectives to the classroom and to research endeavours. FGS will continue to support these efforts and will work with the program and the Faculty of Social Sciences to find an appropriate balance of enrolment targets that allows for maintaining an 11-14 class size and encourages diversity.

FGS will provide continued funding support for international students and we are also working more broadly within the university to find ways to increase support for our international students.

The Dean of Social Sciences responded:

Intake targets for the MA program are developed through consultation with the Program Director, the Associate Dean Graduate Studies representing the Faculty of Social Sciences and the Dean of Graduate Studies. Decisions on student admissions, including proportion

and origin of international students, include considerations such as program capacity, applicant pool, and available resources.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted for consideration by the Program. The Committee expects that the Program is best-positioned to determine admissions targets in consultation with the Deans and within the context of university policies on international enrolment.

Implementation Plan (2nd Priority)	
Responsible for approving:	Program
Responsible for resources:	Program
Responsible for implementation:	Program
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2022/23

Recommendation #4

Review elective offerings to ensure a balance between new courses in critical race studies, Indigenous justice and decolonization and other relevant topics and long-standing offerings

The Program stated:

The program acknowledges the need to review elective offerings annually and this is our current practice. The program hosts an annual spring retreat when a wide range of issues come forward for discussion. Reports by student representatives based on input from all students are discussed at length. The retreat generates an agenda of change priorities for the Program Committee in the subsequent academic year, which may include curriculum changes. For example, at the spring retreat in 2018, students and faculty determined that a priority would be to introduce a new course in disability justice. In Fall 2019, the Academic Planning committee put out the annual call for new course proposals and received two proposals for such a course, among other proposals. The SJES Academic Planning committee worked with the proposers of the two similar courses on disability justice to fashion a single course description, which was approved by the Program Committee and the graduate APC. At the same time, the program and APC approved a new course on Indigenous resurgence.

The Senate Graduate Studies Committee responded:

While these are program decisions, they rely on the availability of instructors (difficult in programs that rely on faculty hired into other units) and on financial resources for additional stipends. Currently, there is Directed Courses fill the curriculum gap, but place great pressure on faculty for overload teaching - a potential Collective Agreement issue.

The Dean of Graduate Studies responded:

This appears to be current practice and programming falls within the program's purview.

The Dean of Social Sciences responded:

Agree with the recommendation that the program continue to review course curriculum, including new course proposals.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

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

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:

Program

Responsible for resources:

Program

Responsible for implementation:

Program

Timeline:

Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of
academic year 2021/22

Recommendation #5

Increase the number of electives offered from 2 to 3

The Program stated:

The program strongly supports this proposal while recognizing that it has resource implications for the Faculty of Social Sciences. Currently SJES electives attract graduate students from other programs and enrolment is normally very high. For example, the two SJES electives currently scheduled for winter 2021 have enrolment in the mid-teens. Enrolment numbers support offering a third elective. If this third elective were offered in the fall or summer, it would support students' timely completion of the program. Expanding the number of electives from two to three would be important if we were to introduce a Type 1 diploma program.

The Senate Graduate Studies Committee responded:

While these are program decisions, they rely on the availability of instructors (difficult in programs that rely on faculty hired into other units) and on financial resources for additional stipends. Currently, Directed Courses fill the curriculum gap, but place great pressure on faculty for overload teaching - a potential Collective Agreement issue.

The Dean of Graduate Studies responded:

While I support this recommendation, course offerings are outside of FGS' domain.

The Dean of Social Sciences responded:

Decisions about number of electives being offered each year are the result of annual discussions with the program and the Dean's office in Social Sciences . These discussions take into account such considerations as number of student in program, demand for courses outside of the program, and resources available.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted for consideration by the Program. The Committee expects that the Program is best-positioned to determine the number of electives in consultation with the Dean and that it will proceed through normal channels of advocacy for any faculty resources required.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Program
Responsible for resources:	Program
Responsible for implementation:	Program
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2021/22

Recommendation #6

Make SJES 5P01 a full credit course

The Program stated:

The program supports this excellent recommendation while recognizing its resource implications in the form of a half courses (0.5 FTE) teaching stipend from FoSS to the GPD's home department. Reasons for increasing SJES 5P01 to a full credit go beyond the NSJF. The Graduate Seminar achieves other key learning outcomes for the program such as supporting students' applications for external scholarships, teaching students to write their MRP or thesis proposal and preparing students for the annual Symposium, which is also a recruitment event for the next year's cohort. The workload associated with the Graduate Seminar is comparable to a full course.

The Senate Graduate Studies Committee responded:

This is a pedagogic matter, and for the program to decide.

The Dean of Graduate Studies responded:

While I support this recommendation, this is a program-level decision.

The Dean of Social Sciences responded:

Changes to the teaching credit associated with SJES courses would need to include discussions with the SJES program director and the Dean of Social Sciences, taking into account normal workload standards, pedagogical considerations, and resource implications.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted for consideration by the Program. The Committee understands that the Program is responsible for curriculum modifications and expects that it will proceed through normal channels of advocacy for any faculty resources required.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Program
Responsible for resources:	Program
Responsible for implementation:	Program
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2021/22

Recommendation #7

Provide Financial and Logistical Support for the Niagara Social Justice Forum

The Program stated:

The Niagara Social Justice Forum is increasingly complicated to organize for many reasons and has grown beyond the capacity of students in the half-credit SJES 5P01 graduate seminar led by the Graduate Program Director. Accepting Recommendation #6 would be one effective way to support organizing the Niagara Social Justice Forum. Alternatively, the NSJF could be organized within a distinct new elective on community organizing for social justice. Such an elective could be the program's third elective and would be focused on experiential learning.

The Senate Graduate Studies Committee responded:

These appear to be linked with recommendation #6 and would be facilitated logistically by making SJES 5P01 a full credit course and having the instructor take charge of the forum (rather than the GPD). The matter of financial support for the forum is beyond our purview. The suggestion of a practicum course where students would undertake a community project would be in keeping with Brock's commitment to experiential learning.

The Dean of Graduate Studies responded:

This is outside of FGS' purview. However, I do think that Recommendation #6 [above] would be one solution that also would fulfill Brock's commitment to experiential learning, if the program chooses to accept this recommendation.

The Dean of Social Sciences responded:

The Faculty has processes in place for units to request financial and organizational support required for events such as the Niagara Social Justice Forum including annual budget development and processes as well as applications to the Council for Research in the Social Sciences.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be not accepted as it lies outside of its jurisdiction. The Committee expects the program to proceed through normal channels of advocacy for financial and logistical support for the Forum.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted.

Recommendation #8

Explore avenues to incorporate social activism and experiential learning more fully into coursework and program.

The Program stated:

The program supports this recommendation for the creation of a new practicum elective in which students either work collaboratively on a community project, participate in local social movement activities or participate in volunteer placements with activist organizations. The practicum elective could be scheduled in alternate years to the community organizing course which mounts the Niagara Social Justice Forum. These half-credit electives could be scheduled every other week through the year (Duration 1), like the Graduate Seminar.

The Senate Graduate Studies Committee responded:

These appear to be linked with recommendation #6 and would be facilitated logistically by making SJES 5P01 a full credit course and having the instructor take charge of the forum (rather than the GPD). The matter of financial support for the forum is beyond our purview. The suggestion of a practicum course where students would undertake a community project would be in keeping with Brock's commitment to experiential learning.

The Dean of Graduate Studies responded:

Experiential learning is a key priority. The program is exploring the possibility of a new practicum elective, and while this is outside of FGS' purview, I support this initiative.

The Dean of Social Sciences responded:

Agree with the recommendation that the program continue to review course curriculum, including opportunities for experiential learning. The Faculty of Social Sciences has an experiential coordinator to assist with the development of these opportunities.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

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

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Program
Responsible for resources:	Program
Responsible for implementation:	Program
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2021/22

Recommendation #9

Continue the Co-op with MRP stream

The Program stated:

The program supports this recommendation and plans to continue the Co-op with MRP stream as an opportunity for a small number of students. The number of Co-op students may expand as more paid opportunities are created .

The Senate Graduate Studies Committee responded:

This is in keeping with Brock's policies supporting increasing experiential learning.

The Dean of Graduate Studies responded:

This is current practice.

The Dean of Social Sciences responded:

Agree with the recommendation that the program continue with the Co-op MRP stream.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to reflect current practice.

Implementation Plan

Current practice (no action required).

Recommendation #10

Enhance record keeping by Graduate Program Director and Graduate Administrative Coordinator

The Program stated:

The program acknowledges the importance of better record-keeping, particularly so we can stay in contact with alumni (with their consent) and track graduates' next steps in post-secondary education and careers. The program currently maintains a record of graduates' preferred email address and has this information for the past eight years. Since the Self-Study was submitted, the GPD has worked with the Alumni Office to obtain a long list of all alumni and their occupations. The information is not entirely complete. The next step is to contact affiliated faculty members to ask for leads about where their former students are now. We might also reach out to graduates to ask them to send a call-out to their former classmates. A student Research Assistant may be employed to research graduates' career and educational trajectories. This information is needed in the lead-up to the 20th anniversary of SJES in 2022/23 when we hope to organize a reunion celebration.

The Senate Graduate Studies Committee responded:

Duties associated with staff and faculty positions are subject to Collective Agreements, and any changes to job descriptions would have to be made in consultation with the individuals in the positions and with reference to the relevant Collective Agreements.

The Dean of Graduate Studies responded:

I support this recommendation and FGS can work with the program and the Alumni Office to provide support for this endeavour.

The Dean of Social Sciences responded:

Supports the recommendation to continue to improve record-keeping.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to enhance record keeping by the Graduate Program Director and Graduate Administrative Coordinator positions to be accepted and in the process of implementation.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Program
Responsible for resources:	Program
Responsible for implementation:	Program
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2021/22

Recommendation #11

Hire a full-time GAC (Graduate Administrative Coordinator)

The Program stated:

The program supports an increase to the GAC's weekly hours. The need for a full time GAC would depend on the growth of the program. As the reviewers state, this recommendation is tied to the successful introduction of a future Type 1 diploma program. We do not yet know the number of diploma students who would enroll.

The Senate Graduate Studies Committee responded:

Staff hiring decisions are beyond our purview.

The Dean of Graduate Studies responded:

FGS is committed to supporting Graduate Program Directors and their Administrative Coordinators. We are working towards creating regular training workshops for administrators to help support them in their roles. While hiring decisions are made in the Teaching Faculty, FGS supports this recommendation to ensure a balanced workload for the GPD and a positive student experience.

The Dean of Social Sciences responded:

Requests for additional administrative resources are subject to Faculty and University-wide approval processes.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be not accepted as it lies outside of its jurisdiction. The Committee expects the Program to proceed through normal channels of advocacy for administrative resources.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted.

Recommendation #12

Ensure current levels of course release for the GPD

The Program stated:

The program supports this recommendation to maintain the GPD's course release at 1.0. We appreciate that the Dean of Social Sciences, who recommends the GPD's course release, has consistently adhered to the BUFA-Brock Collective Agreement which supports additional course release (above the nominal 0.5) for the GPD of a program as complex as SJES.

The Senate Graduate Studies Committee responded:

Minimum GPD teaching release is enshrined in the Collective Agreement; anything beyond that is a matter for negotiation and not subject to policy.

The Dean of Graduate Studies responded:

This falls outside of FGS's purview and is part of the collective agreement.

The Dean of Social Sciences responded:

The Provision of course release for Graduate Program Directors is subject to Collective Agreement procedures.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be not accepted as it lies outside of its jurisdiction. The Committee understands that course release for Graduate Program Directors is governed by the provisions of the Collective Agreement.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted.

Recommendation #13

Ensure Decanal and Chair support for teaching in SJES

The Program stated:

The program supports this recommendation and requests Chairs and Deans to release faculty affiliates to teach in SJES or serve as GPD. We recognize that, at times, a Dean may need to withhold permission if a home department would be severely impacted by a faculty members' involvement with SJES, but we expect this situation to be rare. We rotate instructors of electives annually and core courses every two years. The SJES program depends on departments occasionally releasing faculty members to teach a one-time-only 0.5 FTE elective or a 0.5 FTE core course over two consecutive years.

The Senate Graduate Studies Committee responded:

Workload is defined in the Collective Agreement and teaching allocation is a decanal matter. Unclear how support for any program can be 'ensured'.

The Dean of Graduate Studies responded:

Interdisciplinary programs are often challenged with resources. While I strongly support this recommendation, decision around teaching assignments and load fall outside of FGS' domain.

The Dean of Social Sciences responded:

Faculty workload assignments are determined through Collective Agreement processes.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be not accepted as it lies outside of its jurisdiction. The Committee understands that workload is governed by the provisions of the Collective Agreement.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted.

Recommendation #14

Create a Decanal steering committee to coordinate high-level program issues

The Program stated:

The program appreciates ongoing decanal support for interdisciplinary programs such as SJES. We recognize that Deans have forums for discussion of high-level issues related to interdisciplinary collaboration.

The Senate Graduate Studies Committee responded:

This seems like a useful recommendation that does not run counter to any policies.

The Dean of Graduate Studies responded:

This is an interesting recommendation. While I see the need for greater coordination and collaboration to ensure appropriate resourcing, I am not sure that a steering committee is the necessarily the appropriate way to resolve this. That said, I have no issues if this is accepted.

The Dean of Social Sciences responded:

Deans meet regularly to discuss Faculty best practices and potential for cooperation and collaboration in program development that crosses Faculties.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be not accepted as it lies outside of its jurisdiction. The Committee recognizes that the Deans currently engage in discussions about cross-Faculty collaboration and that they are in a position to decide on any further coordination on high-level program issues.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted.

Recommendation #15

Implement a graduate certificate/diploma in SJES

The Program stated:

The program firmly supports this recommendation and commits to continuing to work on designing and gaining support and approvals for a diploma program.

The Senate Graduate Studies Committee responded:

This is a program decision that would have to go to ARC initially

The Dean of Graduate Studies responded:

I strongly support this recommendation and FGS is willing to work with the program to help support this initiative.

The Dean of Social Sciences responded:

Supports the development of a graduate certificate/diploma in SJES as a priority that fulfills Faculty and University-wide priorities.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted for consideration. If the Program determines that it wishes to proceed with a graduate certificate/diploma in SJES, it will be required to follow the procedures in the Brock IOAP and submit the program for approval to ARC and the Quality Council.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Program
Responsible for resources:	Program
Responsible for implementation:	Program
Timeline:	Dean of Social Sciences to report by the end of academic year 2021/22

Recommendation #16

Increase funding for graduate students to participate in conferences and other events

The Program stated:

The program supports this recommendation while recognizing the limits to our ability to offer more conference support to students through our current operating budget. SJES students sometimes seek support to offset travel and registration fees associated with workshops or training events related to their areas of study that are to not strictly academic conferences. Examples include the Peoples Social Forum in Ottawa in 2014 (two students attended and wrote a blog) and the RISE (Racialized, Indigenous Student Experience) Summit in Toronto in 2016 (three SJES students attended and reported in an article in Brock News). We agree that attendance at such events helps market the program. We would like to see more sources of funding for non-conference co-curricular and professional development activities that are not located at Brock and that can be tied to students' academic work.

The Senate Graduate Studies Committee responded:

Financial decisions are beyond our purview.

The Dean of Graduate Studies responded:

FGS provides some support for conference travel for graduate students and we will continue to do so as this is important aspect of their professional development. Decisions around program-specific funding, however, fall outside of FGS' purview.

The Dean of Social Sciences responded:

Funding support for Graduate Students is available through various application processes adjudicated by the Dean and Associate Deans in the Faculty.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be not accepted as it lies outside of its jurisdiction. The Committee understands that the level of graduate funding is determined by policies and procedures at the institution which are available to all graduate students. ARC expects that the Program is best-positioned to determine strategies to increase funding for SJES student participation in conferences and other events.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted.

D. Summary of Recommendations:

First Priority:

Recommendations 4,5,6,8,10,15

Second Priority:

Recommendation 3

Not Accepted:

Recommendations 1,2,7,11,12,13,14,16

No Action Required:

Recommendation 9