

Four Year Report (2026)

Sport Management Undergraduate Program (reviewed 2021-22)

A. Summary of Review

1. This review was conducted under the terms and conditions of the IQAP approved by Senate on May 25, 2016 and the Codicil to the Brock IQAP, approved by Senate December 15, 2021, which served until the revised IQAP was fully approved by the Quality Council and Senate in 2023.
2. The Review Committee consisted of two external reviewers: Laura Miesner (University of Western Ontario), Norm O’Reilly (University of Maine) and one internal reviewer, Mary-Beth Raddon (Brock University).
3. The virtual site visit occurred on March 28, 30, April 1 2022.
4. The Final Assessment Report was approved by Senate on November 16, 2022.
5. The academic programs offered by the Department of Sport Management that were examined as part of the review are listed below, with the reviewers having assigned the following outcome categories:

Program (s)	Excellent Quality	Good Quality	Good Quality with Concerns	Non-Viable
BSM Bachelor of Sport Management (Honours)			X	
BSM Bachelor of Sport Management (4 Year with Major)			X	

Additional information associated with the outcome categories includes:

- In selecting the Outcome Category, the Reviewers noted that “...despite the comprehensive curriculum and high volume of students, we believe that there is a strong need to review the entire curriculum and find more efficiencies within Brock University.... In a nutshell, the program seems to function largely in isolation without leveraging other programs and resources both within and outside the faculty. The result is a significant demand on resources that risks not meeting the degree level expectations or providing graduates with competitive advantages to find jobs in a high-demand field. While the internship program is highly revered, there are clearly significant challenges with that part of the program, and a thorough review is needed to ensure continued quality practical experiences for the students. As the program continues to grow due to its high demand, the risk lies in the fact that the program is not meeting the needs of students and/or community partners with a high-quality experience. We fully understand that much of this is due to the rapid growth and large class sizes, but there are clearly some efficiencies and economies of scale that could be leveraged to create increased quality learning outcomes for the students.

- The Department and the Dean commented on the outcome category selected and noted that if viewed as a quality-based scale it is perhaps inappropriate, given the positive comments noted by the Reviewer and that the overall tone of the review was one which recognized the SPMA program as one of the leaders in its field in North America and one which is matched in scope and quality by few if any other programs in North America.

6. The next review of the Sport Management programs will be in 2029/30.

B: Recommendations

Recommendation #1

Complete a deep curriculum review.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to conduct a deep curriculum review to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee encourages the Department to continue working with the Centre for Pedagogical Innovation as they undertake this review.

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 the end of academic year 2022/23.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Undertake a comprehensive curriculum review.	Department	T	T	O

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

A SPMA faculty member was granted a course release in Winter 2023 to lead a comprehensive curriculum review process. This led to the formation of an ad hoc curriculum review committee and a series of small-group discussions with SPMA faculty on sub-topics/areas within the undergraduate program. There were also many one-to-one curriculum-focused meetings with faculty and staff, as well as conversations with stakeholders from beyond the department (e.g., CPI) – plus updates at department meetings. In total, this was a very thorough process for gathering insight, assessing the curriculum, and reflecting on the external reviews across the Winter 2023 semester.

Subsequently, during our two-day retreat in May 2023, the Department agreed to work towards several program changes with a focus on eliminating redundancies, reducing core requirements, creating clearer scaffolding of knowledge and skills, and updating course titles and descriptions. The curriculum review committee then assembled a list of agreed upon changes over the summer months. In September 2024, the Department voted to accept a total of 34 program changes.

The program changes were approved in 2024 and are now in the University calendar. The Department is currently phasing out elements of the previous curriculum while phasing in new additions, as appropriate.

In the time since changes were approved, departmental retreats and meetings and other committee work within the department have provided opportunities to identify areas for further refinement in the SPMA curriculum. For example, there is an ongoing conversation about the place of analytics in the SPMA undergraduate program and how this can align with the new Master of Sport Management (MSM) degree in the interest of both pedagogy and organizational efficiencies. Our internal SPMA undergraduate committee continues to work on curriculum-related matters as well, employing insights from the curriculum review in the process (e.g., a curriculum ‘map’ identifying thematic points of connection).

In all, SPMA has indeed undertaken a comprehensive curriculum review. This has comprised an extensive process for gathering insight and assessing the curriculum and has led to meaningful changes to our undergraduate program.

Recommendation #2

Complete overhaul of the internship program.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to be accepted for consideration. The Committee expects that the Department will do a thorough review of the internship program in the context of a larger curriculum review, as mentioned in recommendation #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 the end of academic year 2022/23.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Considerations related to potential changes to the internship courses in our program to be included in our comprehensive curriculum review.	Department	T	T	T

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

Internship courses and experiential learning more broadly have been core considerations in departmental conversations about the SPMA curriculum since the external review.

The comprehensive curriculum review process outlined above included a series of meetings on internships and experiential education, starting in Winter 2023. The lead faculty member on the curriculum review also had many one-to-one meetings with our department Experiential Coordinator

with a focus, *inter alia*, on how internship courses might be strengthened. While the internship is a highly successful component of the SPMA degree program, we have initiated changes by more strictly enforcing partner organization criteria and by ensuring students are doing meaningful internships with direct connections to sport and our program learning outcomes.

Furthermore, in recent years we have added new experiential opportunities that give students the chance to obtain and reflect on practical experience in the sport industry. For example: in 2024, we added a new European field experience course in Spain; in 2025, we added a new field experience course in Las Vegas in collaboration with the National Basketball Association’s Summer League; and in 2026, we developed yet another field placement course that built on an existing relationship with Tennis Canada. These additions compliment pre-existing field trip and field work courses, such as SPMA 3P02 – Sport Management Field Work, in which students complete complete sport industry work placements.

We are also in the process of exploring new initiatives to further bolster the experiential dimensions of the SPMA program. Most notable in this regard is a recently formed ad hoc committee for exploring the prospect of adding a co-op component to the SPMA curriculum. The point is to explore the feasibility of a co-op program, the impact of this vis-à-vis internship courses and other existing experiential opportunities, and the alignment of co-op with the MSM and potential efficiencies arising therefrom.

In all, SPMA has thoroughly addressed the stipulated action with respect to our internship courses and experiential learning on our degree.

Recommendation #3

Prioritize a staff hire with any new resources.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation, to prioritize a staff hire, to be not accepted as the allocation of resources lies outside of the Committee’s jurisdiction. The Committee expects that the program will proceed through normal channels of advocacy for resources.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted as it lies outside of the jurisdiction to the Committee.

Recommendation #4

Explore revenue generation opportunities. Micro-credentials, consultancy work/lab with students, etc.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to explore revenue generation opportunities to be accepted for consideration by the Department. Further, ARC considers the recommendation to specifically explore Micro-credentials to be already current practice and part of the larger discussion about curriculum review, as mentioned in recommendation #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 the end of academic year 2022/23.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Include departmental discussions on revenue generating opportunities, such as micro-credentials, within our larger curriculum review process.	Department	T	T	T

Explanation of Actions Taken, Status and Results:

Revenue generation opportunities have received thorough consideration in department meetings and retreats since the external review.

The curriculum review process has served a purpose of clearly ‘mapping’ the SPMA degree and thus conceptualizing how courses build on one another, year-over-year. This is a useful step in considering micro-credential opportunities or other initiatives such as non-credit certificate programming. It can also be helpful going forward in identifying points of overlap with other academic units on campus. In 2025, we also established a Marketing and Communications committee, creating a structure within the department to consider revenue-generating opportunities such as fundraising, sponsorship, and targeted donations.

With the approval of our Master of Sport Management (MSM) program in January 2025, much of our focus on new programming and accompanying revenue generation has been placed on that program. Even so, revenue generation has and will remain an issue of interest in the department.

In all, we have taken important steps since the external review towards conceiving of where in the curriculum revenue generation opportunities might arise.

Recommendation #5

Dedicated student space for learning.
--

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation, of dedicated student space for learning, to be not accepted as it lies outside of the Committee’s jurisdiction. The Committee expects that the program will proceed through normal channels of advocacy for space resources.

Implementation Plan Recommendation not accepted as it lies outside of the jurisdiction to the Committee.
--

Recommendation #6

Pursue Accreditation.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers the recommendation to pursue Accreditation to be not accepted as it lies outside of the jurisdiction of the Committee. The Committee believes the Department is best-positioned to determine whether to move forward with this.

Implementation Plan

Recommendation not accepted as it lies outside of the jurisdiction to the Committee.

C. Unit Summative Analysis and Evaluation

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

We have thoroughly addressed the improvements suggested by the reviewers. Recommendation #1 led to a comprehensive curriculum review process – one that solicited input from across and beyond the department and in multiple formats and led to the implementation of a list of changes designed to improve the curriculum. This process allowed consideration of the internship component of the program and of revenue generation opportunities, and thus also helped in addressing recommendations #2 and #4.

Notably, beyond the curriculum review we initiated in Winter 2023, we have also leveraged other departmental structures towards improving the curriculum and addressing the above-noted recommendations. The formation of a co-op-focused ad hoc committee, as discussed above, is one case in point.

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

Our response to the external review has had a significant impact. The changes described above have been done carefully with pedagogy at the forefront. We feel comfortable that changes – e.g., eliminating points of redundancy in the curriculum – will positively impact the student experience in the years ahead. In addition, the curriculum review process has also helped the department to conceptualize the curriculum and discuss the progression of ideas in various SPMA-related topics. This should be beneficial from a teaching perspective as well, as it can help decision-making around the selection and delivery of course content. Our enhanced awareness of how SPMA sub-topics align across the curriculum will also help as we continue to evaluate the SPMA degree in the years ahead.

The curriculum review also prompted changes to how we administer the internship component of our program, as described above, and we continue to fortify our experiential offerings more broadly – including experiential opportunities that feature unique and significant sport industry connections. As noted, the review has also spurred meaningful conversations about revenue generation.

3. How is the Department adopting a process of continuous quality improvement?

The Department is adopting a process of continuous quality improvement in that the curriculum review is informing ongoing curriculum conversations and initiatives. For example, the SPMA undergraduate committee has the curriculum 'map' produced through the curriculum review to help consider any new course requests within the department in the future. This gives insight into how any subsequent changes align with or depart from previous changes that arose from the curriculum review. As another example, with the new MSM program up and running, we can now consider whether and how analytics might be fortified in our undergraduate degree – what with the focus of the MSM on data-informed decision-making. Another example still is our ad hoc committee for considering a co-op element as part of the SPMA undergraduate degree. We are also in the process of finalizing a dual degree offering with Portsmouth University (UK), creating another international opportunity for SPMA students.

4. How well do the programs now align with the priorities in Brock's 2023-2028 Academic Plan?

The SPMA program aligns very well with the Academic Plan. While much of this alignment will play out at the level of individual courses, the review process impacted the degree program in ways that further the Academic Plan as well.

The priority of *High-Quality and Meaningful* is addressed in how the SPMA curriculum accounts for a wide array of Sport Management sub-topics, ranging from courses that address core management functions such as marketing and finance, to insight into the structure of the sport industry in Canada and beyond, to courses dealing with questions of sport and social / environmental responsibility. While SPMA has long delivered research-informed insight in these areas, we used the curriculum review to sharpen their place in the curriculum, and the progression of topics students experience from one year of study to the next.

The priority of *Accessible, Flexible, and Customizable* is addressed in part in that there is an ongoing conversation in SPMA, including in curriculum-focused meetings, about flexibility in our course offerings, such as the provision of online learning opportunities. This will be a key point of discussion as we continue to assess and develop experiential opportunities, such as a possible co-op option for students. Our ongoing attention to experiential learning is also one of the ways SPMA will address the priority of *Supportive and Student-Centred*, given the emphasis therein on network-building opportunities.

The SPMA program also addresses the priority of *Equitable, Diverse, and Inclusive*. For example, in recent years we created a core year-one course entitled, 'Diversity and Inclusion in Sport Management', and, as part of the curriculum review, considered how this course aligns with other course offerings and how its themes resonate elsewhere in the SPMA curriculum. Even more recently, we introduced a year-three course entitled, 'Sport, Community and Indigenous Resurgence'. We recognize EDI is an ongoing consideration; it is one to which SPMA is committed. Finally, SPMA is *Future-Oriented*. We are committed to evolving the curriculum as necessary to address emerging trends and to account for the latest insights in the field of Sport Management. What's more, the curriculum addresses both local and global considerations. Here we would

note, for example, how the experiential components of the degree include both domestic and international opportunities.

5. How does this review and its results position the Department as it moves into the next review cycle?

The Department is very well-positioned. First, having made changes to the curriculum in the current review cycle, we are well-placed to further evaluate these changes in the cycle that follow, in addition to considering any new items that are raised in the process of review.

Second, the current curriculum review process was wide-ranging in achieving insight from across SPMA faculty and staff. This was helpful in addressing recommendations in the shorter term, and it should help in evaluating the curriculum in the longer term, as Department members have had insight and input into recent changes and underlying reasons. Recent hires to the Department will bring new perspectives on strengths of the SPMA curriculum and areas requiring further attention.

D. ARC Final Summary

In final summary of the 2021/22 cyclical academic review of the undergraduate programs offered by the Department of Sport Management, ARC has determined the following:

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