



University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process (UTQAP) Cyclical Review: Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan

Program(s):	Sociology, B.A. (Hons.): Specialist, Major, Minor
Division/Unit:	(Review of programs only; offered by the UTSC Department of Sociology)
Commissioning Officer:	Dean and Vice-Principal (Academic), UTSC
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	1. Dr. Kevin McQuillan, Deputy Provost, Professor, Department of Sociology, University of Calgary 2. Dr. Victor Satzewich, Professor, Faculty of Social Sciences, McMaster University
Date of review visit:	October 31 and November 1, 2013
Date reported to AP&P:	April 1, 2014

1 Outcome

The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P) concluded that the Decanal response adequately addressed the review recommendations.

2 Significant Program Strengths

- Positive morale in the Department and excellent leadership
- Strong faculty commitment to enhancing the curriculum
- Effective initiatives, such as implementation of a research day

3 Opportunities for Program Improvement and Enhancement

The reviewers recommended that the following be considered:

- Enhancing the Specialist program, providing for greater flexibility and a capstone course
- Expanding upper-year course offerings
- Increasing students' oral and written communication skills
- Increasing experiential learning opportunities
- Developing an integrated approach to faculty planning, including consideration of space and facilities
- Identifying an appropriate staffing model for the Department
- Broadening collaboration with the Cities Lab

4 Implementation Plan

The Dean undertook in consultation with the Department to support the following changes:

- Immediate Term (6 months)
 - Enhancing the Specialist program
 - The Department has added a capstone experience and has created greater flexibility in the Program, working with the Departmental student association
 - Increasing students' communication skills
 - The Chair is developing a proposal to the Dean to add an instructor and increase teaching assistant contact with students as one means of developing their discipline-specific oral skills
 - The Department will implement tutorials in all second-year courses and is developing a manual on methods of increasing written and oral skills in tutorials
 - Increasing experiential learning opportunities
 - The Department will introduce elements of experiential education in many of its senior courses, including those with a research focus
 - Developing an integrated approach to faculty planning
 - New faculty hires will help support the new minor program in Migration and Ethnic Diversity (M&ED)
 - Identifying an appropriate staffing model
 - The social sciences have recently hired a financial assistant, reducing the burden on the Business Officer
 - Broadening collaboration with the Cities Lab
 - The Department, in partnership with cognate units, will develop two minor programs – the Culture, Creativity, and Cities (CC&C) and the M&ED - both of which will engage external organizations and enrich existing relationships. The Cities Lab will serve as a teaching and research hub for senior courses in those programs.
- Medium Term (1-2 years)
 - Expanding upper-year courses
 - The Department has committed to offering at least two fourth-year courses each semester

- The Department is working with faculty to adjust their graduate teaching responsibilities in order to offer more fourth-year courses in the future
- Increasing experiential learning opportunities
 - The Department will provide significant experiential opportunities within the new CC&C and M&ED minor programs
- Developing an integrated approach to faculty planning
 - The Department will house an expanded faculty complement in a new social sciences building that will be completed in 2016
- Identifying an appropriate staffing model
 - The Social Science units have recently hired a financial assistant, reducing the demand on the Business Officer.
 - The Dean will explore the option of hiring a second Business Officer and will engage the Social Sciences units in a discussion of available resources and future priorities.
- Longer Term (3-5 years)
 - Enhancing the Specialist program
 - The Department will review the Specialist program in three years to assess the impact of curricular changes on enrolment
 - Developing an integrated approach to faculty planning
 - The Department will develop a five-year complement plan and seek base funding for new faculty

The Dean's Office will follow up annually with the unit to assess progress.

5 Executive Summary

The reviewers identified the programs' strengths as the positive morale and leadership within the Department and the strong faculty commitment to enhancing the curriculum and program delivery. The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: enhancing the Specialist program; strengthening students' communication skills and experiential opportunities; and integrating faculty and staff planning. To enhance the appeal of the Specialist, the Department has created greater flexibility in the program and will increase its upper-year course offerings. The Department will strengthen student communication through increased contact in discipline courses with instructors and teaching assistants and will also expand experiential components in many courses. In partnership with cognate units, the Department will develop two minor programs through which students may also strengthen their communication skills and experiential learning. The Department will develop a five-year faculty complement plan and seek base funding for new hires. The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs concluded that the Decanal response adequately addressed the review recommendations.