



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

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| <b>Programs Reviewed:</b>             | Health Studies – Population Health, B.Sc. (Hons.): Major, Major Co-op<br>Health Studies – Health Policy, B.A. (Hons.): Major, Major Co-op  |
| <b>Unit Reviewed:</b>                 | Department of Health Studies, University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC)   |
| <b>Commissioning Officer:</b>         | Dean and Vice-Principal (Academic), UTSC   |
| <b>Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):</b> | 1. Olena Hankivsky, School of Public Policy, Simon Fraser University<br>2. Elizabeth Watkins, Department of Anthropology, History and Social Medicine, University of California, San Francisco<br>3. Annalee Yassi, School of Population and Public Health, University of British Columbia |
| <b>Date of Review Visit:</b>          | May 31 - June 1, 2016  |
| <b>Date Reported to AP&amp;P:</b>     | November 1, 2016   |

*Unless otherwise noted, all bulleted comments apply to all programs reviewed.*

## 1 Outcome

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The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P) requested a follow-up report to update the Committee on the planned restructuring, including strengthening leadership within the unit, as well as plans for the two degree options. The follow-up report will be considered by the AP&P at the Cycle 2 meeting in 2017-18.

## 2 Significant Program Strengths

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- Notable commitment of the faculty, staff, students, and administration to the success of the program and enabling it to realize its full potential
- Program fills a unique and exciting niche in health studies and is at the leading edge in Canada for health humanities

- Immensely popular with students, who appreciate the quality of the educational experience provided by the Health Sciences faculty
- Excellent advising and support staff
- Opportunity to become a leader in training the next generation of workers and scholars in this field

### 3 Opportunities for Program Enhancement

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- Creating an appropriate academic home for Health Studies, which would provide a base for content knowledge, research activity, and program delivery
- Reconsidering the programs' curricular pathways to facilitate student learning and highlight the programs' interdisciplinary strengths
- Reviewing the faculty complement size and structure to ensure balance and adequate support for the academic programs
- Better distributing and more appropriately supporting administrative duties

### 4 Implementation Plan

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

#### Immediate Term (6 months)

- Creating an appropriate academic home for Health Studies
  - The Dean's Office has actively engaged with the Health Studies faculty, the Department of Anthropology, and the Provost's Office to explore alternative administrative structures, including EDU: B, EDU: A, and department status. The Dean's Office, in consultation with the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs, is working closely with the Health Studies group with a goal of making a decision regarding the optimal pathway to follow by the end of the year.

#### Medium Term (1-2 years)

- Reconsidering the programs' curricular pathways
  - The Health Studies faculty arrived at a consensus at the broad level about the changes they would like to make over the course of the next year. These include developing a new introductory course in Epidemiology and introducing a new freestanding Minor in Health Humanities. There is also consensus that, as they continue to modify their curriculum, the faculty will promote interdisciplinarity, and focus more attention on scaffolding and continuity of courses from one level to the next.
  - The Health Studies faculty are considering ways to integrate the BA and BSc streams into a single program. This will include establishing a core of courses that will be required of all students. Upon completion of the core, students would then be able to take additional science or social science/humanities courses. Students taking sciences courses would be working towards a BSc, while

students taking social science/humanities courses would be working towards a BA. This structure would ensure that all students are well grounded in a core interdisciplinary approach to health studies, and also able to concentrate their studies at the upper levels.

#### Longer Term (3-5 years)

- Reviewing the faculty complement size and structure
  - The Dean's Office has allocated three new positions to this group over the next three years, one of which is being searched in 2016-17. At present the complement consists of two full professors, four assistant professors and one assistant professor, teaching stream. The Dean's Office is supportive of mid or later career hires in the searches that will take place over the next three years to provide a more balanced demographic distribution.
- Better distributing and more appropriately supporting administrative duties
  - The Dean's Office will ask UTSC HR Services to review the staffing needs of the unit, and will consider their recommendations.

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

## 5 Executive Summary

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The reviewers identified the programs' strengths as the notable commitment of the faculty, staff, students, and administration to the success of the program; the unique and exciting niche at the leading edge in Canada for health studies; popularity with students, who appreciate the quality of the educational experience provided by the Health Sciences faculty; excellent advising and support staff; and the opportunity to become a leader in training the next generation of workers and scholars in this field. The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: creating an appropriate academic home for Health Studies; reconsidering the programs' curricular pathways to facilitate student learning and highlight the programs' interdisciplinary strengths; reviewing the faculty complement size and structure to ensure balance and adequate support for the academic programs; and better distributing and more appropriately supporting administrative duties. The Dean's Office has actively engaged with the Health Studies faculty, the Department of Anthropology, and the Provost's Office to explore alternative administrative structures. The faculty arrived at a broad consensus on curricular changes, and the faculty will promote interdisciplinarity, and focus more attention on scaffolding and continuity of courses. The Health Studies faculty are considering ways to integrate the BA and BSc streams into a single program. The Dean's Office has allocated three new positions to this group over the next three years, one of which is being searched in 2016-17. The Dean's Office will ask UTSC HR Services to review the staffing needs of the unit, and will consider their recommendations. The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P) requested a follow-up report to update the Committee on the planned restructuring, including

strengthening leadership within the unit, as well as plans for the two degree options. The follow-up report will be considered by the AP&P at the Cycle 2 meeting in 2017-18.