

FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

Institutional Quality Assurance Program (IQAP) Review

Bachelor of Commerce Program

Date of Review: April 22 – 23, 2019

In accordance with the University Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), this final assessment report provides a synthesis of the external evaluation and the internal response and assessments of the undergraduate program delivered by DeGroot School of Business. This report identifies the significant strengths of the program, together with opportunities for program improvement and enhancement, and it sets out and prioritizes the recommendations that have been selected for implementation.

The report includes an Implementation Plan that identifies who will be responsible for approving the recommendations set out in the Final Assessment Report; who will be responsible for providing any resources entailed by those recommendations; any changes in organization, policy or governance that will be necessary to meet the recommendations and who will be responsible for acting on those recommendations; and timelines for acting on and monitoring the implementation of those recommendations.

Executive Summary of the Review

In accordance with the Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), DeGroot School of Business submitted a self-study in April 2019 to the Vice-Provost, Faculty to initiate the cyclical program review of its undergraduate program. The approved self-study presented program descriptions, learning outcomes, and analyses of data provided by the Office of Institutional Research and Analysis. Appendices to the self-study contained all course outlines associated with the program and the CVs for each full-time member in the department.

Two arm's length external reviewers, one from Manitoba and the other from Alberta, and one internal reviewer were endorsed by the Dean, DeGroot School of Business and selected by the Vice-Provost, Faculty. The review team reviewed the self-study documentation and then conducted a site visit to McMaster University on April 22 – 23, 2019. The visit included interviews with the Provost and Vice-President (Academic); Associate Vice-President, Faculty, Associate Dean, and meetings with groups of current students, full-time faculty and support staff.

The Associate Dean and the Dean of the DeGroot School of Business submitted responses to the Reviewers' Report (June 2019). Specific recommendations were discussed and clarifications and corrections were presented. Follow-up actions and timelines were included.

The review team provided a comprehensive report with actionable recommendations for the Bachelor of Commerce (Honours) Program. The recommendations focus on improving student learning and

student experience. For student learning, recommendations relate to the number of required courses both inside and outside of the faculty as well as processes for better coordination and staffing of courses. For student experience, recommendations relate to the uneven student engagement in the program and extra-curricular activities.

The DeGroot School of Business is very appreciative of the reviewers and their recommendations. DeGroot is in the beginning stages of a B.Com Curriculum Redesign, thus, these recommendations are extremely relevant and timely. The Associate Dean along with the Decanal Team and Student Experience Office will begin working on the implementation of the recommendations over the next year.

Strengths

- Direct entry for students from high school
- Attracts high quality domestic and international students
- Capable and energized faculty; outstanding support staff
- The faculty provides a wide range of experiential learning opportunities (e.g. internships, case competitions, 24 hour case, career counselling)
- Programs are accredited by external professional/business organizations (e.g., BTM, CHRP, CPA)
- New building under construction will significantly enhance the physical teaching and student engagement environment

Areas for Enhancement or Improvement

- More emphasis needed on strategically developing online/blended learning courses. The program office should strategically identify courses where online/blended learning will be most useful and then convert courses into this format, and provide financial resources to help instructors make the transition
- More systematic focus on developing general (and discipline specific) data analytics capabilities. Students should be able to create a minor in data analytics, or at least have some systematic exposure to data analytics in their area of expertise
- Be more responsive to new (e.g., digital marketing, sustainability, soft skills) and broader contextual developments in the business environment (e.g., corporate social responsibility, sustainability, entrepreneurship).

Summary of the Reviewers' Recommendations with the Department's and Dean's Responses

Recommendation	Proposed Follow-Up	Responsibility for Leading Follow-Up	Timeline for Addressing Recommendation
1. The number of courses students are <u>required</u> to take <u>outside</u> the	The curriculum committee is reviewing the degree requirements as part of	Associate Dean (Academic)	This recommendation is being addressed as part of the B.Com Curriculum Redesign

faculty should be reduced.	an overall B.Com Redesign. The appropriate number of required courses outside of the faculty will be a key discussion point.		Process. The B.Com redesign will be incremental with a goal of major components being implemented within the next 4 years.
2. The number of courses students are <u>required</u> to take <u>inside</u> the faculty should be scaled back.	The curriculum committee is reviewing the degree requirements as part of an overall B.Com Redesign. The appropriate number of required courses inside of the faculty will be a key discussion point.	Associate Dean (Academic)	This recommendation is being addressed as part of the B.Com Curriculum Redesign Process. The B.Com redesign will be incremental with a goal of major components being implemented within the next 4 years.
3. The sequence of courses needs to be reconfigured. Right now students take too many breadth courses and not enough courses in their area of specialization during the first two years of the program.	The curriculum committee is reviewing the program sequencing as part of the overall B.Com Redesign. Discussions will include allowing for more business courses in level 1 and then opportunity for business electives in level 2.	Associate Dean (Academic)	This recommendation is being addressed as part of the B.Com Curriculum Redesign Process. The B.Com redesign will be incremental with a goal of major components being implemented within the next 4 years.
4. Student Engagement is uneven (bimodal with some students engaging extensively in various extra-curricular activities, and some being disengaged). Students could be assigned to cohorts and/or required to engage in at least on additional extra-curricular activity.	The Associate Dean, Student Experience Office, DeGroote Commerce Society and Faculty are collaborating to increase student engagement. Mandatory experiential learning activities have been added to level 1 and will added to level 2. The curriculum committee is addressing student engagement as part of the B.Com Redesign –	Associate Dean (Academic) Student Experience Office DeGroote Commerce Society	New initiatives to increase student engagement will be implemented for level 2 and levels ¾ students in the 2019/20 school year. Additional initiatives will be created and added over the next 4 years.

	cohorts and other avenues to promote student engagement are being discussed.		
5. There is a need for more formal co-ordination of multiple sections of required classes, sequences of courses in a particular area (e.g. financial accounting), and a more formal plan for how different types of faculty (permanent and non-permanent) are assigned to courses and extra-curricular activities.	<p>The Dean and Decanal Team will work with Area Chairs to provide formal coordination of multiple sections of required classes.</p> <p>In addition, the Areas will be asked to review and report on the sequencing of courses in a particular area, with recommendations and implementation plans for any necessary changes to sequencing.</p> <p>The Dean and Decanal Team will work with the Area Chairs to develop a process for assigning faculty to courses and extra-curricular activities.</p>	Dean and Decanal Team and Area Chairs	<p>The Dean and Decanal Team will work with the Area Chairs over the next 2 years to ensure coordination of multiple section classes.</p> <p>The Dean and Decanal Team will ask the Areas to review and report on the sequencing of courses in a particular area over the next year, with a plan for changes to be implemented over the next 2 years.</p>
6. There are too many departments, and there is need for more tenure track/tenured faculty for the size and complexity of the teaching programs. The number of departments should be reduced substantially.	The Dean will consult with the Provost on the need for more faculty and the number of departments.	Dean	The Dean will consult with the Provost over the next year regarding the number of faculty and departments.
7. The faculty needs more and better data for internal decision making. The faculty should benchmark itself against	DeGroote has hired an analytics officer to provide better data and analysis to support internal decision making. Metrics are being developed and	Associate Dean with Analytics Office and Student Experience Office	The Analytics Officer has been hired. Development of metrics and initial data gathering has begun. The metric development and data

peers/closest competitors on both curriculum and extra-curricular activities	data is beginning to be gathered for all aspects of the B.Com program. This data and analysis will be used for key strategic decisions as well as for benchmarking analysis.		gathering process will continue to evolve to support internal decision making with a goal of the initial key metrics being complete within the next year.
--	--	--	---

Dean’s Response, DeGroote School of Business:

The Dean would like to thank the external reviewers and the internal reviewer. Their review was extensive and most helpful to the School going forward.

The comprehensive and actionable assessment of the B.Com program is very timely and valuable as the School begins a curriculum redesign. The Associate Dean (Academic) has addressed the recommendations via the above implementation plan. The majority of the recommendations will provide guidance for the curriculum redesign.

The Dean would like to highlight that recommendation 6 related to the number of departments and need for more faculty will require consultation with the Provost and President. This recommendation is not directly relevant to the B.Com program and thus will be discussed in a broader context and not as part of the curriculum redesign.

Quality Assurance Committee Recommendation:

McMaster’s Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) reviewed the above documentation and the committee recommends that the program should follow the regular course of action with a progress report and subsequent full external cyclical review to be conducted no later than 8 years after the start of the last review.