

October 3, 2023

To: UPEI Senate

From: Academic Planning and Curriculum Committee (APCC)

Subject: Annual Report to Senate (2022-23 Activities of APCC)

Terms of Reference

The Academic Planning and Curriculum Committee (APCC) of Senate has the following Terms of Reference.

- To review existing programs and policies with a focus on quality assurance and developing initiatives.
- To report to Senate the results of reviews carried out under (1) and, as appropriate, to make policy and program recommendations to Senate.
- To consider curriculum issues of general academic interest and make recommendations to Senate regarding these issues.
- To review course offerings, inter-faculty offerings and curriculum requirements where appropriate and to consider new courses and changes in courses and make appropriate recommendations to Senate.
- To draw Senate's attention to, and make recommendations regarding, those changes in curriculum which have implications in terms of staffing or affect other Departments, Schools, Faculties, or support areas such as the Library and Information Technology Systems and Services.
- The Committee will report as needed and submit an annual summary report of activities to Senate in September.

APCC has overall responsibility for implementing the UPEI Senate policy on Quality Assurance of Academic Programs. This policy outlines the need for the University to carry out program reviews on an ongoing and regular 7 year cycle for the purpose of:

- encouraging reflection on the mission of the unit and achievement of that mission;
- encouraging planning and identification of strategic directions;
- improving teaching, research and service;
- promoting accountability within the framework of University autonomy; and
- informing society about the activities of the University and its academic units.

Committee Composition

The composition of the committee includes: Vice-President, Academic and Research (Chair); Deans; Associate Registrar; University Librarian; 1 student nominated by the Student Union and elected by Senate; and 1 graduate student nominated by the Graduate Student Association and elected by Senate.

The Equity, Diversity and Inclusion champion of the committee is the Dean of Education, Dr. Miles Turnbull. The EDI champion initiates appropriate places to start discussions about diversity and inclusion. They would help to regularly inform members of the committee about UPEI's [EDI strategy](#). Also they would support the committee's work by sharing information about the importance of EDI principles in APCC activities and ways to strengthen UPEI's commitment to those core principles.

Curriculum and Program Changes

In addition to individual motions of curriculum reports over the past year, the Academic Planning and Curriculum Committee considered and approved numerous proposals of significant program changes in academic year 2022-23. A sample list is provided below.

- Diversity and Social Justice Studies (DSJS): curriculum changes including 4 deleted courses, 3 cross-listing deletions from other departments, and 8 replaced new courses.
- Sociology / Anthropology: significant curriculum changes in response to past QA program review, including 16 course deletions, and 10 new course proposals.
- Financial Mathematics: changes to the requirements for a major in Financial Mathematics, with two courses and their labs replaced by another course, and two further courses related to predictive analytics added in response to the removal of the actuarial science professional exam from associateship requirements.
- Climate Change and Adaptation: replaced a 1st year introductory course, Surveying Cultural Landscapes in the Environmental Humanities, with a new course, Introduction to Climate Change, for students to gain a broader knowledge of climate change.
- Physics: calendar entry changes for the Minor in Medical and Biological Physics, and changes in course requirements to expand the Minor in both curriculum breadth and experiential opportunities, in preparation to create a new Major in Biological Physics.
- Sustainable Design Engineering: 15 cross-level listing changes between senior undergraduate and graduate courses to expand the course offerings for masters and doctoral students. Graduate students have separate course requirements than undergraduates in these cross-listed courses.
- IKERAS: 18 new courses in preparation for a new major program in Indigenous studies, including topics of decolonization, Mi'kmaq of Eastern Canada, Mi'kmaq language, Wabanaki Confederacy, Spiritualities, Peace and Friendship Treaties, Indigenous Justice, Gardening and Meditative Practices, Wabanaki Legends, and others.
- Paramedicine: program name change (in response to an MPHEC review) from Bachelor of Science in Paramedicine, to Bachelor of Applied Health (Paramedicine).

Academic Program Reviews

During the academic year 2022-23, the following program reviews were completed.

- Diversity and Social Justice Studies
- Bachelor of Integrated Studies
- Political Science
- Faculty of Education Graduate Studies
- Psychology Undergraduate Program

The next group of internal reviews to be initiated include the following programs.

- University 1010, 1020, 1030
- Sociology and Anthropology
- Modern Languages
- Religious Studies
- MAIS Island Studies
- Chemistry
- Kinesiology
- Climate Change and Adaptation
- BSc Biotechnology
- MSc Sustainable Design Engineering

Within one month of a QA program review site visit, the Advisory Team provides a review report and recommendations. This report is shared with the program being reviewed and APCC. Program leads (such as the Dean, Chair or Coordinator) are then invited to APCC to present the program area's response to the report and recommendations through an action plan. The action plan outlines the programming area's approach to implementing recommendations and/or priority initiatives that enable continuous improvement to student education and experience. Action plans require an annual update to APCC.

Annual progress reports that have been provided to APCC in 2022-23 for reviews carried out in previous years include:

- Faculty of Arts (Economics)
- Faculty of Business (Undergraduate Programming)
- Faculty of Education (Undergraduate Programming)
- Faculty of Science (Environmental Studies)
- Faculty of Science (Physics)
- Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (Graduate Programming)

MPHEC Review of UPEI's Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures

An institutional review of UPEI's QA policies and procedures was conducted on March 13 – 14, 2023 by an MPHEC review panel. The purpose was to confirm that reviews have occurred periodically to ensure the ongoing quality of academic programs and student services. APCC was engaged in this QA Monitoring (QAM) throughout the review process.

An overall positive review found that UPEI's policy and guidelines provide a firm foundation for quality assurance through cyclical program reviews. Since the last QAM review in 2008-09, UPEI has been diligent in addressing the recommendations made in the 1st cycle report and has made significant changes to its QA policies and procedures. Based on interview sessions, reviewers found three focal points are increasingly important to UPEI as an institution: experiential learning; EDI; and expansion of research and scholarship. QA processes have been more proactive, shared, and collaborative than the past. Also, UPEI's QA framework and MPHEC's QA framework are well aligned.

Also, there were several areas of improvement identified by the MPHEC review:

- Follow-up on QA reviews and monitoring of action plans
- Communication / awareness of QA across campus
- Composition of APCC
- QA reviews of programs at UPEI Cairo campus
- Review of academic support units within the QA policy
- Clarity around accredited programs within the QA policy
- Articulation of student learning outcomes

An Action Plan in response to reviewers' recommendations from the assessment was developed and endorsed by APCC in August, 2023, and subsequently by Senate at its September, 2023, meeting. A majority of recommendations made to UPEI were related to process / procedural items rather than larger fundamental / structural aspects. Almost half of the recommendations related to APCC and/or Senate (including Office of the VPAR to operationalize) and others align with institutional level initiatives, communications and processes.

Acknowledgements

Internal quality assurance reviews take several months to complete and require data from various University units. Information needs for each review are coordinated by the Office of the VPAR in collaboration with the Director of Strategic Planning, UPEI Registrar's Office, the Office of Institutional Data, Office of Research Services, UPEI Financial Services, and the Robertson Library. APCC is involved in each review at different stages.

The participation of faculty members as internal reviewers on Advisory Teams is gratefully acknowledged for UPEI quality assurance reviews. Robertson Library librarians take part in each review as data providers and meeting participants. In addition, numerous stakeholder groups (including staff, students, graduates, and others) engage in the review process to ensure a holistic approach to providing/gathering valuable feedback for the purpose of continual improvement.

Expert external reviewers from universities across Canada participated as Advisory Team members in UPEI internal quality assurance reviews completed or initiated in 2022.

Universities represented include:

- Trent University
- Mount Allison University (x2)
- Mount Saint Vincent University
- Memorial University
- St. Francis Xavier University (x2)
- Wilfred Laurier University
- McGill University
- Thompsons River University

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. F. Naterer".

Greg F. Naterer, PhD, P.Eng.
Chair, Academic Planning and Curriculum Committee