

Four Year Report IQAP

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In the four years since the IQAP report for Religions and Cultures was submitted RLCT has continued to build on the strengths noted by the external reviewers including high impact teaching practices and interdisciplinary approaches to religious studies. With limited staffing resources we have been able to offer a wide variety of cutting edge courses including the newly created “Religion, Justice and Animals’ and “Religion and Social Justice”

We implemented three of the our key suggestions given at the end the report and now have the ATLA database recommended by the reviewers available for Nipissing students. We have divided the RCLT 1025 “World Religions” into two courses RLCT 2146 World Religions: East and RLCT 2147 World Religions: West All our offerings, except for one, are now three credits. We have offered Summer/Spring courses on line for three consecutive years.

We have not implemented the suggestion regarding a second year required course. The reason for this is that historically theory courses of this type for religion majors have not enrolled well. For the past four years we have been concerned with stabilizing our numbers as the changes in the Education faculty impacted RLCT directly. Now that our numbers have

stabilized and are growing we are planning to revisit this idea at our next retreat.

In the period since the review we have created a new Introductory course as suggested. This course RLCT 1206 “What Does It All Mean?” serves as a gateway into Religious Studies, introducing students to the field and key concepts, and has consistently enrolled well. Opportunities for students to engage in experiential learning have included taking students to the Sons of Jacob Synagogue and had invited speakers such Elder John Sawyer and Lorraine Whiteduck Liberty speak in our classes. Students in Dr Susan Srigley’s courses have also volunteered with hospice care in North Bay.

In as far as we can RLCT has worked with Advancement to improve our presence on the website and now includes written testimonials from former students and a video interview was done with former student Dr Michael Agnew who is now an academic working at McMaster. We have also created a Facebook page that is updated regularly for both current students and alumni.

In the fall of 2017 RLCT participated along with English Studies in a meet and greet for students where they could have t-shirts printed with the logo of their department. RLCT faculty has participated in all the iterations of the Interdisciplinary Offerings at Nipissing. We have worked toward Indigenizing our curriculum and Dr Cindy Pelletier has met with me and with the entire department to discuss this. We have also been in communication with Social Work and Nursing to ensure that our offerings

are available and attractive to their students. As a result of these changes we have seen the numbers in RLCT rise for two consecutive years.