

FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

PROGRAM UNDER REVIEW

PROGRAM	SENATE APPROVAL DATE	PREPARED BY
School of Nursing	December 13, 2019	Provost and Vice-President

A. SUMMARY OF REVIEW PROCESS & LISTING OF PROGRAMS UNDER REVIEW

SELF-STUDY REVIEW TIMELINE	DATE
1. Self-Study Presented to AQAPC	Mar 1, 2019
2. Site Visit Conducted	Jun 17-19, 2019
3. Reviewer's Report Received	Aug 6, 2019
4. Internal Reviewers Response Received	Sept 17, 2019
5. Dean's Response Received	Oct. 5, 2019

The members of the review committee were:

- Dr. Callie Mady (Internal)
- Dr. Victoria Smye, Western University (External)
- Dr. Janet McCabe, University of Ontario Institute of Technology (External)

The academic programs offered by the Department which were examined as part of the review included:

This review was conducted under the terms and conditions of the IQAP approved by Senate on May 17, 2013.

B. PROGRAM STRENGTHS

External Reviewers: It is clear that Academic Priorities of the University are reflected across the three programs. Academic and research excellence are exhibited in the outcome expectations, the student experience is exemplified by the different programs and entry points (e.g., standard 4 year, bridging programs, online flexibility, and second entry), and community engagement is central to the success of the programs through placements. In addition, research excellence begins at the undergraduate level, with opportunities for students to expand on their own "intellectual passions by participating in and leading original research" (Self-Study Report, Strategic Plan, 2015-2020, p. 4).

C. OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT AND ENHANCEMENT

Governance Structure/Leadership

External Reviewers Recommendation #1: *Appointment of a Director of Nursing by the Provost/Vice-Provost or Dean – 5 year term with an opportunity for renewal. We recognize this is a challenge given the collective agreement, however, a title change could rectify this issue (e.g., Associate Dean, Nursing). We highly recommend this be an academic nurse (PhD RN) given that Administrators in these roles need to guide the vision of the programs – this capability would require a strong link to nursing and the current trends in nursing and health care locally, provincially and nationally. Nursing is at a particular historical juncture with an associated need to shape nursing programs so they remain relevant across local, provincial and national contexts. The appointment of an Associate Dean of Nursing would provide much needed stability for the school.*

Unit's Response: We recognize that there are benefits to having a director that is an academic nurse. We are committed to encouraging our colleagues to serve in that role for, at present, a three-year term according to the collective agreement. We will share this recommendation with members of the Nipissing University Faculty Association. As this first year of the university restructuring unfolds, we will continue to provide updates to administration regarding our administrative needs which may result in a request for an Associate Dean, Nursing.

Dean's Response: Administration fully understands the need for a Registered Nurse as a Director, as per the current structure, or as an Associate Dean, if further structural changes are made that would support this. The current Associate Dean of EPS is serving as Interim Director of the School of Nursing as no one from the unit was willing to serve as Director. I am unclear as to why the unit would consult with NUFA on this matter.

Provost's Response: It is imperative that the School of Nursing selects a Director from amongst themselves, otherwise the Dean will, with my full support, continue to pursue other structures through which we can continue to support all our Nursing programmes.

External Reviewers Recommendation #2: *Policies & procedures need to be in place to provide structure and consistency across the nursing programs, e.g., regulations related to progression requirements need to be clearly articulated to students.*

Unit's Response: The restructuring of the university has encouraged conversations not only across programs but across schools. As such, we have begun discussions about clinical placement policies and procedures and are moving toward a similar practice across schools. Members of the administrative team also have an upcoming meeting scheduled to discuss progression requirements. In addition, the School of Nursing struck the scholarship advisory committee in order to increase sharing of policies and scholarly work across the programs.

Dean's Response: We have made progress in developing policies that span all Nursing programs and across the three professional schools. We have proposed common degree progression requirements and anticipate them being approved by Senate by December 2019.

Provost's Response: I support the Dean's response.

External Reviewers Recommendation #3: *Committees and accountability structures should be clearly outlined (e.g., a diagrammatic representation would be very helpful alongside a detailed narrative.*

Unit's Response: Human Resources has a diagrammatic representation of the accountability structures in place as of January 2019. We are committed to reviewing the document and suggesting adjustments and/or additions/deletions where appropriate.

Dean's Response: Internal staff and faculty accountability structures are the purview of Human Resources. The Committees and related accountability structures continue to be reviewed by the unit for effectiveness and efficiency.

Provost's Response: I believe this work is ongoing.

External Reviewers Recommendation #4: *Student representation on most School Committees is highly recommended, e.g., School Council.*

Unit's Response: We are open to having student representation on committees. Committee chairs will review committee structures and make recommendations to allow for student representation where appropriate. We will also look to our Nipissing University Nursing Society students for their input. SPP is investigating including an SPP student representative in Faculty meetings as well as periodic scheduling of open forums to enhance communication beyond episodic conversations.

Dean's Response: I agree with the above.

Provost's Response: I agree.

Curricula and the Program (capital 'P')

External Reviewers Recommendation #5: *The nursing Program, mission, vision and values need to be clearly articulated; we recommend these also be consistent across programs.*

Unit's Response: In Faculty meetings and in meetings with the director, we have highlighted the need to begin such discussions. These discussions will begin this academic year.

Dean's Response: The university is currently in the process of re-evaluating its strategic goals. It is my expectation that the mission, vision and values will be closely related to the institution's statement.

Provost's Response: The connection between the mission, vision, values and learning outcomes should be a topic of discussion in this dialogue.

External Reviewers Recommendation #6: *A shared philosophical underpinning for the Program, which is consistently taken up across the 3 nursing programs.*

Unit's Response: We will discuss the feasibility of adding this to the discussions above (i.e., mission and vision) and the order in which such conversations need to be had.

Dean's Response: The university is currently in the process of re-evaluating its strategic goals. It is my expectation that the mission, vision and values will be closely related to the institution's statement.

Provost's Response: I believe this is covered by recommendation 5. But I do like the emphasis that underpinnings for all programmes should be the same.

External Reviewers Recommendation #7: *Evaluation of CASPer™ should be conducted, and then consideration given to weighting, and use across programs.*

Unit's Response: Meetings have been scheduled to have this conversation beginning August 26, 2019. These discussions can then be broadened to include a larger group.

Dean's Response: I have recommended that, in order to truly evaluate the effectiveness of CASPer, it is necessary to suspend face-to-face interviewing of all applicants. This practice currently represents a significant additional burden on our FT and adjunct faculty.

Provost's Response: I am in full agreement with the Dean.

External Reviewers Recommendation #8: *The nature of the curriculum, and the unique partnerships within the SPP may result in inequities in the types of experiences students engage in. Some consideration should be given to ensuring variety of experiences are provided for students, this could be managed through internal processes and/or through a change in when students engage with their 'home' institution.*

Unit's Response: Changes in partnership relationships and governmental changes (e.g., changes in staffing models within health care institutions) have led us to expand our variety of clinical placements. We will continue to seek diverse experiences.

Dean's Response: We are continuing conversations with our partners about the number and scope of clinical placements.

Provost's Response: Work is ongoing.

Faculty and Staff

External Reviewers Recommendation #9: *Consideration should be given to appointing faculty in a way that allows for them to be engaged across the programs at the North Bay site. This would provide a wider span of opportunity for both faculty and students and help to address the faculty needs of the blended RPN-BScN program. In addition, it would support the ability for faculty to student mentorship to be consistent across the programs.*

Unit's Response: Administration has begun investigating how to appoint Faculty members to the School of Nursing rather than to a specific program. This may require a reissuing of letters of appointment.

Dean's Response: The intent is to issue addendums to all appointment letters for faculty positions within the School of Nursing, to indicate that they can teach across degree programs within the School. This has not yet been actioned.

Provost's Response: I agree with this recommendation.

External Reviewers Recommendation #10: *Professional development and the development of the Teaching/Learning Center is seen as an important element to support the ongoing re-visioning and development of the program and curricula.*

Unit's Response: We look forward to welcoming our Dean of Teaching. In addition to the suggested areas of support, we hope to have technological support in particular for our Blended Program.

Dean's Response: The Dean of Teaching is now on campus and will be consulting with all faculties in order to provide appropriate support. We look forward to the opening of the Teaching Hub.

Provost's Response: This work is now ongoing.

External Reviewers Recommendation #11: *The recognition of the adjunct faculty (SPP) as integral members of the Nipissing's School of Nursing's team is important to address (i.e., inclusion on committees, relationship to the University).*

Unit's Response: We recognize the importance of communicating to all faculty members across programs while acknowledging the diverse requirements of having different employers. As it pertains to SPP in particular, discussions

have begun between the program manager and the director. We will continue these discussions with the view to broaden understanding and offering greater inclusion.

Dean's Response: Adjunct faculty are clearly defined by university policy. We acknowledge and value their contributions.

Provost's Response: I agree with the above.

Students

External Reviewers Recommendation #12: *Lines of communication need to be clearly articulated (including a diagrammatic) especially in relation to navigating issues in clinical. Clarity is also required regarding resource navigation; student's currently note they are being "bounced around" (i.e. program office to Registrar and back) – they do not know where to go to have their needs met – this was articulated on both Day 1 and Day 2 (i.e., at both sites) during student meetings.*

Unit's Response: As mentioned above, the director has begun conversations across Schools and programs with the view to having clear processes that are cross-programs. In particular, these discussions have focused on issues in clinical. Once common processes and policies are in place, we will communicate them to students through their handbooks, including the consideration of providing a diagrammatic representation.

Dean's Response: This is in progress, with changes to the handbooks being considered for inclusion in the Academic Calendar.

Provost's Response: I agree with the above.

External Reviewers Recommendation #13: *Students expressed the view they require clearer and consistent expectations regarding evaluation components of the program, in particular, noted on the SPP site.*

Unit's Response: This spring the Dean and members of the SPP team have engaged in discussions pertaining to evaluation that included the consideration of students' perceptions. The SPP Faculty engages in semester reviews prior delivery. The syllabi for Years 1 and 2 are assessed for gaps and clarity prior each semester. Efforts will be made for increasing inter-rater reliability in grading assignments using the established rubric.

Dean's Response: Faculty has been responsive to my suggestions for clearer rubrics. This would support students' understanding of key learning outcomes and consistency in assignment evaluations.

Provost's Response: This work is ongoing.

External Reviewers Recommendation #14: *Students do not clearly understand the course evaluation process. Clear communication to students addressing who sees these evaluations, anonymity, their purpose, and the timing of their release to faculty is important*

Unit's Response: We will continue to administer student opinion surveys as per the collective agreement. We will engage students in conversations so as to gather more detail to know how to better respond to their needs. We will endeavour to highlight the process to students so we can gain the richest data to inform our teaching.

Dean's Response: Online surveys with questions aimed at soliciting student suggestions for various aspects of the different programs can be distributed via Google Sheets.

Provost's Response: The system for student evaluation of courses is going to be under review over the next year.

Resources: Needs expressed by faculty

External Reviewers Recommendation #15: *Consider how and where exams are scheduled and the potential impact this has on distance learners. Consider allowing students to schedule at alternate campuses to support the blended learning approach.*

Unit's Response: We have had discussions about online exams and have offered technological support to faculty to offer a stress reduced exam offering. We will engage the registrar in discussions pertaining to offering options at alternate campuses. As of the fall the registrar's office will oversee tools and monitoring of online exams.

Dean's Response: Scheduling of exams is the purview of the Registrar's Office. Conversations about Lockdown Browser and training proctors to monitor same are ongoing. Currently, all professors who choose to offer online exams via Lockdown Browser are offered training.

Provost's Response: Agree with the Dean.

External Reviewers Recommendation #16: *Provision of a curriculum designer to support ongoing curricula review and redesign on both sites.*

Unit's Response: This request has been shared with the Dean. In the meantime, we will engage with the incoming Dean of Teaching to support our curricula review and design processes.

Dean's Response: The Dean of Teaching is now on campus and will be consulting with all faculties in order to provide appropriate support. We look forward to the opening of the Teaching Hub.

Provost's Response: All new positions must be sought through the Annual Academic Planning process.

External Reviewers Recommendation #17: *Provision of administrative support for the SPP on-site.*

Unit's Response: The director has begun discussions with the SPP program manager who is, at present, accessing resources on the North Bay campus as support more so than in the past. We will continue to monitor this level of support.

Dean's Response: Agreed. I am aware of the level of support that is required.

Provost's Response: All new positions must be sought through the Annual Academic Planning process.

External Reviewers Recommendation #18: *Provision of a counsellor at the SPP site.*

Unit's Response: The director has approached the assistant vice president and manager of counselling services with the view to providing support to our SPP students. They are working on options to do so and in the meantime, students who have opted into the NUSU health plan can also access therapy and counselling through realcampus.ca.

Dean's Response: We will follow up on this request and work to establish clear timelines for its implementation.

Provost's Response: All new positions must be sought through the Annual Academic Planning process.

External Reviewers Recommendation #19: *Enhanced connection with the leadership in North Bay, including on-site SPP visits – students and faculty both expressed a sense of disconnect from the home institution.*

Unit's Response: The director has an on-site visit scheduled for the fall and will make bi-monthly visits and seek student input to enhance our sense of connectedness.

Dean's Response: I will support efforts to increase connection with the North Bay campus. It must however, be acknowledged that, based on the decision to provide programming elsewhere, offsite programs do experience a unique relationship with the main campus.

Provost's Response: I will support the Dean.

Research and Scholarship

External Reviewers Recommendation #20: *Continue efforts to support the engagement of undergraduate students in research is key to supporting faculty research programs and to build student interest in research.*

Unit's Response: Student interest in research is built through courses and a variety of opportunities at present. For example, the collaborative program has been reviewed and changed to reflect the need to foster, develop, and support students participating in the SoN research activities. Students from the SPP have also been involved in multiple research projects and have had the opportunity to co-author peer reviewed publications. The students are also heavily involved in the Best Practice Spotlight Organization (BPSO) initiative. We will continue with these opportunities. Moving forward, through the BPSO initiative, NU students will be able to collaborate with international BPSO nursing students to develop a joint project related to the Champions experience and evidence-informed practice.

In addition, we are examining ways by which to better involve students from the Blended program and have plans to encourage student participation in the Champions workshop on Oct 18, 2019.

Additional responses (Unit): In addition to the recommendations addressed above, we would like to share:

- a) Initial discussions have begun to investigate options to offer a graduate program/stream
- b) Discussions with the Dean and former director have begun with the view to examining the admission of indigenous students

Dean's Response:

I am happy to support the above initiatives and have recently provided funding to bring offsite students to campus for the Undergraduate Research Conference.

Provost's Response: I appreciate the quality of engagement and support the above initiatives.

D. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Below are the recommendations that require specific action as a result of the Review, along with the identification of the position or unit responsible for the action in question. Notwithstanding the position or unit identified as the being responsible for specific recommendations, the Dean of the Faculty has the overall responsibility for ensuring that the recommended actions are undertaken

RECOMMENDATION	RESPONSIBLE MEMBER/UNIT	PROJECTED COMPLETION
#1 - Select Director to start July 1, 2020	School of Nursing	April 2020

#2 - Ensure consistency of degree policies, incl. progression requirements. Bring changes to Academic Curriculum Committee	School of Nursing	March 2020
#4 - Address student participation in School committees	School of Nursing	January 2020
#5, 6 - Develop School of Nursing mission, vision, and values to align with Nipissing's mission, vision and values	School of Nursing	March 2020
#7 - Suspend applicant interviews	School of Nursing	As of next intake
#8 - Further diversify clinical placement opportunities	School of Nursing	Ongoing
#9 - Appoint all Nursing faculty to the School of Nursing	Provost	Effective of July 1, 2020
#12 - Develop visual articulations of student advising in the School programmes	School of Nursing	March 2020
#13 - Clarify expectations in SPP	School of Nursing	January 2020
#15, 16 - Apply for staff positions through the established process	School of Nursing	Annual Academic Planning
#20 - Continue to support undergraduate research	School of Nursing	Ongoing