

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Under Nipissing University's Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP) and the Ontario Universities Quality Assurance Framework (QAF), all programs are subject to a comprehensive review at least/at minimum every eight years to ensure that they continue to meet provincial quality assurance requirements and to support their ongoing rigour and coherence. This review was conducted under the terms and conditions of the IQAP approved by Senate on June 29, 2023 and ratified by the Quality Council on May 5, 2023

In academic years 2018-2019 a program review was scheduled for Geography. This was the 2<sup>nd</sup> program review for this program. The timeline of the review was as follows.

### PROGRAM UNDER REVIEW

PROGRAM	SENATE APPROVAL DATE	PREPARED BY
GEOGRAPHY	SEPTEMBER 13, 2019	PROVOST & VICE PRESIDENT

### A. REVIEW TIMELINE

SELF-STUDY REVIEW TIMELINE	DATE
1. Self-Study Presented to AQAPC	March 13, 2019
2. Site Visit Conducted	April 9-10, 2019
3. Reviewer's Report Received	April 17, 2019
4. Department's Response Received	April 29, 2019
5. Dean's Response Received	May 27, 2019

### A. REVIEW SUMMARY

**Two external reviewers conducted the review. During the in-person site visit, the reviewers met with the following groups and individuals:**

- Provost & Vice President, Academic & Research
- Dean of Arts & Science
- Registrar
- Geography students
- Geography faculty members
- Dean of Graduate Studies & Research
- Harris Learning Library – Executive Director & Librarian

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

- Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Geography
- Bachelor of Arts in Geography
- Bachelor of Science in Environmental and Physical Geography

**The follow program strengths were noted:**

The reviewers found the Department of Geography programs to be very strong overall, noting extensive improvements since the 2009 review and strong progress in addressing most prior recommendations. Students are generally satisfied with the program and its instructors, despite some limitations typical of a smaller department. The unit has also developed a robust research profile, supported by new Canada Research Chairs and significant success in securing research funding.

**Summary of review team recommendations:**

The reviewers recommend strengthening the Department of Geography through several key initiatives: enhancing teaching and graduate training by integrating teaching assistants; exploring the creation of a School of Environment to support interdisciplinary collaboration and faculty renewal; and developing a transition plan for Canada Research Chairs to sustain faculty research and retention. They also emphasize improving curriculum and programming through reintroducing labs, developing new Environmental Science and Studies degrees, expanding geomatics training, and reconsidering senior-level course requirements. Additionally, they call for increased support staff, clearer honours thesis guidelines, gradual development of online courses, improved facilities such as outdoor storage, and stronger collaboration with the Registrar's Office to support recruitment and student advising.

**Status:**

**Due date for 2 Year Follow-up Report: 2021**

**Date of next Cyclical Review: 2026**

## B. 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 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 - Role of grad TAs in undergraduate teaching	Dean of Research and Graduate Studies	With Strategic Plan for Graduate Studies (IIIB3 in Annual Academic Plan)
#2 - Articulate a position on the School of Environmental Studies	Dean with stakeholder Departments	May 2020
#4 - Policy on labs	Dean of Research with Faculty Deans	February 2020
#5 - New programme proposal must follow NU IQAP	Dean	As needed
#8 - Review of Honours thesis guidelines	Department	January 2020
#9 - Review of programme delivery	Department	December 2020
#11 - Contribute to SEM plan	Department with Dean in consultation with Registrar	May 2020
#12 - Review 4000-level programme requirements	Department	March 2020