

## 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 2022-23 a program review was scheduled for Bachelor of Arts – Social Welfare and Social Development. This was the 2nd program review for this program. The timeline of the review was as follows.

### PROGRAM UNDER REVIEW

PROGRAM	SENATE APPROVAL DATE	PREPARED BY
Bachelor of Arts – Social Welfare and Social Development	May 10, 2024	Provost and Vice-President

### A. REVIEW TIMELINE

SELF-STUDY REVIEW TIMELINE	DATE
1. Self-Study Presented to AQAPC	October 22, 2021
2. Site Visit Conducted	October 4 – 6, 2023
3. Reviewer’s Report Received	November 2, 2023
4. Department’s Response Received	December 5, 2023
5. Dean’s Response Received	February 12, 2024

### 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 and Vice President, Academic

The Dean and Associate Dean of Arts and Science

Internal Review Committee

Registrar and Associate Registrars

Executive Director, Library and Subject Librarian

Department Chair and Members of the Faculty

Current Students

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

Bachelor of Arts Major

Bachelor of Arts Honours Specialization

**The follow program strengths were noted:**

The Social Welfare and Social Development program is doing a good job and clearly accomplishing its core mandate. The program is fundamentally working, and the faculty should be congratulated on their efforts. Although the faculty are overstretched and the trajectory of the numbers over the last few years is worrying, the program continues to be successful.

**Summary of review team recommendations:**

- The university should enhance its marketing efforts for the Social Welfare and Social Development program, as many students are unaware of its existence. Improved outreach to prospective high school and college students is needed to raise awareness and boost enrolment.
- Any potential merger should not result in a reduction of course releases for administrative duties. Establishing a program coordinator position with a partial course release could help manage administrative tasks more effectively.
- Increase the program's budget, ideally to \$1,000, to provide honoraria for guest speakers and support events that promote the program's profile.
- Formalise hybrid course delivery and highlight it as a selling feature, since many instructors already offer flexible learning options.
- Consider offering summer courses, taught by part-time instructors, to help students graduate faster without adding to the workload of full-time faculty.
- Address the program's inadequate library budget, either by combining resources with similar programs or launching a targeted fundraising initiative.
- If feasible, add courses on "alternative political-economic systems" and "workers' rights and economic justice" in response to student requests, possibly aligning them with a new tenure-track hire.
- Ensure faculty and staff receive adequate Health and Wellness support, including guidance on maintaining a healthy work-life balance, to address stress and prevent burnout.
- Provide mentorship and support to Limited Term Appointments (LTAs) to facilitate their career development and progression toward tenure-track positions. Consider redistributing administrative tasks or offering research release time if converting an LTA to tenure-track.
- Investigate retention and completion rates, particularly for fourth-year students, to identify and resolve barriers affecting student progress through the program.
- Encourage faculty to help students establish a Social Welfare Student Group to foster community, strengthen program identity, and provide a platform for student advocacy.
- Maintain the program's independence for now, as merging with other programs does not offer immediate benefits. If numbers decline and a merger becomes necessary, it should involve creating a new entity rather than simply combining existing programs. Future decisions should consider exciting course content and positive working relationships among faculty.

**Status:**

**Due date for 2 Year Follow-up Report: 2025**

**Date of next Cyclical Review: 2030**

## 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
#10: understand and eliminate barriers to successful degree completion	SWLF faculty, Registrar	September 1, 2024
#1: marketing	SWLF, Dean, Marketing and Recruitment	September 1, 2024
#4: hybrid delivery. This recommendation is unclear. If there is a case to be made for rethinking delivery, then it needs to be delineated. Were the delivery mode to significantly modify the program, then a major modification would need to be proposed to the QC.	SWLF, Director of Teaching and Learning	October 15, 2024

