



School of Professional Studies Quality Assurance Review

Executive Summary

Cape Breton University's School of Professional Studies consists of three departments: Education, Health Sciences & Emergency Management, and Nursing. The programs within these departments include the Bachelor of Education (Elementary and Intermediate), Teacher Education diplomas and certificates, Bachelor of Health Sciences (Public Health), Bachelor of Science Nutrition (transfer option), Bachelor of Technology (Emergency Management), and Bachelor of Science (Nursing).

A Quality Assurance (QA) Review of the School of Professional Studies and its programs was launched in the winter of 2012. A Review Committee (RC) was struck and a self-study report prepared over the months that followed. In late November 2013, two external reviewers, Madeleine Buck, McGill University and Alice Collins, Memorial University of NL, were on campus for a site visit. All meetings took place according to the schedule and an additional meeting with Dr. Dale Keefe, Dean of Research and Graduate Studies, took place at the request of the reviewers.

The reviewers submitted their report with eleven recommendations in January 2014. A summary of these recommendations, along with responses to them from both RC and the Vice-President Academic (VPA), are provided here.

Recommendation 1

Senior administration to re-confirm the present administrative structure of the School of Professional Studies.

Response of the SPS Review Committee to Recommendation 1

There is not widespread consensus among school members on the current administrative structure of the school as numerous perspectives exist. The hope of the Review Committee is that the interim dean and later permanent dean will work with CBU's senior administration to review the SPS school structure so as determine the best future development for CBU.

Response of VPA to Recommendation 1: Agreed

Recommendation 2

The Dean of the School of Professional Studies to lead the development and implementation of a five year collegially constructed Strategic Plan for the SPS.

Response of the SPS Review Committee to Recommendation 2

The three departments of SPS look forward to the involvement of the SPS interim and permanent dean in helping devise a shared school vision including sharing of knowledge and other resources.

Response of VPA to Recommendation 2: Agreed

Recommendation 3

The Vice President Academic and Provost (VPAP) to confirm the faculty complement in Education.

Response of the SPS Review Committee to Recommendation 3

The Department will continue to work with the Dean and VPAP to ensure the faculty complement is adequate to not only offer the programs currently available, but also to enable the Department to develop new, innovative programming and contribute to the growth and the strategic plan of the University. An important consideration in consideration of human resources in the Education Department is that faculty resources support a host of programs at various levels; a Bachelor of Education program, a Masters of Education (Information Technology), offered in conjunction with Memorial University in Newfoundland and numerous, post certified certificates and diplomas for practicing teachers. The Department is fully cognizant of the current market rationalization occurring in the K-12 education system in Nova Scotia and other jurisdictions. This is contributing to a challenging recruitment environment in the B.Ed program. We will collaborate closely with senior management to identify creative strategies to ensure that capacity enrolment within B.Ed course offerings is achieved. However, it must also be noted, that the B.Ed, is offered within a provincially legislated enrolment “cap” that limits its potential for growth. The greatest opportunities for program expansion and enrolment growth in Education, (which are significant) is within the non-B.Ed. programs. The Department is currently moving a number of new credentials forward, including a graduate degree program (Education for Sustainability). Confirmation of an appropriate “core complement” of faculty is essential.

Response of VPA to Recommendation 3

It is not possible to confirm at this time a particular number of faculty members that should be in the Department of Education. As in all other programs, decisions on faculty appointments must be based on sustainable enrolment projections, as well as the strength of analysis in any proposed new academic and research programs.

Recommendation 4

The Chair of Education, in collaboration with the Dean of SPS, to provide leadership for dedicated space for the teaching programs of the Department of Education.

Response of the SPS Review Committee to Recommendation 4

The Department acknowledges the challenges inherent in not having dedicated space. A classroom lab configured to provide for modeling innovative instructional and pedagogical techniques and strategies would directly lead to a higher quality learning experience for students. Providing instructors and students with a space to experiment with alternative classroom arrangements, to facilitate collaborative learning environments, to create and display visual aids and graphic organizers designed to augment differentiated instructional strategies would be an important milestone in the development of the B.Ed program. The Department will continue to work with the

Dean and VPAP to identify opportunities that may arise as other units and departments re-structure and re-organize and suitable space for a classroom laboratory may become available on campus.

Response of VPA to Recommendation 4

Dedication and enhancement of teaching space to specific functions requires a strong, clear case, probably in partnership with the Teaching & Learning Centre. In addition, dedicating teaching space to small enrolment courses is unlikely, so functionally sensible partnerships with other programs often make more sense.

Recommendation 5

The Chair of the Department of Nursing and the VPAP develop a plan to increase enrolment in the B.Sc.N. program taking into consideration the requirement for increased human, physical, and fiscal resources.

Response of the SPS Review Committee to Recommendation 5

We agree that the CBU Nursing department should grow in diverse directions. In addition to growth of admissions to the undergrad program, we believe we should consider other nursing degrees, certificates and courses. There is an abundance of external support (i.e. placement opportunities, potential students, preceptorship, etc.); however, it is essential to have infrastructure in place before growing this program (i.e. funding, staff, physical facilities, technology, etc.). With the current demand for nurses, CBU Department of Nursing supports this recommendation.

Response of VPA to Recommendation 5

Agreed, although any increase in Nursing enrolment would require cooperation in funding from the Province for increased human and other resources, and a model of incremental growth which may differ from the present staffing model.

Recommendation 6

The Department of Nursing, in collaboration with the Dean of Research and Graduate Studies, develop a plan to facilitate and increase nursing scholarship.

- a) **Review the current Nursing Department Service on Internal Committee structure as committee service is consuming much time and detracts from completing scholarly activities.**
- b) **Consider the potential for collaboration and interprofessional research activities within SPS and other departments at CBU.**
- c) **Explore pan-Canadian and international research initiatives and opportunities.**

Response of the SPS Review Committee to Recommendation 6

An active research program that engages both internal and external partners continues to be a priority for the Department of Nursing. With the recent

appointment of the Canada Research Chair and an increase in the number of PhD educated faculty, this research will grow exponentially.

The amount of service required for our successful program can detract from time spent on research; however, with the recently ratified Collective Agreement of a reduction in workload credits for faculty who are researching, this should improve time constraints. In addition, involving NPEs and students in research activities will enhance nursing scholarship. The Department of Nursing supports a research plan to address this recommendation.

Response of VPA to Recommendation 6: Agreed

Recommendation 7

The Chair of the Department of Health Science and Emergency Management to initiate a collegial exercise to develop a mission and vision statement and the setting of curriculum goals and research initiatives for the Department.

Response of the SPS Review Committee to Recommendation 7

The Chair of the Department of Health Science and Emergency Management and those teaching within that department concur with this recommendation.

Response of VPA to Recommendation 7: Agreed

Recommendation 8

The Chair of the Department to work with the Registrar's Office to develop a mechanism for tracking former students in each of the programs in the Department of Health Sciences and Emergency Management.

Response of the SPS Review Committee to Recommendation 8

The Chair of the Department of Health Science and Emergency Management and those teaching within that department concur with this recommendation and will work with the registrar's office to implement this recommendation. Putting a 2-year diploma in human nutrition in place will assist with tracking nutrition students. The department will also support public health students in finding practicum placements and keep contact with all public health students before, during and after practicum placements have been completed. Students will also be tracked before and after the CIPHI exam for numbers taking and performance on the CIPHI exam.

Response of VPA to Recommendation 8: Agreed

Recommendation 9

Chair of the Department, in collaboration with the VPAP, to work toward further upgrading of lab facility (should read facilities).

Response of the SPS Review Committee to Recommendation 9

The chair of the department of Health Sciences and Emergency Management concurs and will with other department members work in collaboration with the VPAP, to work toward further upgrading of lab facility (should read facilities). This includes but is not limited to emergency automatic back up power to fridge and freezer units in room A-207C, bringing ventilation and cooling in room A-118A to satisfactory levels for Dr. Barre and to increased lab space for Dr. Barre next to room A-118A.

Response of VPA to Recommendation 9

This response from the Review Committee seems overly specific to one faculty member's research infrastructure. The general recommendation to maintain and enhance lab infrastructure is accepted, as practicable, with priority on teaching infrastructure. A recommendation to upgrade lab facilities will be included in the 2014-2015 capital budget.

Recommendation 10

The Chair of the Department and faculty member in the Human Nutrition program, in collaboration with the VPAP, oversee the approval of a diploma in the nutrition option.

Response of the SPS Review Committee to Recommendation 10

The Chair of the Department of Health Sciences and Emergency Management, those instructing in that department including faculty member in the Human Nutrition programme concur with this recommendation and will, in collaboration with the VPAP, oversee the approval of a two-year diploma in nutrition at CBU. This diploma will likely mirror the requirements for the first two years of the transfer option. This will further increase numbers in the nutrition transfer option and bring further recognition of CBU as a leader in providing training in healthcare.

Response of VPA to Recommendation 10

A proposal for a Nutrition credential could be submitted to the SPS Executive Committee for consideration. There are concerns around defining a credential based on such a small faculty complement.

Recommendation 11

The Chair of the Department to develop an academic strategic plan for the Emergency Management Program taking into consideration faculty complement (on site) and research needs.

Response of the SPS Review Committee to Recommendation 11

The Chair of the Department of Health Science and Emergency Management in conjunction with the instructor (s) in Emergency Management, in consultation with the VPAP, will develop an academic strategic plan for the Emergency Management Program taking into consideration faculty complement (on site) and research needs.

Response of VPA to Recommendation 11

It is agreed that Emergency Management should have a strategic plan. The “research needs” may be addressed through a potential graduate EM program in the future, as such an undertaking would require partnership with a program delivered by research active faculty, probably the MBA-CED.