

***SUBMITTED TO OUCQA FOR INFORMATION – August 1, 2024***

***APPROVED BY TRENT UNIVERSITY’S SENATE COMMITTEE – Feb 13, 2024***

Final Assessment Report & Implementation Plan – Executive Summary BBA Business Administration and BA/BSc Business Administration Joint Major

Completed by the Cyclical Program Review Committee (CPRC).

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| **Degree Programs Being Reviewed** | BBA Business Administration  BA/BSc Business Administration Joint Major |
| **External Reviewers** | Dr. Sara Mann, University of Guelph  Dr. David Richards, Lakehead University |
| **Internal Representative** | Dr. Mark Dockstator, Chanie Wenjack School for Indigenous Studies |
| **Year of Review** | 2022-2023 |
| **Date of Site Visit** | Mar 27-28, 2023 |
| **Due Date for Implementation Report from the Program** | December 1, 2024 |
| **Date Prepared by CPRC** | Jan 24, 2024 |
| **Date Approved by Provost & VP**  **Academic** | Feb 6, 2024 |
| **Signature of Provost & VP Academic** | A close up of a signature  Description automatically generated |

The School of Business is one of the largest and fastest growing Schools of Study at Trent University offering an education that prioritizes academic excellence on both the Peterborough and Durham campuses. The School offers two undergraduate degrees, the BBA, and the BA/BSc joint-major honours. There are nine specializations available within the BBA, seven of which are available on both campuses: Accounting, Economics (Peterborough), Entrepreneurship, Ethics & Sustainability (Peterborough), Finance, Human Resource Management, Information Systems & e-Commerce, Marketing & Consumer Culture, and Niigaaniiwin—The Art of Leading (Peterborough).

The mission of the BBA Program is to provide business students with a high-calibre business education and practical experience to advance organizations as agents of positive change as they anticipate, adapt to, and shape issues that are relevant currently and in the future. The aim of the Program is to develop leaders of tomorrow who will be critical thinkers with an expanded focus on their mission to recognize multiple stakeholders—shareholders, employees, and communities—while pursuing social change.

The Program aspires to develop business and organizational leaders who take a proactive role in building a sustainable future. Graduates will be able to address the four pillars of a sustainable economy: social equity, economic development, environmental protection, and human sustainability. These ideals are threaded throughout the Program, which offers students the core business program in all functional areas of business.

# Overview

During the 2022-2023 academic year, the BBA Bachelor of Business Administration and BA/BSc Joint Majors Honours underwent a review. Two arm’s-length external reviewers (Dr. Sara Mann, University of Guelph and Dr. David Richards, Lakehead University) and one internal representative (Dr. Mark Dockstator, Chanie Wenjack School for Indigenous Studies, Trent University) were invited to review the self-study documentation. The site-visit took place on March 27-28, 2023.

This Final Assessment Report (FAR), in accordance with Trent University’s Institutional Quality Assurance Policy (IQAP), provides a synthesis of the cyclical review of the graduate degree programs. The report considers four evaluation documents: the Program’s Self-Study, the External Reviewers’ Report, the Program Response, and the Decanal Response.

A summary of the review process is as follows: the academic unit completed a self-study that addressed all components of the evaluation criteria as outlined in Trent’s IQAP. Appendices included: Curriculum Vitae, Course Syllabi, Data Tables, Student and Alumni Surveys and a Library Statement of Support. Qualified external reviewers were invited to conduct a review of the programs that involved a review of all relevant documentation (self-study, appendices, and IQAP policy) and participation in a virtual visit. During the virtual site visit, reviewers met with senior administration, faculty, students, and staff.

The External Reviewers’ Report identified six (6) recommendations. Ideally, recommendations will focus on a culture of ongoing and continuous improvement and prioritizing student-centred learning and experiences.

Following receipt of the External Reviewers’ Report, the Program and Dean provided responses to the Report. Based on the four review documents, the Cyclical Program Review Committee (CPRC) then reviewed and assessed the quality of the degree programs and reported on significant program strengths, opportunities for improvement and enhancement, and the implementation of recommendations.

The Implementation Plan identifies five (5) recommendations for action and specifies the proposed follow-up and the person(s) responsible for leading the follow-up. The Academic Unit, in consultation with their Dean, will submit an Implementation Report in response to the recommendations identified for follow-up. The Report is due December 1, 2024.

# Significant Program Strengths

Student enrolment in the business programs continue to grow, and diversify based on the interdisciplinarity of the program as well as the number of options available to students. The School of Business is unique in that it offers a joint-major BBA program whereby students can combine Business with a multitude of areas of interest – in the Arts or Sciences, such as Media Studies or the Environment. The School offers a wide choice of specializations for their students to choose from, and consistently explores new specializations that may be of interest to their students. The BBA Program has introduced two new specializations since the last cyclical review, (1) Accounting, and (2) Finance. As well the School is currently working on a specializations in Leadership that will include courses in sustainability and Indigenous leadership, and a joint specialization with International Development Studies (Global Justice and Development) that will provide students with the opportunity to engage in project planning in Ghana.

The Program is continually working to remain engaged with alumni. Alum play a significant role at the University by providing placement and internship opportunities, and possible co-op opportunities in the future. Alumni have also been quite generous in supporting student awards through funding and mentoring students in pursuit of employment upon graduation.

The School has developed far reaching academic relationships and partnerships that benefit both the School and the students that include opportunities in Swansea, UK and Chandigarh, India. The BBA program has established many 2+2 pathway agreements with colleges in Ontario whereby students graduating from College are able to continue their studies in Business at the University.

Since the last review, equity, diversity and inclusion has been an academic focus. Curriculum has been revised and updated to incorporate EDI into course content. Examples of these courses include ADMN 3300H – Personal Ethics in Organizations and Business, ADMN 3800H – Foundations of Leadership, and ADMN 4460H – Managing for Workplace Psychological Health & Wellness. As well the School has incorporated EDI into the procedures for awarding grants, prizes and scholarships.

# Opportunities for Program Improvement and Enhancement Continuous Improvement

Reflecting on the recommendations from the External Reviewers, it is evident that the Program is

regularly updating their curriculum in the Specializations. The Accounting and Human Resource Management Specializations have been kept updated and reflect the changing requirements of the professional bodies that provide certification, Certified Public Accounts of Ontario (CPA) and the Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA). Most recently, a course in data analytics was developed to meet changes in business education and employer demands. As well, the School introduced a personal finance course for business and non-business students.

With possible retirements in the future, new faculty hires and a growing number of specializations being offered, the program needs to more clearly define a process for gathering feedback to ensure that the BBA program remains relevant, current and effective. The approach should demonstrate an on-going and routine process for effectively addressing issues as they arise. Questions to consider include:

* How will the program assess whether the program (design and delivery) is working the way it should?
* Are students achieving what they are expected to before and after graduation, e.g., skills, abilities and knowledge?
* What types of information is needed? Who will be responsible for gathering this information, and how will this information be used on an on-going basis to inform decision-making to revise the program or curriculum.

The School would also benefit by completing an extensive review of its curriculum that would consider the streamlining of programming and alignment with current strengths of the program and full-time faculty.

# Faculty

In recent years, the School has welcomed a number of new tenure-track faculty that helps address the teaching needs of growing student enrolments. The School, in working with the Deans has been able to identify key areas of teaching and research that would benefit and strengthen the School. The Program will continue to rely on sessional instructors for the expertise, knowledge and experiences they bring to the program.

When staffing courses, the Program should carefully consider where best to place their tenured and tenure-track faculty. Engaging students in first year classes is a significant retention tool, as is delivering fourth-year capstone courses to our students from experienced faculty.

# Experiential Learning Opportunities

The School of Business offers four types of experiential learning opportunities: placements, internships, co-ops, and community-based research projects. The School is encouraged to work with Careerspace to expand availability of co-ops so more students will benefit from this experience.

Implementation Plan

The Implementation Plan identifies those recommendations that require action by the academic unit. The Chair or Director, with members of the academic unit, will be responsible for leading the follow- up in consultation, and where appropriate with Dean(s) and other university departments. The Academic Unit will report on actions taken and the status of each recommendation by the due date provided. The Dean will be responsible for Reviewing the Implementation Report and submitting the final report to the Office of the Provost.

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| **Recommendation** | **Proposed Follow-Up**  If no follow-up is recommended, indicate ‘No follow-up report is required’ and provide rationale | **Specific Timeline** Indicate specific timeline for addressing or completing  recommendation | **Position Responsible for Leading Follow-up** |
| **Recommendation 1**  That the Program develop a process for systematic curriculum review and revision. | The Implementation Report will provide details on the formalized process for the review and revision of curriculum albeit, in practice, the School does appear to be reviewing curriculum on a regular basis, but  perhaps not consistently. | To be put in place for the 2024-25  academic year | Director |
| **Recommendation 2**  That the Program develop a strategic plan which clarifies their focus and utilizes value proposition as a basis for decision- making. | A strategic plan is critical to the School of Business to address enrolment growth.  The Implementation Report will provide details on the School’s strategic plan, clarity on the value propositions of the program, and how Durham’s programming may  become more distinct. | To be completed by December 2024 | Director |
| **Recommendation 3**  That the Program consider assigning core courses in | The School should undergo an extensive review of its curriculum that would consider  the streamlining of programming and | To be in place for next  academic year. | Director |

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| first and second year to fulltime faculty members. | alignment with current strengths of the program and full-time faculty.  The Implementation Report will provide a summary of the curriculum review and program streamlining. | Ongoing; for consideration as staffing plans are developing |  |
| **Recommendation 4**  That the School of Business be established as an independent decanal unit. | This recommendation falls outside the scope of this review which is to review the quality of the BBA. No follow-up is required.  The School is encouraged to discuss this recommendation with Senior Administration. |  |  |
| **Recommendation 5**  That the Program identify and enhance support for students on both the Peterborough and Durham campuses. | CPRC acknowledges that the School has already begun to look at these issues.  The Implementation Report will provide an update on student supports in Durham and Peterborough, identifying any new supports or changes to existing supports. | Ongoing; updated to be provided for December 2024 | Director, in consultation with student- supporting departments |
| **Recommendation 6** That the Program strengthen communication channels  with students, specifically with respect to:   * experiential learning opportunities, and * providing students with an opportunity to bring forward   issues and concerns. | CPRC notes that the School has been working on providing information on experiential learning opportunities. The School should continue to explore methods of distributing the weekly newsletter, and supports for the re-establishment of the Student Association.  The Implementation Report will include an update on any additional communication strategies put in place (e.g., townhall), and any forums put in place to address student  issues. | Ongoing; update to be provided for December 2024 | Director, in consultation with Trent Business Student Association |