

## FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

### Institutional Quality Assurance Program (IQAP) Review

#### Business Ph.D.

**Date of Review: May 11 and 12, 2015**

In accordance with the University Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), this final assessment report provides a synthesis of the external evaluation and the internal response and assessments of the undergraduate programs delivered by the **Business Ph.D. program**. This report identifies the significant strengths of the program, together with opportunities for program improvement and enhancement, and it sets out and prioritizes the recommendations that have been selected for implementation.

This Final Assessment Report includes an Implementation Plan that identifies who will be responsible leading the follow up for the proposed recommendations; any changes in organization, policy or governance that will be necessary to meet the recommendations; and timelines for acting on and monitoring the implementation of those recommendations.

#### **Executive Summary of the Business Ph.D. Cyclical Program Review**

The **Business Ph.D. program** submitted a self-study in April 2015. The self-study presented the program descriptions and learning outcomes, an analytical assessment of the program, and program data including the data collected from a student survey along with the standard data package prepared by the Office of Institutional Research and Analysis. Appended were the course outlines for all courses in the program and the CVs for each full-time faculty member in the Department.

Two external reviewers and one internal reviewer examined the materials and completed a site visit in May 2015. The visit included interviews with the Provost and Vice-President (Academic); Dean of the Faculty of Business; Dean of School of Graduate Studies; Associate Dean of Graduate Studies for the Faculty of business, Area Chairs from the Ph.D. fields of study, and meetings with groups of current students, full-time and part-time faculty and support staff.

The reviewers noted that overall their assessment of the program was very positive and noted no major problems.

The following program strengths and areas for enhancement/improvement were also noted:

- **Strengths**

(Excerpted from the review report)

- The PhD Program in Business Administration is very highly aligned with the mission, academic plans, and Strategic Mandate Agreement (SMA) of McMaster.

- The program has a very thorough academic curriculum focused on learning goals requiring knowledge and the ability to use theory, current research, and research methods in each of six fields of study: Accounting, Finance, Management of Organizational Behavior and Human Resources, Information Systems, Management Science, and Marketing.
- A high proportion of faculty in the program are nationally and internationally known scholars with productive research programs and funding from national funding agencies. Faculty and students collaborate on many peer-reviewed scholarly publications and conference presentations.
- Knowledge acquisition and dissemination are clearly the goals of the PhD Program and there is much evidence that these goals are being achieved, through the prolific publications in peer reviewed sources by faculty and students, consistent with the academic plan of McMaster.
- The PhD Program is well supported financially by the DeGroote School of Business and the School of Graduate Studies which in combination provide the financial resources for the program. Students receive a guaranteed minimum \$20,000 per year in funding for four years. With other sources of funding (e.g., scholarships, awards, and faculty stipends from research grants), the actual average total funding per student has risen from \$21,786 to \$31,943 in the last seven years. There are also funds available for conference travel and dissertation expenses. This is generous funding for PhD students and consistent with other high quality PhD programs with which we are familiar.
- The quality and availability of graduate supervision is excellent and wholly appropriate to the program requirements. There is considerable evidence for this. As previously discussed, faculty members involved with the PhD Program are prolific researchers and are very well funded by the major funding agencies..... Faculty members consistently publish in high quality peer reviewed journals and many hold endowed chairs, including two Canada Research Chairs. Faculty hold many honors and awards too numerous to mention except to say that overall, the quality of the faculty is without question excellent. The faculty are also clearly dedicated to mentoring and developing their doctoral students.
- All faculty, student, and program indicators are very well aligned with McMaster's PhD Degree Level Expectations. A very strong indicator that supports the quality of the program is that the PhD Program as well as the entire DeGroote Business School is fully accredited by AACSB. This accreditation process is very demanding and thorough, and DeGroote's accreditation indicates that the PhD Program (as well as all their programs) meets the exacting standards of this international accreditation body with respect to curriculum content and quality, faculty sufficiency and qualifications, administrative support and processes, student quality, and learning outcomes.

- **Areas for Enhancement/Improvement**

The reviewers offered some suggestions for further enhancing the quality of the program. These include reducing the course load of PhD students by allowing course waivers based on prior

degree work and development of an MSc program in Business, developing a more detailed curriculum map that includes learning outcomes at the course and field levels, and adding teaching competencies to the learning goals of the PhD Program and offering opportunities to develop these competencies. These suggestions are discussed in more detail below.

### Summary of the Reviewers' Recommendations with the Department's and Dean's Responses

Recommendation	Proposed Follow-Up	Responsibility for Leading Follow-Up	Timeline for Addressing Recommendation
<p>1. Admission Requirements:</p> <p><i>1a. We support the current administrative procedure in the program to use a two stage admission process where weaker or un-matching students are filtered out at the first stage. This is an efficient process and will be useful as the program grows</i></p>	<p>The two-stage application process will be continued.</p> <p>No follow-up is required.</p>		
<p>2. Curriculum:</p> <p><i>2a. Consideration could be given to waiving select courses for those students coming from academically oriented Master's programs in a discipline matched with their field of study in the PhD Program.</i></p>	<p>Such consideration is already given in the PhD Program.</p> <p>The Business Administration PhD Program is governed by the policies and procedures as outlined in the School of Graduate Studies Calendar. Section 2.3 of the Calendar: Advance Credit and Determination of Course Equivalency allows for up to 50% of the course degree</p>		

	<p>requirements to be waived based on prior degree work.</p> <p>A Course Selection Form is used in the PhD Program to establish course requirements for each student and includes the following instruction: "If a student is exempt from a course due to proven prior knowledge, please mark that course as "EXEMPT" and provide a written explanation for the exemption (e.g. which course from a previous degree is equal to the required course".</p> <p>No follow-up is required.</p>		
<p>2. Curriculum:</p> <p><i>2b. We strongly support the proposed plan to develop and provide a Master's degree in Business Administration which would significantly benefit the PhD Program and students by decreasing the number of courses required in the PhD Program thus facilitating its primary research focus, and enabling students to obtain an additional year of funding.</i></p>	<p>This initiative is already underway in the School. A proposal to offer an MSc program with five fields of specialization is being developed, and if successful, the new program would be offered effective September 2017.</p> <p>No separate follow-up action is needed, as the reviewers have expressed support for this initiative.</p>		
<p>2. Curriculum:</p>			

<p><i>2c. The PhD Program should consider developing a more detailed curriculum map that includes learning outcomes at the course and field of study levels.</i></p>	<p>The curriculum map provided in the self-study was developed in accordance with the McMaster IQAP process guidelines and the AACSB Accreditation Standards.</p> <p>The review team had an opportunity to discuss their recommendation with Ms. Lori Goff, Manager of Program Enhancement, McMaster Institute for Innovation &amp; Excellence in Teaching &amp; Learning (MIETL). The program will consult with Ms. Goff to determine if any changes were needed in the program curriculum map and develop an implementation plan if necessary.</p>	<p>Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research for the School of Business</p>	<p>July 2016</p>
<p>3. Teaching and Assessment:</p> <p><i>3a. As mentioned previously, we believe the program should consider developing field of study specific and even course specific learning outcomes to enhance understanding of the program curriculum requirements.</i></p>	<p>See response provided to Recommendation 2c above.</p>		
<p>3. Teaching and Assessment:</p> <p><i>3b. To make this exercise as useful and effective as possible, the activity/opportunity and assessment/evidence related</i></p>	<p>See response provided to Recommendation 2c above.</p>		

<p><i>to each field of study as well as the program as a whole needs to be more precise to be operationally effective.</i></p>			
<p>4. Resources:</p> <p><i>4a. The PhD Program should consider additional administrative resources be made available as enrolments increase and the Master's Program is implemented.</i></p>	<p>Additional administrative resources were provided when new fields of specialization were added to the program.</p> <p>An assessment of staffing requirements for the MSc Program will be made as part of the development of the program proposal. The School will provide a budget to fund the needed staffing resources at the time program is implemented.</p> <p>No further follow-up is needed in this regard.</p>		
<p>5. Quality Indicators:</p> <p><i>5a. The growth in student enrollment should be managed carefully keeping in mind the limited supervisory capacity of some faculty; in addition, an effort should be made to distribute supervisory load uniformly across the faculty avoiding supervisory polarization.</i></p>	<p>Annual enrolment targets for new students entering individual PhD fields are established taking into account the available supervisory capacity.</p> <p>Supervisory arrangements are considered and proposed as part of the admission process and are finalized within six months of student's arrival. The key</p>		

	<p>factors guiding supervisor selection are matching of the research interests of the student and the faculty and their mutual willingness to work together. This voluntary and collaborative selection process has produced highly effective and satisfying supervisor-supervisee relationships.</p> <p>No follow-up is needed.</p>		
<p>5. Quality Indicators:</p> <p><i>5b. An additional support staff should be considered to be added to the support staff pool, but dedicated primarily to support an increasing administrative load caused by adding two more areas and overall significant growth of the program.</i></p>	<p>See response provided to Recommendation 4a above.</p>		
<p>5. Quality Indicators:</p> <p><i>5c. Once again, we reiterate our support for DeGroot to launch a new research based Master's degree program which will allow the School to admit many of the potential PhD students at the Master's level and have them complete one year of course workload while earning BIUs prior to transferring them to PhD program with full credit.</i></p>	<p>See response provided to Recommendation 2b above.</p>		
<p>6. Quality Enhancement:</p>	<p>Post-comp students have a number of opportunities</p>		

<p><i>6a. Rather than holding just one annual event for students to present their research, the program may consider a bi-weekly seminar series where all post-comp students present their work-in-progress and all students are encouraged to attend. Additionally, a bi-weekly or monthly research seminar where faculty, visiting faculty, invited external researchers, and post-docs present on their research could be considered, and all PhD students would be encouraged to attend. Such seminars/presentations need not be field of study specific which encourages interdisciplinary thinking and collaboration. Attendance at these seminars could become part of their Annual Progress Report.</i></p>	<p>to present their work-in-progress. The annual event called Research Day is organized by the DeGroot Doctoral Students Association (DDSA); it was extended from one-day to two-day duration last year.</p> <p>In addition, students are expected to present their dissertation research proposals in Year III, and these presentations are open to all faculty and students. Students are also encouraged to present their papers resulting from their on-going research at learned conferences in their field. A large number of students in fact do so with conference funding support from the School.</p> <p>There are also events organized at the university level by the School of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Students Association which provide further opportunities to PhD students to present their research.</p> <p>The Areas with PhD fields regularly organize seminars at which in-house faculty and visiting faculty and research scholars from other</p>		
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	<p>institutions present research on key emerging trends and issues in the field. PhD students are expected to attend these seminars. Often, visiting faculty may hold special presentations and discussion sessions exclusively for PhD students.</p> <p>The Areas with PhD fields appear satisfied with the existing level of opportunities for PhD to present their own research and participate in seminars offered by in-house and external faculty and researchers.</p> <p>No further follow-up is planned.</p>		
<p>6. Quality Enhancement:</p> <p><i>6b. Currently, many students work on a variety of research projects, write articles with their supervisor and other faculty and fellow students, and present them in good conferences. As the program grows, it will be important to continue to encourage and support these activities.</i></p>	<p>The PhD Program will continue to encourage and support the variety of research engagement activities for all PhD students in the program.</p>		
<p>7. Graduate Program Requirements:</p> <p><i>7a. Due to the planned increase in enrollments and the lack of experience</i></p>	<p>The existing monitoring and management</p>		

<p><i>supervising doctoral students among faculty in fields that have just recently begun their PhD Program, it will be important to maintain the monitoring and management systems currently in place to assess student progress and ensure timely completion of the program.</i></p>	<p>systems to assess student progress and ensure timely completion of the program will be maintained.</p>		
<p>7. Graduate Program Requirements:</p> <p><i>7b. The PhD Program should consider ways to support the non-academic career aspirations of some students, perhaps through short programs, seminars, and/or guest speakers. Students should be encouraged to investigate related courses provided by McMaster and participate as appropriate.</i></p>	<p>Many of the skills and competencies acquired in Business PhD studies are transferable to non-academic career settings. Some of these include the ability to present and organize large amounts of information in a clear and concise manner, analysis of complex data, ability to plan a project and deliver it on agreed timelines, ability to interact with colleagues from diverse backgrounds, and ability to make effective presentations to a variety of audiences.</p> <p>The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) employs a Graduate Career Strategist to assist with the career aspirations of graduate students. Although the position supports both Master's and PhD students, the School has prioritized workshops and seminars specifically for</p>		

	<p>PhD students, as they have more unique needs than Master's students. Much of the career programming offered is focused on non-academic careers, in recognition of the fact that an increasing number of PhD graduates may work in these settings.</p> <p>The career programming offered through the SGS is being actively promoted to McMaster's graduate student population, including Business PhD students, through a weekly direct email, twitter, Facebook, Google+ and the SGS website.</p>		
<p>8. System of Governance:</p> <p><i>8a. The School should begin to consider a succession plan to fill the position of Associate Dean of the Graduate Studies which is currently filled by a highly respected and competent Professor Emeritus.</i></p>	<p>The present incumbent was appointed to the position of Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and Research for the School of Business when it was established three years ago. The current appointment was set to expire on June 30, 2015. There is no immediate need to develop a succession plan, as the incumbent has been re-appointed for an additional two years.</p>		
<p>8. System of Governance:</p> <p><i>8b. The School should</i></p>			

<p><i>consider gender equity issues that may particularly impact the PhD Program. Currently, there is a gender inequity in terms of the number of female students admitted, the number of female faculty available to supervise students, and the number of female faculty appointed to PhD committees dealing with the admission, administration, and progress of the student population. The School may consider striking a Gender Equity Committee to examine these issues.</i></p>	<p>There are no <i>systemic barriers</i> that prevent female students to enter the PhD Program and progress through the course of studies to graduation. Applications for admission and the annual performance reports submitted by in-course students are evaluated purely on academic merit and without any reference to gender of the student under review.</p> <p>The size of the female student population in the program is essentially dependent on the number of females who apply for admission to the program. For example, female students comprised an average of 26.3% of the entering cohort of students over the past 5 years. In contrast, 66.7% of the cohort of students entering the program in September 2015 will be female. Thus, the gender composition of the incoming student class can fluctuate widely from one year to the next depending upon the gender composition of the applicant pool. The PhD Program has very little ability to influence the gender composition of the applicant pool, but it is</p>		
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	<p>very conscious of the need to ensure that all its processes for evaluating and supporting students are free from bias against students belonging to any designated group members under the Canadian Charter of Rights including women.</p> <p>Similar contextual factors can help explain the lack of gender equity in faculty participation in the supervision and formal governance processes of the PhD Program. The School of Business has a general pool of faculty from which all its academic programs draw their faculty for their academic and governance activities.</p> <p>The faculty pool from which the PhD Program can draw its faculty consists of 48 tenured/tenure-track faculty located in the 6 Areas that offer doctoral fields of study. This pool includes 8 female faculty members, all of whom are actively involved in supervising and supporting PhD students except two who are part of the recently established fields of study.</p>		
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	<p>It is true that that no female faculty currently serve on either of the two PhD program level committees. The Committee of Area Chairs with PhD Fields had female representation in the past and will have it again in the coming academic year, as a female faculty has been appointed as an Area Chair. The absence of female faculty on the Ad Hoc PhD Operating Advisory Committee can be explained by the fact that two eligible female faculty members hold other major administrative roles, namely, the MBA Program Director and the Graduate Diploma in Professional Accountancy Program Director. Two other eligible female faculty hold research chair appointments that tend to carry lower teaching and administrative loads.</p> <p>The issue of gender equity in faculty complement cannot be addressed at the program level. The PhD Program's ability to engage female faculty in its academic and governance activities is constrained by the relatively small number of eligible female faculty in the overall School faculty pool.</p>		
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	<p>Diversity issues including gender balance in the workforce can best be addressed at the institutional level.</p> <p>McMaster University is committed to the goal of building an inclusive community with a shared purpose and has developed policy initiatives to achieve this goal. Within this overarching goal, the issue of gender equity in faculty population has received particular attention. In November 2012, Provost and Vice President Academic appointed a task force “to inquire into the status of women faculty and what, if any barriers existed to women’s advancement and inclusion at McMaster University”.</p> <p>The task force submitted its report in January 2014 and recommended a number of proactive measures to achieve equity between men and women faculty. Implementation of the task force’s recommendations is underway.</p> <p>No follow up is needed at the program level.</p>		
9. Areas for Enhancements:			

<p><i>9a. It would be very valuable to add teaching competencies to the learning goals of the PhD Program. Having successfully taught at least one course-section at the undergraduate level would be the assessment/evidence for this learning outcome. It is recognized that to implement this recommendation, there are some significant barriers to overcome, including i) determining if it is possible to give PhD students priority over sessional instructors for teaching assignments, ii) mitigating the impact of teaching a course on the progress of students' dissertation, and iii) accommodating students with special circumstances (e.g. students with poor English skills or other limitation) in a way that this requirement may be met by an alternative means.</i></p>	<p>Teaching competencies are already included in the following learning goal of the PhD Program: Upon graduation, our PhD students will “demonstrate effective presentation or teaching skills”. These will be re-affirmed as part of the upcoming AACSB Accreditation Maintenance Review in Fall 2015.</p> <p>PhD students are encouraged to take Education 750: Principles and Practices of University Teaching in the post-com years.</p> <p>In addition, a significant number of PhD students are also able to gain opportunities to teach as a sessional instructor in the School's undergraduate programs. This will be further facilitated by a provision in the collective agreement for sessional faculty which becomes effective in September 2015. This allows up to 11% of the total number of course sections held by bargaining unit members in a Faculty to be offered to PhD students without posting. Under this provision, 15 such part-time teaching appointments will be</p>		
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	<p>available to Business PhD students in 2015-16.</p> <p>No further follow-up is needed at the program level.</p>		
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**Faculty Response:**

Dean Waverman noted that no major problems were identified and that Associate Dean Naresh Agarwal had adequately addressed the recommendations, only one of which required follow-up

Dr. Waverman addressed two of the recommendations directly:

2b) The reviewers strongly support the development of a M.Sc. program. We will develop this program for submission to the Province for a projected 2017 start.

8b) Gender equity Ph.D. students and Faculty. Dr. Waverman noted that the reviewers had highlighted two gender equity issues: the limited number of female Ph.D. students and the very limited number of Ph.D. female faculty. The Dean agreed that these are serious concerns that the Faculty needs to address. For the first issue, Dr. Waverman says that they will add materials to their website and marketing materials to ensure that the program is seen, as they are, as welcoming to female graduate students. The Dean also confirmed that the poor representation of women in the tenure stream faculty needs to be seriously address and noted that they will ensure that in all future hiring the DeGroote School of Business attracts capable women.

**Quality Assurance Committee Recommendations**

McMaster’s Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) reviewed the above documentation and the committee recommended that the program should follow the regular course of action with an 18-month progress report and a subsequent full external cyclical review to be conducted no later than 8 years after the start of the last review. The progress report should provide an update on specific measures that have been taken to address the gender equity issues identified by the reviewers. This response should address the implementation recommendations of the University Equity Task Force in the case of women faculty members, but it should also address matters of equity and inclusion for women students in the program. In the report, the Program Director should take a more reflective approach, so that the feedback provided through the IQAP process can be used to improve the quality of the Program.