

Final Assessment Report

Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP) Review
Life Sciences Undergraduate Program

Date of Review: April 3 - 4, 2012

Review Team Members: Dr. Andrew P. Dean, Lakehead University
Dr. P. Ken Rose, Queen's University
Dr. Martin Gibala, McMaster University

Summary:

The Review Team's report was positive of the overall direction and intended implementation of the Honours Life Sciences Program. In particular, they noted the commitment of the faculty to provide a quality education to their students and acknowledged the program's academic mission and its innovative teaching format as primary strengths of the program. The report also highlighted that the program is flexible, diverse, and novel and it acknowledged that the program incorporates an enlightened approach that examines the interconnections between disciplines and uses these interconnections to address fundamental questions in the life sciences.

The report identified some fundamental shortcomings within the program surrounding resource allocation and governance, which must be overcome in order for the program to remain viable and to reach its full potential. The Reviewers offered some suggestions which are listed below.

The Department and Faculty of Science appreciate the guidance the report offers for future directions of the program and agree with the Reviewers for the need for a speedy solution to the more serious shortcomings in the governance of the program.

The Quality Assurance Committee has completed a review of the report prepared for the Life Sciences program as part of the IQAP process. The reviewers noted the serious governance issues in the Life Sciences program that require immediate corrective action to insure its ongoing viability. While the Faculty has already taken a number of steps to address these concerns, they are recommending that a full external review of the Life Sciences program be held in 18 months to assess the progress being made.

Recommendation	Implementation Plan
Long-term formal commitment of Teaching Professors and Contractually Limited Appointment (CLA) to enhance and stabilize instructional team	Develop a plan to recruit remaining 5 half-time Teaching Professors or CLAs (as outlined in Strategic Plan July 2011)
Recruit at least two Instructional Assistants and a fixed number of Teaching Assistants	Review need for Instructional Assistant and Teaching Assistants based on resources available
Greater and more flexible access to level IV	Creation of a Life Sciences Council to oversee this

departmentally-based courses	process in coordination with the chairs of the Science departments
Create a Life Sciences Council to review curriculum and undergraduate degree level expectations	Life Sciences Council was created which consists of Chairs of the departments, Director and Associate Director of Life Sciences and chaired by the Associate Dean
Full-time administrative assistant for the program	Academic Program Advisor position has been approved
Creation of more Level IV seminar courses and expanded capacity of Level III courses devoted to experiential learning	Aim to require all graduating students to have at least 3 units of Level IV seminar courses or independent studies. Implement new Level III course as a requirement that will focus on experiential learning.