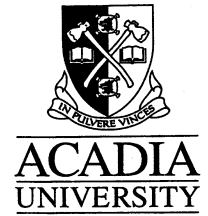


Office of the Senate Secretariat

Acadia University
Wolfville, Nova Scotia
Canada B0P 1X0

Telephone: (902) 585-1617
Facsimile: (902) 585-1078



Minutes of the Senate Meeting of Monday December 10th, 2018.

A meeting of the Senate of Acadia University occurred on Monday December 10th, 2018 beginning at 4:00 p.m. with Chair A. Kieft presiding and 36 present with two guests. The meeting took place in BAC 132.

1) Approval of Agenda

The Chair called the meeting to order, noting that there was quorum at present.

Motion to approve the agenda. Moved by D. MacKinnon and seconded by J. Guiney Yallop.

The Chair asked whether Senators were ready to approve the minutes of November 19th since they had only been received earlier in the day.

It was agreed that the November 19th Minutes would be removed from the agenda and approved in January, and that the numbering for all of the other agenda items would be altered.

The Chair stated that item 5) d) would be changed to a 'Notice of Motion' and brought forward to the January meeting of Senate.

The Chair drew attention to the fact that Items 5) a) and 5) b) were on the agenda as motions, but had only been received on Thursday prior to Senate. Since these two items had not had the full seven days on the agenda, the Chair asked Senators whether they wished to discuss them.

P. Abela asked whether these items were time-sensitive and whether unanimous consent would be required since these items had not met the required timeline.

The Chair stated that although the vote did not have to be unanimous, if there were any objections it would have to be moved to the January Senate meeting.

C. Rushton asked whether the two motions could be considered separately. She noted that the proposed Calendar dates were time sensitive and that perhaps it would take longer to work through the motion on the Principles.

The Chair asked Senators to indicate whether they were prepared to discuss Item 5) a).

B. Anderson pointed out that the Principles informed the Calendar dates.

M. Bishop stated that these items could wait until January 2019 but that the T.I.E. Committee was mandated to recommend academic Calendar dates to Senate by January. Once the committee had received the results of a recent survey it had met and was now presenting the proposed Calendar dates.

There were no objections to these motions remaining on the agenda.

G. Whitehall stated that he would be bringing forward a substitution motion between agenda item 4) a) *Motion from the Academic Planning Committee* and 4) a) i) *Amendment to the previously tabled motion*.

G. Whitehall felt that many of the changes that were being proposed in 4) a) i) could easily be made under the current process, and that he was prepared to circulate copies of his suggested changes.

The Chair agreed that G. Whitehall could circulate the substitution to Item 4) a) he was proposing. Hard copies of the proposed substitution motion were then circulated around the room.

The Chair noted that if a motion for substitution was being made, it could not be made in the midst of an amendment. It would therefore have to be made either before Item 4) a) i) was discussed, or after Item 4) a) i) had been discussed and voted upon. It could be added to the agenda if G. Whitehall wished to do so.

A. Wilks felt that this item should be added to the agenda.

P. Abela suggested positioning the item prior to the discussion of Item 4) a).

A. Vibert pointed out that as a member of the Academic Planning Committee she had had the opportunity to work with and consider the original amended process. She felt that the APC had not been given any opportunity to discuss G. Whitehall's substitution and suggested that the discussion be held over to the January meeting which would give the APC an opportunity to consider the new proposal.

Robert's Rules of Order were discussed with respect to the tabling of a motion and whether if the tabled motion was removed from the agenda, it could still be on the next meeting's agenda. The Chair referred to the 11th Edition of Robert's Rules of Order and confirmed that tabled motions could come back to Senate at a later meeting. This would require a majority approval by Senate.

G. Whitehall stated that the benefit of the tabled motion not coming to Senate until January would be that both the substitution and the tabled motion could be discussed. He noted though, that his rationale for proposing the substitution was not yet attached and he wished to make the case either in person, or by providing Senate with a preamble.

P. Abela pointed out that a further benefit of waiting to the January meeting of Senate would be that the VP Academic would be present.

S. Currie also suggested that the substitution could go back to the APC for consideration, prior to it coming back to Senate.

The Chair then suggested that there were at least two appropriate options. One was the removal from the agenda with the knowledge that various members of the APC were present and aware of the previous discussion at the November meeting of Senate and at today's meeting. A second option was to keep item 4) a) on the agenda, take the motion from the table and then make a motion to refer it back to the Academic Planning Committee, taking the comments that had been made during the initial discussion back to the committee, including the proposed substitution.

A. Vibert was comfortable with removing the item from today's agenda and Senate sending both the amendment Item 4) a) i) and the substitution from G. Whitehall back to the Academic Planning Committee for consideration, before being added onto the January agenda for Senate.

G. Bissix asked when other Senators would be given an opportunity to provide any further options for the process.

The Chair stated that if Item 4) a) was removed from the table, there was no reason for discussion not to include other amendments or suggestions. Senators could also contact the Chair of the committee between now and the January meeting with other suggestions and input.

P. Abela asked what would happen if Senate had an informal discussion and learned more about both the APC revised motion and G. Whitehall's substitution, but that in January the APC had redrafted the revision. P. Abela asked whether G. Whitehall would still be able to introduce the substitute motion.

The Chair agreed that there was always opportunity when the motion was on the floor, to either make a substitute motion or make an amendment to the motion.

Motion to remove Item 4) a) i) from the agenda. Moved by A. Vibert and seconded by J. Guiney Yallop.

MOTION CARRIED, WITH TWO OPPOSED AND THREE ABSTENTIONS.

MAIN MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA CARRIED.

2) Announcements:

a) From the Chair of Senate

Regrets were received from President Ricketts, H. Hemming, S. Dunn, P. Rigg, R. Murphy, L. Aylward, J. Leidl, M. Jarvin, N. Clarke, D. Benoit, Z. Goldsmith, G. Wooden, J. Grant and M. Lukeman.

The Chair welcomed two guests: J. Wentzell from the APC and H. Chipman from the T.I.E. Committee.

The Chair thanked the following Senators, whose terms were ending in December: J. Guiney Yallop, B. Robinson, P. Rigg and M. Lukeman.

The Chair stated that she had received positive feedback on the announcements being provided in writing in future. She stated that in January all those making announcements would be asked to provide them in writing to be added to the agenda. During the Senate meeting the Chair would ask for any questions relating to the announcements.

b) From the ASU President

G. Philp reported that he and M. Branch travelled to Ottawa to meet 160 members of Parliament and Senators, with the Canadian Association of Student Associations Advocacy Week which represents 350,000 students Canada wide, to discuss international students, the support of graduate students, and sexual violence prevention on campuses.

G. Philp noted that the ASU had recently passed a new By-law which will enhance diversity on the council, allow for more efficient and productive meetings, and promote fair and accessible elections.

G. Philp reported that a 24 hour study space in the Michener Lounge would be available through the examination period.

G. Philp stated that M. Branch was working with the Student Resource Centre to help enhance medical services in the Dennis Clinic. He stated that three vacant and new positions had been filled and that the clinic's hours would be expanded in the New Year.

G. Philp extended good wishes for the holiday season to Senators and looked forward to 2019.

3) Old Business

a) Motion to remove Item 3) a) from the table (attached)

Motion to remove Item 3) a) from the table. Moved by J. Hennessy and seconded by J. Richard.

R. Raeside stated that the By-laws committee met recently and expressed concern that the motion contravened the Constitution of the By-laws of the Senate whereby Senate was responsible for the educational policy of the University. R. Raeside drew attention to this and stated that if the revised policy was approved, it would remove from Senate its responsibility for academic policy.

P. Abela returned to the original language in the first motion brought to Senate in November. He noted that the language no longer included the necessity for the list of rankings to come to Senate and for Senate to vote on the ranking list. He asked whether this was merely an oversight.

G. Whitehall pointed out that that was the reason for his suggested substitution motion. He felt that with the desire for more flexibility and

shorter timelines, the revision to the APC process removed the single most important obligation by removing Senate oversight.

G. Whitehall stated that the revised process did not achieve its objectives and would be created at a big cost to the bi-cameral governance of the University. He felt that the timelines appeared to be shorter only because a lack of detail had been provided in terms of when units needed to develop academic plans, and of when plans might be amended. There was no indication of when academic plans would be received by Faculty Councils or by the APC. August was the only defined date. G. Whitehall felt that this put aside a rational planning cycle in favour of a sense of flexibility but without providing a meaningful, flexible policy generation; which was what was needed rather than just flexibility.

G. Whitehall noted that flexibility would be achieved by handing over all decision making authority to the VP Academic in August, but would come at a cost to all other mechanisms that would have to come into play in order to allow the VPA to make an informed decision.

G. Whitehall believed that because there was a 12 month advertising, selection committee and hiring process, there was in fact very little difference between the original time frame for the process and the proposed revised time frame.

G. Whitehall commented that the long-term thinking component that would be desirable had not worked and had been removed from the second revision. He stated that long term thinking was not a long term goal but was something that needed to be integrated and embedded into the overall process.

On the subject of flexibility, G. Whitehall stated that governing from a standpoint of a permanent emergency made for bad policy and that exceptions should be built into a rational plan. He felt that in this instance, flexibility had been achieved by taking the decision out of the hands of Senate and a planning cycle and instead placing it into the hands of the VP Academic, and in the future, the VP Academic and Provost. The Bi-cameral nature of the Institution was such that the Board created the financial envelope and Senate held the responsibility to create the contents of that envelope. G. Whitehall reminded Senators that he was a Board member and therefore also had a responsibility to consider the Board's responsibility. Senate's obligation was to the educational policy of the University and this responsibility was granted to Senate by the Board.

G. Whitehall pointed out that while Senators knew that the current VPA was well regarded and trusted, one concern was that the VPA was only answerable to the Board through the President of the University. He gave as an example, the decision by the President to change the responsibilities of the VPA to that of VPA and Provost. When asked whether Senate would have an opportunity to vote on this change, the President had correctly stated that Senate would not because it was the responsibility of the Board to make any changes to the VPA position, since it was only answerable to the Board.

G. Whitehall stated that the VPA in the future will now have new non-academic responsibilities covering recruitment and enrolment. The position

would carry double the responsibility; having to consider the academic mission of the University and also to consider how to improve recruitment, retention and enrolment. G. Whitehall noted that final decisions would no longer be made primarily from an academic position, but from the standpoint of someone who carried a double responsibility to both the academic sector and to recruitment and enrolment. The new responsibilities of the VPA and Provost position were not yet clear.

G. Whitehall stated that these revisions removed key decisions about the future of educational policy of the University outside of Senate oversight with only some consultation to a Senate sub-committee; the Academic Planning Committee. He felt that Senate would be present only in an advisory role to the VPA and the VPA would only be required to consult with the APC, and not be bound by the decisions of the APC.

G. Whitehall pointed out that it was not yet known which individual would fill the position but that it would be a six-year contract. He was not comfortable with empowering the new individual with decision making on the future of Acadia's educational policy.

G. Whitehall summarized that his proposed amendment kept Senate oversight and allowed for flexibility and different timelines, and the long-term thinking that was desired in the original motion.

The Chair questioned one aspect of the relationship between the Board and Senate. Her understanding was that the Provincial Government had given responsibility both to the Board and to Senate for operational/financial and academic aspects, respectively. She stated that she would refer again to the provincial legislation related to bicameral governance for further clarity.

J. Hennessy appreciated G. Whitehall's comments and took his concerns seriously as did Arts Faculty members. He was not in agreement that the intention behind the revised motion violated the purview of Senate and believed that in the bicameral system Senate was responsible for generating policy and giving academic direction for the University. However, J. Hennessy felt that prior to TTTCAC, allocation of positions were never part of a Senate debate. Senate took on this role but J. Hennessy felt that if the system was working properly the individuals who should be making those decisions were the people who were accountable to Senate for its policies and directions, and accountable to their Faculty Councils, and who also had the fiduciary responsibility to the President and to the Board with respect to resources, and had the pan-perspective on the University; that might not be present in an elected committee. J. Hennessy pointed out that the Deans and the VPA had the necessary overview of where the academic needs were, all of which came from the Heads and Directors and Faculty Councils. He felt that the spirit of the revised process was to have the Deans and the VPA in consultation, making these final decisions.

J. Hennessy pointed out that in the existing process the VPA could change the order of the list without the consultation of the Deans.

J. Hennessy felt that the pan-University perspective was often missing in a committee or in Senate and he did not feel that Senate should be deciding where to deploy the most important resources. J. Hennessy felt that this was the responsibility of leaders and leaders needed to be held to account.

P. Abela felt that good leaders needed to act responsibly and also be accountable. He stated that the bicameral nature of Senate provided a focus with respect to accountability for the academic mission of the Institution.

P. Abela noted that the original language required Senate to review and approve the final submissions from the APC. The VPA was also required to report to Senate on the rationale of the final selections.

A. Vibert thanked Senators for the points that had been raised. She expected that the APC and the VPA would still be reporting back to Senate, and that this was probably just an omission in the wording of the revision. Conversation at the APC had focused on how to make the process less unwieldy and more responsive in addition to shortening the timelines.

J. Wentzell stated that there were concerns about the process because long-term needs (as opposed to wants) were not taken fully into consideration. Although the idea had been to have units sit down and discuss retirements, where the curriculum needed to go, what were the enrolment trends and what other new trends could be emerging. She felt that looking down the road would enable academic units to be smarter about the way that proposals were put together. In any given year a unit could decide not to submit a proposal to the APC and wait until another year.

J. Wentzell agreed with tabling the motion and returning it to the APC but did not feel that there had been any intention to undermine the process; it was about becoming more responsive and acknowledging the needs that often came to light after the February date.

J. Guiney Yallop stated that all of the three proposals that came to the APC from the School of Education were carefully thought out and submitted with the hope that all three would be considered by the APC. J. Guiney Yallop felt that the process was not working for the School of Education.

G. Gibson wanted the long-term plan to be kept in mind. She pointed out that it was a lot of work for a unit to put together requests and that every single request that went forward was a high need. Acadia had not been replacing faculty as they retired or left, hence the high need now.

G. Gibson stated that Psychology would need to re-visit their entire program because they did not have the faculty to support the current program. The same conversations were held in Biology. She urged the Board of Governors to also think about the fact that all units were in a state of high need.

P. Abela felt that the revision proposed by G. Whitehall would add the nimbleness that had been discussed. He felt that if the APC was going to re-fashion the revised motion it would be important to include that the APC report would come to Senate and that Senate would vote on the report. He

pointed out that the ability of the VPA to add to the list already existed in the current language.

P. Abela stated that in June 2013 TTTCAC was morphed into the APC which provided more flexibility. T. Herman was the VPA at the time and was asked whether the VPA would always make the final decision in the same order as the ranking from the APC. T. Herman responded that the VPA might not always make the final selection in the same order but that if the order was altered he/she would have to justify any change.

S. Currie stated that the idea of Senate endorsement was new to her and asked whether when the ranked list came to Senate, it also included all of the background information, so that Senate could make an informed vote.

The Chair stated that Senate does not receive the full proposals that the APC and Heads and Directors receive.

S. Currie pointed out that she would feel uncomfortable voting on something without background information.

P. Abela stated that the APC does provide a rationale for the rankings.

G. Whitehall commented that Senate had always approved the ranking that the APC had presented. This still maintained the bicameral nature of the Institution. He stated that the APC had been created to introduce the long-term thinking and different kinds of questions. Individuals on the committee were encouraged to think about the big picture and not about their Faculty. There was currently no representative from the Faculty of Arts, for example.

G. Whitehall stated that there was a difference in long-term planning between procedural planning and the culture of planning. The University needed a culture that invested in long-term thinking. He agreed that a lot of short-term thinking had occurred to date because the Institution had been operating in crisis mode.

G. Whitehall felt that long and short-term plans could come forward to the APC and could stay with the APC without needing to be rewritten but could be revised. All this was available in the original APC guidelines with slight modifications.

G. Whitehall pointed out that in Point 1 of the decision-making process, he had inserted *may* to address the assertion that some of the decisions that were formed in each of the Faculties could employ some forms of democratic bargaining. He stated that it should be up to the Faculties to decide how they choose to rank the list, or they might give up that right and allow the Dean to do so.

A. Vibert commented that the APC wanted to contextualize any request for a permanent position in a longer term academic plan and to provide that information to members of the APC who were faculty but did not have the opportunity to see the pan-University issues. This would allow the APC members to make better decisions. The intention was also to speed the

process up. She did not feel that the APC would want to report to Senate in April, the year prior to a tenure track position being endorsed, and she expected that the APC would request that a later date be agreed by Senate.

G. Whitehall agreed that his substitution motion left the dates as they had been because it was difficult to create a proper choreography of policy. He expected that the APC would know whether those dates could be shortened.

The Chair asked for a motion to refer the matter back to the APC.

Motion to refer the matter back to the APC. Moved by G. Whitehall and seconded by C. Shields.

MOTION TO REFER MOTION BACK CARRIED.

b) **Motion that Senate approve the Prioritized Recommendations of the APRC coming out of the Review of the Department of Psychology (*attached*)**

Motion that Senate approve the Prioritized Recommendations of the APRC coming out of the Review of the Department of Psychology. Moved by S. Currie and seconded by R. Newman.

S. Currie stated that the external program review took place in late November 2017 and that D. Brodeur met with the APRC in October 2018 and the review was positive.

S. Currie pointed out that the review identified a very strong and research intensive undergraduate program that allowed students to be exposed to both the depth and breadth of psychology, which was an important feature of the Department. She noted that an M.Sc in Clinical Psychology was also offered for a small number of graduate students and that this had also been favourably reviewed. S. Currie stated that the program allowed students to be licensed to practice as clinical psychologists in Nova Scotia.

S. Currie noted that the major challenges were the volume and intensity of the program which was coming at a cost to the faculty and staff, as they were considerably overstretched.

S. Currie referred Senators to the nine recommendations made by the external reviewers. Following the meeting with D. Brodeur, the APRC prioritized these into three categories of high, medium and low priority.

S. Currie stated that in the high priority area the APRC agreed with the department responses to the recommendations, including rationalization of the course delivery, continuing to cross-list courses and explore new areas, and finally the delivery of the PsyD program, for which the department was waiting for direction from the Province. Both the APRC and the Psychology department were in agreement that if the Provincial support and resources were not forthcoming, they would not proceed with the program. If the program was put in place it would be the new standard for registration for clinical psychology and would effectively replace the M.Sc. program that the department currently offered. S. Currie noted that although discussions with

the Province had moved a little forward there were no firm answers at this time.

S. Currie stated that in the medium priority area there were requests for additional resources, including an increase to the administrative support, and faculty long-term CLT positions, all of which the APRC agreed with, although action fell outside of the mandate of that committee.

S. Currie noted that of the low priority recommendations, the APRC believed that student advising was important but that the department was already managing this very well. Also the ability to track students once they graduate from Acadia was something the APRC felt was an Institutional obligation which would be worked towards in the 2025 strategic plan.

MOTION CARRIED.

c) Discussion item from the A&AS (Policy) Committee: Proposal to restore the use of a 4.3 GPA Alpha based grading scale (*attached*)

Discussion item from the A&AS (Policy) Committee: Proposal to restore the use of a 4.3 GPA Alpha based grading scale.

M. Bishop explained that there were two separate components to the discussion, but that they were highly linked. He noted that this would be a restoration of 4.3 equating to an A+ and provided some historical context.

M. Bishop reported that in 1987 Senate tasked a sub-committee to evaluate the current grading system which was numeric. Many institutions across North America were moving towards a GPA Alpha-based system and this committee was to consider doing the same. M. Bishop stated that although the committee made the recommendation to Senate to adopt an Alpha GPA system that was 4.3, and Senate approved that, there was a caveat that the committee would report back to Senate at the end of five years.

M. Bishop stated that in 1992/93 the committee was reconvened to evaluate the grading system over the five year period. The committee indicated that this was working well and had been adopted by most other Institutions and provided an equitable playing field for students across the board, but that since most institutions had adopted a 4.0 system, Acadia should do the same.

M. Bishop stated the Senate agreed with the recommendation and had since that time, operated with a 4.0 system; however, Acadia did not eliminate the A+ whereas most other institutions did drop the A+. Acadia was now out of sync with national peers, and most institutions that had a 4.3 scale had the A+. M. Bishop noted that only the University of Alberta and the University of California took the same approach. McGill and other large institutions with a 4.0 system capped it at A. He felt that this disadvantaged Acadia students who had earned the A+ but had no associated benefit for having that.

M. Bishop stated that a related but separate item that he brought to the A&AS (Policy) committee was coming to Senate as a motion but would need to be moved by another Senator. This would be a motion to restore the use of a 4.3 scale on the A+, but it was related to the use of numerics. He noted that in both 1988 and 1993 the recommendation from the sub-committee was that

Acadia eliminate the use of numerics at Acadia, however the SPAC had indicated that they were very reliant on the use of numerics to carry out a variety of their work. The SPAC recommendation was that while the rest of the institution move towards the alpha and the GPA system, they would prefer to see numerics retained.

M. Bishop stated that this was what happened. However, it meant that the numerics were used as a basis for primary grading at Acadia, they were translated onto student transcripts as an alpha grade and GPA. The numeric value was hidden from the students. This was why the Calendar showed an Asterix beside the percentage range that was used stating that it was only to be used at an interpretation for assessment by other institutions. M. Bishop stated that students never got to see the grades that they were assessed in. The numeric grade was still being used and he said that if a student contacted the Registrar's office to question why he/she appeared on the Dean's List last year but not this year, when they still had a A and a perfect 4.0.

M. Bishop stated that the Dean's List was based on the top 5% of non-graduating students within each respective Faculty, by average. This was an average that the student never gets to see. This left students concerned and confused.

M. Bishop stated that his second concern was with University athletes who achieve a certain grade level in order to achieve and retain athletic awards, which typically was a C average. He commented that this year there were cases of students that had met the C average but received letters to say that they had not retained the award; this was because they had not met a 65% average but instead had 63%, which still showed as a C grade. As a result, he heard from a number of confused, concerned and upset students.

M. Bishop noted that students with regular scholarships were in the similar situation. Transfer students were also affected. Because the system was still based on the numeric and had not fully changed, a student coming from Memorial University where they had a true 4.0 system and also included a numeric range could be disadvantaged. Students from Memorial had a 4.0 as a A, 3.0 as a B, 2.0 as a C and 1.0 as a D. Grades from Memorial are inputted as a numeric grade alongside the letter grade, but the Acadia system was geared for numerics as primary and therefore picked up the numeric grade and then switched. As a result, he was approached by one of the academic units questioning why a student had been admitted and provided with transfer credits when the Acadia transcript showed that the student had achieved Ds, in which case they would be inadmissible. The student had in fact achieved a C level of grades but the ranges of percentage grades were different between Acadia and Memorial.

M. Bishop noted that this was a proposal and a discussion item.

The Chair asked whether a Senator wished to make a motion.

**Motion to restore the use of a 4.3 GPA Alpha based grading scale.
Moved by J. Hennessy and seconded by D. Benoit.**

J. Hennessy appreciated the rationale provided by the Registrar and had received similar concerns from students.

A. Redden asked whether this change would impact the records of current students or was it only on a going-forward basis.

M. Bishop agreed that this would be on a going-forward basis and stated that the back of a university transcript would show a date range of when grading systems had been altered in the past. Acadia transcripts would be altered to show these changes. M. Bishop also had access to the Registrar's listserv for Canada and receives notices several times during the year from other institutions that were changing their transcripts in some manner.

A. Redden stated that these changes would make it better for students applying for Tri-Council scholarships.

The Chair asked whether the change would take effect on July 1st, 2019, starting in the next academic year.

M. Bishop confirmed that this would be the case.

The Chair asked about summer intersession and spring intersession grades. M. Bishop said that the date could be set but that it would typically be July 1st, 2019, so would take effect for summer intersession but not for spring intersession.

G. Whitehall relayed a comment from the Faculty of Arts Steering Committee. They felt that this change could be negative for Arts students primarily because in the Faculty of Arts a student would rarely be given an A+ grade or achieve 98 or 99 as a numeric grade. They were concerned that students could be negatively affected with scholarships for Acadia but recognised that there could be equivalency between Acadia and other institutions for arts students.

G. Whitehall felt that the internal problem could be solved by clarifying what got a student on the Dean's List by stating that if a student got an A grade they would be on the Dean's List, rather than having a moving target of 5%. By taking this approach across the board it would not be necessary to modify the hybrid system.

M. Bishop agreed to address both of these issues with the A&AS (Policy) Committee.

M. Bishop stated that many institutions went to the alpha and GPA system rather than the numerical grades in order to provide, especially in the humanities and social sciences, the latitude of flexibility and the ultimate autonomy of a faculty member to access and assign particular grades, without having to give a 98 or 99. A professor could decide that in their opinion the student's paper was an 'B' paper for example. Moving away from the numerics may allow for more flexibility.

J. Hennessy had shared G. Whitehall's concerns but agreed that this would allow a professor to take a qualitative and subjective assessment when assigning grades.

B. Anderson stated that this had also been discussed in Nutrition and Dietetics and students supported the move and saw the value when applying for scholarships and awards at other universities. The students were concerned that very clear communication about the change be sent out through the ASU and other venues. Students were concerned about starting in one year and then having their GPA alter in the following year.

G. Philp agreed that students were concerned on how this might impact them and he offered to play a role with the Registrar's Office in order to communicate clearly.

MOTION CARRIED.

4) New Business

- a) **Motion that the T.I.E. Committee recommends to Senate approval of the following principles to be used when preparing the Academic Calendar dates. (*attached*)**

Motion that the T.I.E. Committee recommends to Senate approval of the following principles to be used when preparing the Academic Calendar dates. Moved by D. MacKinnon and seconded by M. Branch.

H. Chipman spoke to the motion. He pointed out that this was a tweaking of the principles that had previously been approved by Senate in 2015, to reflect current practice and to reflect the second motion which referred to Calendar dates for the coming years.

H. Chipman stated that in Point #2 classes would start the first Wednesday after Labour Day rather than the first Wednesday in September and a similar minor adjustment in January.

In Point #9 the principles stated that wherever possible there would be 12 weeks of classes and in Point #10 they noted that scheduling was challenging because of the Monday holidays and therefore cautioned the use of three-hour classes on Mondays.

C. Shields asked why the principles Point #6 stated that it would be desirable for the exam period to end as early as possible. He asked what the rationale was for limiting the term of the examinations and whether trying to be efficient with the exam period resulted in more students having three examinations in two days.

M. Bishop stated that this was not a new principle, it had been approved in 2015.

D. Benoit asked what software was being used by the Registrar's Office to schedule the exams.

M. Bishop stated that an algorithm designed by R. Johnson was being used.

D. Benoit stated that 20 years ago a Computer Science student had written the examination scheduler for the Registrar's Office and that several years ago another Computer Science student on Coop had written a new version for the Registrar's Office. D. Benoit stated that 3-4 years ago a third Computer Science Honours student had written a new version which was not currently being used by the Registrar's Office.

D. Benoit pointed out that this software had been shown to produce a shorter examination schedule with less conflicts because the conflicts could be tweaked by the owner of the software by putting in exceptions, e.g. no more than two exams in a 24 hour period. He felt that unless the new student information system was expected to have a better course examination scheduler, he strongly suggested that the Registrar's Office look into implementing this software.

D. Benoit offered to forward the thesis information to M. Bishop and to speak to the student.

M. Bishop agreed to consider this.

The Chair asked whether D. Benoit wanted wording changed in the Principles document.

He did not.

G. Whitehall asked about the Fall break in the last week of October or first week of November.

H. Chipman noted that the Fall was a juggling act and that two surveys had been circulated, both to students and to faculty, with good responses. Among the students there was a strong sentiment in favour of a Fall break. They were offered Thanksgiving (one week), November 11th (one week) or a two/three split in days. Overwhelmingly the students preferred the Remembrance Day one week Fall break but recognised that it was rather late in the term. Faculty were concerned that this was also too late. The T.I.E. Committee was therefore recommending late October.

H. Chipman pointed out the Labour Day and Thanksgiving always fell on a Monday and that sometimes Remembrance Day also fell on a Monday. In the next four years it would be possible to have a break in the Fall by following this schedule.

P. Arnold asked whether this set of Principles would replace a previous set of Principles.

H. Chipman confirmed that this was the case.

P. Arnold asked whether Point #9 which stated '*When possible, there will be 12 weeks of classes*', should read '*a minimum of 12 weeks of classes*', because from an accreditation point of view programs could be in jeopardy if they slipped below 12 weeks of class.

H. Chipman responded that not all of the proposed Calendars for the next four years were 12 weeks; some were 11.5 or just under 12. Adding the Fall break and other constraints made this impossible but efforts had been made to get to 12 weeks. He noted that the previous language had stated that *'there shall be 13 weeks'* but pointed out that this was not being achieved.

D. Benoit noted that a minimum number of credit hours needed to be covered in the term and asked whether in an 11.5 week term, the required 36 hours of instruction could be given.

M. Bishop stated that a 13 week term would allow for 39 hours of instruction and a 12 week term would allow for 36 hours of instruction. In one or two instances there were 11.5 weeks of term time.

The Chair pointed out that at was 5.59 p.m.

Motion to extend the Senate meeting to 6:10 pm. Moved by G. Whitehall and seconded by C. Shields.

MOTION TO EXTEND CARRIED.

P. Abela believed that there was a firm requirement for 36 hours of instruction for a 3 credit hour course.

A. Vibert shared the concerns.

A. Wilks asked how many hours would be missing in an 11.5 week term.

H. Chipman stated that the committee had counted days of the week and that in the 2019-20 Calendar there would be 11 Mondays, 12 Tuesdays and 13 Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

H. Chipman stated that in the proposed 2020 Calendar there were only 11 Monday, Tuesday and Wednesdays, and 12 Thursday and Fridays.

The Chair asked whether the Calendar stated that 36 hours of instruction was required.

M. Bishop had not identified this in the Calendar.

D. Benoit pointed out that if a faculty member was sick and missed a class, no one would suggest that the course was no longer validated because students had only met for 33 hours instead of 36. However, if the course was already reduced to 33 hours and then on top of that a faculty member was out sick or a snow storm reduced the hours by a further three or more, concerns would be valid, in those situations. In those instances a class should be rescheduled, perhaps for a Saturday.

P. Abela pointed out that page 38 of the Calendar stated that a 3 credit hour course would have a minimum of 36 hours and contact hours.

P. Callaghan suggested that the Calendar needed to add a qualification which would allow for some discretion on the odd occasion when 36 teaching hours were not met.

A. Vibert did not think that a minimum of 36 teaching hours was only applied to Acadia. She felt that this was a standard expectation of what a 3 credit hour course meant and she was concerned around programs carrying certification requirements, such as the Bachelor of Education. A. Vibert suggested looking into the issue of what a 3 credit hour course really meant to faculty.

A. Wilks asked whether the T.I.E. committee had considered a four day study break in the Fall and a full week in the Winter term.

D. Benoit stated that as chair of the Faculty Support committee he was involved in discussing what was defined as a 3 credit hour course. This was presently defined by the number of hours that a faculty member stood in the classroom and not by the amount of work done in the course. He asked if the definition of a 3 credit hour course should be changed to be related to the material that was taught.

D. Benoit felt that this would solve a lot of problems. He noted that some institutions in the States ran courses that were longer than those in Canada, and that some of them ran 15 or 16 weeks.

R. Raeside agreed that this issue was on the agenda for the Curriculum Committee (Policy).

S. Currie agreed with D. Benoit and said that it was not necessary to restrict courses to 36 contact hours and that new and innovative approaches could be taken.

P. Abela asked whether the motion could be tabled to the January meeting of Senate to allow for some investigative work to be done.

The Chair asked whether P. Abela would prefer to table the motion or to refer it back to the T.I.E. committee.

P. Abela had no preference.

M. Bishop stated that it had been a considerable challenge to produce a teaching schedule with the dates that had been presented to the T.I.E. committee, both with the existing Principles and the proposed revision. He noted that the years that were really impacted were the ones in which Labour Day fell late. In order to make the term up to 13 weeks in those years it would be necessary to start the term prior to Labour Day. He noted that there was little appetite to move to an early start to the term.

It was noted that this had occurred once in recent years and it was not desirable.

The Chair asked whether Senators were ready to vote on the motion.

MOTION CARRIED.

5) Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 6:15 p.m. Moved by G. Whithall.

ORIGINAL SIGNED

R. Hare, Recording Secretary

Motion from the Academic Planning Committee: The APC moves the adoption of a revised decision-making process for allocating permanent faculty positions.

Background and Rationale for Revisions to the APC Process

- In response to a number of issues raised at the September 2018 Senate meeting in relation to the processes of the Academic Planning Committee (APC), the VP Academic as Chair of the Committee agreed that the Committee would review its processes and report back to Senate with suggestions. The report of the VPA at the September 2018 Senate meeting identified a number of concerns about the process.

Issues raised included:

- 1) the length of time between requests for tenure-track positions from academic units and the authorization of ranked positions for advertising means that significant changes in academic units have often taken place in the interim. The process takes too long: 18-24 months from the time a unit begins drafting a proposal until a new faculty member begins an appointment;
 - 2) the current process is unwieldy and ineffective in responding to changing university contexts and unexpected complement developments. The needs for positions often change within months of the list of positions being finalized. There is no way to address emergent needs in units (late resignations, multiple resignations in the same unit/programme, deaths etc.) outside of this process;
 - 3) the current process encourages short term needs-based thinking within academic units at the expense of medium- and long-term planning and possibilities of cross-unit collaborations;
 - 4) the current process means that the APC spends significant time in the ranking process for tenure-track requests rather than on broader and more long-term matters of academic planning.
- The APC subsequently engaged in reviewing the process by which permanent faculty requests are adjudicated, in response both to issues raised at Senate and to the range of issues identified by faculty, department heads, directors, and deans.

The suggested process revisions brought from the APC to Senate for approval respond to the concerns raised by :

- 1) considerably tightening the time-line between requests and authorizations, therefore responding to identified needs in a much timelier fashion;
- 2) allowing for more effective responses to dynamic university and/or complement contexts and developments by providing considered and careful revision of APC recommendations by the deans and VPA under certain circumstances;
- 3) providing a process through which requests for permanent faculty positions come to the APC in the context of medium and long-range plans, thereby encouraging university-wide academic planning;
- 4) introducing a binning rather than ranking process. By making the APC an advisory body, the proposed process frees up the APC for broader and longer range planning, and, under 3 above, provides the Committee with both the impetus and the information necessary to carry this out.

Proposed Revised Process

Academic Faculties and the Library are requested to develop short-term (one year) and long-range (3-5 years) academic plans which demonstrate anticipated permanent faculty hiring needs linked to the unit's academic plans. In any given year, those requesting permanent positions will be provided with the opportunity to up-date their academic plans, in consultation with the relevant dean(s), in order to contextualize their requests and to provide guidance in planning to the APC.

During an August meeting of the APC, the faculty deans and the UL will present short-term hiring requests and long-range faculty planning. Individual faculties may choose to rank requests or group them by priority, and the deans will communicate to the APC the priorities of their respective faculties/library. In the case of interdisciplinary requests, the relevant deans will confer and present.

Each year the APC will bin the requests into immediate, short term and long-range priorities for the University as a whole. In doing so, the APC will consider program and institutional integrity, the Acadia mission of providing a personalized and rigorous liberal education, historical and current and projected enrolment trends, and potential interdisciplinary synergies. These results will be communicated as an advisory report from the Academic Planning Committee.

The Vice President (Academic) in consultation with the deans and/or the UL will authorize searches for permanent positions, taking the APC advisory report into consideration.

In the event that unanticipated needs emerge, the Vice President (Academic) in consultation with the deans and/or UL may authorize positions not included in the APC report.

Should university-wide strategic decisions warrant it, the Vice President (Academic) may trigger a call for proposals at other times in the year (for example: decolonization efforts).

Current process approved by Senate: June 18th 2013

The Process

- 1) *Provides opportunity for Library, program and faculty level input with respect to establishing priorities;*
- 2) *Represents a synthesis within the academic sector that allows for integration into academic planning as approved by Senate;*
- 3) *Incorporates a review and approval by Senate of the selection produced in step 2 of the process (below)*
- 4) *Contains a final selection by the VP-Academic, through reference to the Senate-approved report and in consultation with the Deans and University Librarian, that integrates the academic priorities with financial considerations*
- 5) *Requires a report by the VP-Academic to Senate of the rationale for the final selection*

The VP Academic will report to Deans and University Librarian in October whether a hiring environment is anticipated in the upcoming year. Deans and the University Librarian will transmit this information to program heads and directors for information and/or action.

Decision-Making Process for Allocating Permanent Faculty Positions:

- 1) *Programs develop requests upon the basis of their own rationale. They may draw on any background information or data they wish in preparation of those requests. Relevant Faculties and / or the Library provide input indicating the relative priorities, together with a rationale for those priorities, with reports submitted by Faculties and/or the Library to the APC by 15 February.*
- 2) *The APC reviews the reports submitted by Faculties and/or the Library and develops recommendations for hiring priorities and a report with rationale for presentation to Senate as a motion for consideration at the April meeting of Senate at which it shall be the first item of business on the agenda.*
- 3) *Senate reviews, approves and submits a final recommendation for hiring priorities to the VP Academic no later than 1 May.*
- 4) *The VP-Academic makes final selection decisions by 1 August.*
- 5) *The VP-Academic reports to Senate at the September meeting of Senate on the rationale for the final selection.*

This process will be employed in the hiring of tenure-track, continuing faculty, encompassing instructors, librarians, and professors. PAD / Lecteur / Lectrice, Part-time, and CLT hiring is not included in this process.

Amendment to the tabled motion: The APC moves amendment to the motion regarding the revised decision-making process for allocating permanent faculty positions.

Background and Rationale for Revisions to the APC Process

- In response to a number of issues raised at the September 2018 Senate meeting in relation to the processes of the Academic Planning Committee (APC), the VP Academic as Chair of the Committee agreed that the Committee would review its processes and report back to Senate with suggestions. The report of the VPA at the September 2018 Senate meeting identified a number of concerns about the process.

Issues raised included:

- 1) the length of time between requests for tenure-track positions from academic units and the authorization of ranked positions for advertising means that significant changes in academic units have often taken place in the interim. The process takes too long: 18-24 months from the time a unit begins drafting a proposal until a new faculty member begins an appointment;
 - 2) the current process is unwieldy and ineffective in responding to changing university contexts and unexpected complement developments. The needs for positions often change within months of the list of positions being finalized. There is no way to address emergent needs in units (late resignations, multiple resignations in the same unit/programme, deaths etc.) outside of this process;
 - 3) the current process encourages short term needs-based thinking within academic units at the expense of medium- and long-term planning and possibilities of cross-unit collaborations;
 - 4)-the current process means that the APC spends significant time in the ranking process for tenure-track requests rather than on broader and more long-term matters of academic planning.
- The APC subsequently engaged in reviewing the process by which permanent faculty requests are adjudicated, in response both to issues raised at Senate and to the range of issues identified by faculty, department heads, directors, and deans.

The suggested process revisions brought from the APC to Senate for approval respond to the concerns raised by:

- 1) considerably tightening the time-line between requests and authorizations, therefore responding to identified needs in a much timelier fashion;
- 2) allowing for more effective responses to dynamic university and/or complement contexts and developments by providing considered and careful revision of APC recommendations by the deans and VPA under certain circumstances;
- 3) providing a process through which requests for permanent faculty positions come to the APC in the context of ~~medium and long range~~ **longer ranged** plans, thereby encouraging university-wide academic planning;
- 4) ~~introducing a binning rather than ranking process. By making the APC an advisory body, the proposed process frees up the APC for broader and longer range planning, and, under 3 above, provides the Committee with both the impetus and the information necessary to carry this out.~~

Proposed Revised Process

Academic Faculties and the Library are requested to develop short-term (one year) and long-range (3-5 years) academic plans which demonstrate anticipated permanent faculty hiring needs linked to the unit's academic plans. In any given year, those requesting permanent positions will be provided with the opportunity to up-date their academic plans, in consultation with the relevant dean(s), in order to contextualize their requests and to provide guidance in planning to the APC.

During an August meeting of the APC, the faculty deans and the UL will present short-term hiring requests **in the context of longer ranged and long range** faculty planning. Individual faculties may choose to rank requests or group them by priority, and the deans/UL will communicate to the APC the priorities of their respective faculties/library. In the case of interdisciplinary requests, the relevant deans will confer and present.

Each year the APC will **prioritize the requests** ~~bin the requests into immediate, short term and long range priorities~~ for the University. ~~as a whole~~. In doing so, the APC will consider program and institutional integrity, the Acadia mission of providing a personalized and rigorous liberal education, historical and current and projected enrolment trends, and potential interdisciplinary synergies. These results will be communicated as an advisory report from the Academic Planning Committee.

The Vice President (Academic) in consultation with the deans and/or the UL will authorize searches for permanent positions, **on the basis of** the APC advisory report. ~~into consideration.~~

In the event that unanticipated needs emerge, the Vice President (Academic) in consultation with the deans and/or UL may authorize positions not included in the APC report.

Should university-wide strategic decisions warrant it, the Vice President (Academic) may trigger a call for proposals at other times in the year (for example: decolonization efforts).

Current process approved by Senate: June 18th 2013

The Process

- 6) *Provides opportunity for Library, program and faculty level input with respect to establishing priorities;*
- 7) *Represents a synthesis within the academic sector that allows for integration into academic planning as approved by Senate;*
- 8) *Incorporates a review and approval by Senate of the selection produced in step 2 of the process (below)*
- 9) *Contains a final selection by the VP-Academic, through reference to the Senate-approved report and in consultation with the Deans and University Librarian, that integrates the academic priorities with financial considerations*
- 10) *Requires a report by the VP-Academic to Senate of the rationale for the final selection*

The VP Academic will report to Deans and University Librarian in October whether a hiring environment is anticipated in the upcoming year. Deans and the University Librarian will transmit this information to program heads and directors for information and/or action.

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This process will be employed in the hiring of tenure-track, continuing faculty, encompassing instructors, librarians, and professors. PAD / Lecteur / Lectrice, Part-time, and CLT hiring is not included in this process.



Academic Program Review Committee

Prioritized Recommendations

Department of Psychology

The Academic Program Review Committee (APRC) met on October 22, 2018 with the Head of the Department of Psychology, Dr. Darlene Brodeur to receive the response from the Department to the External Review Team's report. This review was part of a regular cycle of reviews of Acadia's programs. After consideration of the review, the response to it from the Department, and discussion with the Department's Head, the APRC offers prioritized responses to the External Review recommendations.

The External Review was generally very positive noting that the Department is achieving the aspirational goals documented in their Self Study. The external reviewers emphasized the strengths of the faculty, programs, students, and collaborations within Acadia and the broader community. Overall, challenges currently faced by the Department and described by the external reviewers were focused on capacity to deliver and maintain program quality given the number of students and courses in the Department. The Reviewers made nine specific recommendations; the APRC prioritized these recommendations in bins of high, medium and low priority and retained the original recommendation numbers.

HIGH PRIORITY:

Recommendation 1: *The faculty and staff in the Department should engage in a Department-level discussion about (1) the sustainability of the breadth of their undergraduate curriculum, taking into serious account the size of the faculty complement and the areas of expertise in which they have hired; (2) the desired capacity of their courses; (3) the feasibility and usefulness of developing a 3-4 year rolling plan of course offerings; and (4) the possibility of enabling faculty members to teach more regularly in their areas of expertise, particularly in upper year seminars;*

The Department has spent significant time (i.e. meetings and retreats) discussing ways they could more efficiently use existing resources to lighten faculty workloads. Psychology has made a strategic decision to maintain the breadth of their program,

given the diversity of the field. Their Options are of great interest to students and support their program goals. Their first- and second-year courses are at capacity, both pedagogically and physically, and the Department is exploring creative solutions to offer some popular 3rd years courses on rotation.

The APRC supports the Department's position on this recommendation. We encourage the Department to continue to maintain program breadth as well as depth (i.e. Options). We agree with the approach to explore rationalization of course delivery through possible rotations of upper level classes. Overall, we encourage the Department to continue to explore the balance between more focused options/areas of concentration with broader course offerings through collaboration with the Acadia community (see also Recommendation 2).

Recommendation 2: *The Department might revisit the practice of cross-listing courses with other departments, with the goal of determining whether increasing such listings is appropriate. Where warranted, this exercise might be part of a larger institutional initiative on rationalizing resources that could extend to sister institutions in the Maple League;*

The Department currently cross-lists several courses with Biology, Chemistry, Kinesiology and Philosophy and are interested in exploring other collaborations (e.g. Business, Music Therapy and Women and Gender Studies). They are also open to possibilities within the Maple League.

The APRC agrees that cross-listing courses and pursuing interdisciplinary areas will benefit the Department and the broader Acadia community.

Recommendation 5: *Given the impossibility of offering a PSY D program without new resources and the protracted nature of discussions regarding registration requirements for practicing psychologists in the province, we think it prudent that members of the Department not put additional effort into conversations about the already-developed proposal for a PSY D program until there is movement by the provincial government on this issue;*

The Department agrees that resources from the province are essential if they are to move forward with the PSY D program. If provincial support is not forthcoming, Psychology is not interested in moving forward with the PSY D. Acadia is currently pursuing whether there are external funds to support this program.

The APRC agrees with the Department's position on this recommendation and hopes for a resolution on this program with the province in 2019. Because of the implications of the potential PSY D to the Department, the APRC ranked this recommendation as 'high priority'.

MEDIUM PRIORITY:

Recommendation 6: *If contractually limited terms (CLTs) continue to be used, the University should consider offering extended terms rather than, in some cases, 9.5 month appointments;*

The Department agrees with this recommendation in that 3-year CLTs would facilitate program planning, contribute to research supervision and reduce the workload associated with searches.

The APRC agrees and understands the importance of program planning and attracting research-active faculty, although such decisions lie outside the responsibilities of the APRC. The APRC encourages the Department to make application for longer CLT positions through the customary channels.

Recommendation 7: *The University should seriously consider addressing the administrative inefficiencies, such as with technical support, student registration and advising, identified by the members in the Department. These issues were repeatedly cited as creating unnecessary additional workload burdens for both faculty and staff;*

The Department strongly agrees with this recommendation particularly given their high student enrolment and number of courses.

The APRC agrees that this recommendation is an important priority for the Department and encourages the Acadia administration to realign/rationalize administrative support for identified high-need areas.

Recommendation 8: *University budget allocations to departments/units should not be tied to historical levels, but should be activity based, i.e., driven, at least to some extent, by enrollments and performance in teaching and research;*

The Department agrees that the Departmental budget should be flexible and tied to activities (e.g. courses, enrolments).

The APRC recognizes the importance of appropriate unit budget allocations and encourages the Department to work with the Dean of FPAS in the upcoming budget exercise.

Recommendation 9: *The Department should consider implementing a department-level budget planning process to ensure resources are being allocated in the most effective manner.*

The Department agrees and has spent time in meetings and during retreats reflecting on how to more accurately allocate resources.

The APRC supports this recommendation and as with #8, encourages the Department to work with the Dean towards timely, efficient and realistic budget planning.

LOW PRIORITY:

Recommendation 4: *The Department might consider having a small number of persons (e.g., 2) perform all of the student advising for a particular academic year, rather than having several persons do it every year. Limiting this function to a small number of individuals should promote efficiency and also increase the consistency of information being provided to students. A rotational system could be implemented so that each faculty member would be responsible for providing advising every few years;*

The Department is committed to consistent advising and has established an Advising Committee with the Head and two additional faculty members. All members will be trained by the Head and assist in in-course advising sessions and advise when needed throughout the year.

The APRC agrees with the Department's approach and supports their commitment to consistent student advising.

Recommendation 3: *While faculty members in the Department have a good sense of what their Honours students are achieving from their undergraduate programs, they are less certain of what their programs are providing for non-Honours students. We suggest that the Department (or another unit charged with such responsibilities) consider surveying non-Honours students with respect to learning outcomes and the extent to which students' expectations are met;*

The Department agrees with this recommendation and has made attempts to track students, especially for the Self-Study. Administrative support and possibly a collaboration with Alumni Affairs could assist in collecting these important tracking data.

The APRC support the Department's efforts to track students. We agree that these data are important and as an institution, it will be important for us to collaboratively collect this information.

Academic Program Review Report

Department of Psychology

Acadia University

November 28 – 30, 2017

Submitted by:

David MacKinnon (Acadia University), Linda McMullen (University of Saskatchewan), Jennifer Tomes (Mount Allison University), and Brian Wilson (Acadia University)

Executive Summary and Recommendations

As outlined in the Department of Psychology's self-study document, the Department aspires to: (1) provide a broad-based education in the discipline that allows for opportunities to specialize; (2) develop critical thinking skills; (3) strengthen literacy, numeracy, and communication abilities; (4) provide training in relevant professional and technical skills; (5) encourage an appreciation of the value of research through positive research mentorship; (6) promote ethical behaviour and decision making; (7) provide opportunities for connections within the University and the broader community; and (8) develop educated citizens capable of using their knowledge for the benefit of self, others, and society. In our judgement, the Department is clearly achieving these aspirational goals.

Through the Department's very strong, research-intensive undergraduate programs, students are provided with opportunities for didactic and experiential learning, along with specialization options, that enable them to be exposed to the discipline of Psychology in both its breadth and depth. First-year laboratories for majors, intensive courses in research design and analysis, and smaller class sizes in the senior years assist students in developing critical analytic, numeracy, and communication skills. Mentored research experiences for students in the Honours program further cement an understanding of, and appreciation for, the importance and complexity of empirical research. The graduate program in clinical psychology provides further opportunities for small numbers of students to gain professional experience that enables them to be licensed to practice as clinical psychologists in the province and, thereby, to serve the broader community.

The students with whom we spoke were consistently positive about their programs. In particular, the undergraduate students highlighted the reputation of the Department's programs, the rigour of many of their courses, the opportunities for specialization, the graduated research experiences that define the curricula, the possibilities for mentored research, and the dedication and commitment of the Department's faculty members. Similarly, the graduate students emphasized the clear expectations and structured nature of their program that enabled them to graduate with a scientist-practitioner degree in two years. They echoed the undergraduate students' praise of the faculty.

In summary, the programs offered by the Department of Psychology are of very high quality and are clearly achieving what the Department has set out to accomplish. However, the volume and intensity of what the Department is offering its students comes with a cost. Perhaps, surprisingly, this cost has not resulted in the forfeiting of faculty members' research programs. Almost all faculty in the Department are actively involved in research, produce peer-reviewed publications, and garner grant support. The cost comes in faculty members being overworked and stretched to the limits of what they can do.

With these judgements, we make the following recommendations:

- The faculty and staff in the Department should engage in a Department-level discussion about (1) the sustainability of the breadth of their undergraduate curriculum, taking into serious account the size of the faculty complement and the areas of expertise in which they have hired; (2) the desired capacity of their courses; (3) the feasibility and usefulness of developing a 3-4 year rolling plan of course offerings; and (4) the possibility of enabling faculty members to teach more regularly in their areas of expertise, particularly in upper year seminars;
- The Department might revisit the practice of cross-listing courses with other departments, with the goal of determining whether increasing such listings is appropriate. Where warranted, this exercise might be part of a larger institutional initiative on rationalizing resources that could extend to sister institutions in the Maple League;
- While faculty members in the Department have a good sense of what their Honours students are achieving from their undergraduate programs, they are less certain of what their programs are providing for non-Honours students. We suggest that the Department (or another unit charged with such responsibilities) consider surveying non-Honours students with respect to learning outcomes and the extent to which students' expectations are met;
- The Department might consider having a small number of persons (e.g., 2) perform all of the student advising for a particular academic year, rather than having several persons do it every year. Limiting this function to a small number of individuals should promote efficiency and also increase the consistency of information being provided to students. A rotational system could be implemented so that each faculty member would be responsible for providing advising every few years;
- Given the impossibility of offering a PSY D program without new resources and the protracted nature of discussions regarding registration requirements for practicing psychologists in the province, we think it prudent that members of the Department not put additional effort into conversations about the already-developed proposal for a PSY D program until there is movement by the provincial government on this issue;
- If contractually limited terms (CLTs) continue to be used, the University should consider offering extended terms rather than, in some cases, 9.5 month appointments;
- The University should seriously consider addressing the administrative inefficiencies, such as with technical support, student registration and advising, identified by the members in the Department. These issues were repeatedly cited as creating unnecessary additional workload burdens for both faculty and staff;
- University budget allocations to departments/units should not be tied to historical levels, but should be activity based, i.e., driven, at least to some extent, by enrollments and performance in teaching and research;
- The Department should consider implementing a department-level budget planning process to ensure resources are being allocated in the most effective manner.

Introduction

At the request of Jeff Hooper, Dean of the Faculty of Pure and Applied Science, we conducted a review of the academic programs offered by the Department of Psychology at Acadia University. Prior to our site visit, we were supplied with a self-study document and sets of appendices prepared by the faculty members in the Department. We found these documents to adhere closely to the criteria set out in the *External Review Procedures for Academic Units or Programs* that were approved by Senate in March, 2017. During the site visit, we met with the following individuals and groups: Heather Hemming (Vice-President Academic); Jeff Hooper (Dean, Faculty of Pure and Applied Science); Anna Redden (Dean of Research and Graduate Studies); Darlene Brodeur (Head, Department of Psychology); Lisa Price (Clinical Program Coordinator); Professors Bezanson, Bleile, Champod, Hayes, Holmberg, Jones, Mehta, Newman, Pelland, and Symons (Faculty in the Department of Psychology); Professor Chris Shields (Adjunct appointee from the School of Kinesiology); a group of graduate students enrolled in the program in clinical psychology; and a group of undergraduate students who, collectively, were enrolled in a variety of programs and options and were in various years of their programs. In addition, we were given a tour of the Department's office and lab space. We also observed a third-year seminar taught by Professor Holmberg, which provided us with an opportunity to engage in conversation with approximately 15 additional undergraduate students.

We thank the faculty who prepared the self-study document for providing us with a thorough description of the strengths of their programs and a frank assessment of the challenges they are facing. We also appreciate the care that was taken in scheduling the meetings in which we participated during the site visit.

Department Profile

The faculty complement in the Department is reported to be 12 members. At present, the Department is operating its programs with nine members in the professorial ranks, two in the instructor ranks, and two in contractually limited term positions. The distribution across the professorial ranks in the permanent positions is weighted more heavily at the senior level (2 assistant professors, 2 associate professors, and 5 full professors), with the two assistant professors being quite recently hired. Between the time of the writing of the self-study document and our visit, the Department was informed that it had the authority to advertise for an additional two tenure-track positions at the level of assistant professor. These authorizations are welcomed by the current faculty who see themselves as now approaching what has historically been a complement of 12. We had the sense that, coupled with the recent hirings of the two tenure-track faculty members, the promise of two additional hirings is engendering a sense of rejuvenation in the Department.

At the undergraduate level, the department offers a B.A., a B.Sc. (both with Honours, including a thesis), a neuroscience option (introduced in 2009), an applied option (introduced in 2011), and opportunities to participate in a co-op program. The first- and second-year courses, with

the exception of the course in research design and analysis, are open to all students, regardless of major, while the third- and fourth-year courses are restricted to majors only. The curriculum is strongly geared toward providing students with scaffolded, experiential research learning that now begins with laboratory experiences in the introductory psychology course (for majors) and progresses in following years to research design and analysis courses and to laboratory-based courses in substantive areas of the discipline. Low-enrollment seminar courses in the fourth year of the programs round out the research experience. All students must also complete a minor.

At the graduate level, the Department offers a thesis-based M.Sc. in clinical psychology. This program aims to provide students with a basic understanding of assessment, psychotherapy, and ethics, and to prepare them to provide services to the public. It is clearly structured as a two-year program, with eight courses in the first year and a 500-hour practicum in the second year. Thesis supervision is provided by both clinical and non-clinical faculty members, with practicum supervision being strongly supported by clinicians in the community. At present, the standards for registration as a psychologist in Nova Scotia enable persons with a Master's degree in clinical psychology to be registered. For the past 6 years, the provincial registering body and the provincial government have been engaged in on-again, off-again discussions about changing the standard for registration to the doctoral level. Should this change be legislated, some members of the Department have expressed interest in offering a PSY D (Doctor of Psychology) program in place of their current M.Sc. However, this matter remains unresolved at this time.

Faculty members in the Department typically teach five courses per academic year. Despite this heavy teaching assignment, almost all are actively engaged in research. Those who require physical lab space have been accommodated in the Department, and some have recently received funds from infrastructure programs to outfit their labs. Research-active faculty members welcome Honours students and graduate students into their research programs, and provide supervision and mentorship to these students.

Faculty and staff offices are cohesively located in one building on campus (Horton Hall). Space for offices, labs, and meetings appears adequate. Administrative support in the Department has been eroded over recent years, which has put more strain on the person who fills this role, as well as on the Department Head, and on faculty members who now must do some tasks that were previously performed by staff.

Strengths

Over the course of our visit, we were impressed by the consistency with which the numerous strengths of the programs offered by the Department of Psychology were articulated. This consistency extended from students (undergraduate and graduate), to faculty, to senior administrators. It is clear that this Department enjoys an excellent reputation, and is perceived as one of the strongest teaching and research units in the University and as a driver in both the

Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Pure and Applied Science. It is also known for its excellent connections and engagement with local communities. We highlight the following particular strengths:

- **Quality of the faculty** – The members of the faculty are highly committed to providing excellent learning experiences for their students, both in the classroom and in mentored research contexts. They were universally praised by students for their investment in high quality teaching, for the excellence of their courses, for their enthusiasm, and for their support and accessibility. Students reported that their professors care about them and want them to do well. Despite heavy teaching assignments, most faculty members are research-active and involve undergraduate and/or graduate students in their research programs. We were particularly impressed with the number of peer-reviewed publications produced and grants (internal and external) secured by faculty members;
- **Research-intensive undergraduate curriculum** – Particularly impressive is the extent to which research is infused in the undergraduate curriculum. From the lab experiences for majors in the introductory psychology course, to the seminal courses in research design and analysis, to the laboratory-based courses and seminars in the senior years, this curriculum is a model for how to deliver a graduated set of experiences that engage students in learning about the research process, in conducting research, in thinking critically about research, and in the art of scientific writing and oral communication. Opportunities for mentored quasi-independent research experiences in the form of an Honours thesis are also remarkable, given the size of the faculty complement;
- **Opportunities to specialize in the undergraduate program** – The decision to build on the Department’s strengths in cognition/neuroscience and in applied psychology by offering both a neuroscience option and an applied option at the undergraduate level speaks to the commitment of the faculty members to enabling students to specialize within the context of a broad-based curriculum. Students clearly like the opportunities afforded by these options. Those who were participating in the co-op program had similarly high praise for this opportunity;
- **Opportunities for undergraduate students to work closely with a faculty member** – In addition to remarking on how the small size of senior courses enables the development of close faculty-student relations, students commented favourably on the opportunities to work with a faculty member on research projects, either in the context of the Honours thesis course or as a volunteer in the professor’s lab;
- **Responsivity of faculty to students’ needs** – In response to the perception that first-year students who had elected to major in Psychology were struggling with numeracy when they entered the second-year course in research design and analysis, the faculty members in the Department have recently opted to add a hands-on laboratory experience in the introductory course. While this decision clearly required shifting

resources at a time when such resources are scarce, it speaks, again, to the commitment of the faculty members to ensure the quality of students' education;

- **Collaboration within and across department(s)** – We had the sense that, for the most part, faculty members in the Department strive to work collaboratively in their decision-making. The result is what appears to be an overall highly functional departmental unit. We were also impressed by the extent to which the Department services other units on campus and works closely with some of them, e.g., Women's and Gender Studies, Biology, Kinesiology, to develop innovative cross-disciplinary courses and to cross-list courses for credit;
- **Quality of the graduate program** – The M.Sc. program in clinical psychology provides students with a basic foundation in assessment, psychotherapy, and ethics which allows graduates to enter the workforce in the province. We were told that feedback from practicum supervisors is positive with respect to the preparation and performance of the students. Students had high praise for the quality of the program, including the research experience connected to the completion of a thesis, and for the commitment, knowledge, investment, and collegiality of the faculty members both within and external to the program. The students told us directly that the program is providing them with what they want;
- **Quality of students in the graduate program** – The program attracts strong students who compete well for scholarships at the national level and who are able to go on to further training at the doctoral level, should they desire to do so. Graduates of this program are in high demand in the province, and all students secure employment after graduation. The program is clearly providing important human resources to the province;
- **Time to completion** – The graduate program is designed to be completed in two years. While it is a heavy program (eight courses, a 500-hour supervised practicum, a Master's thesis), most students do, in fact, complete the program in two years. We were impressed with this outcome and believe it reflects well on the dedication of the faculty members and supervisors, on a well-structured program with clear expectations, and on the focus and commitment of the students;
- **Strong ties with local agencies and organizations** – Graduate students reported that they had not experienced difficulties in securing their practicum placements, an outcome that was corroborated by faculty members. The program appears to have very strong support from local psychologists.

Challenges

While it is customary in a report of program reviews to pair a list of strengths with a list of weaknesses, we have chosen to replace the latter list with a set of challenges. We observed no major weaknesses in the cohort of faculty members in the Department, in the undergraduate programs, or in the graduate program. To be sure, we did hear of some perceived gaps in the programs (e.g., the transition from the labs in the introductory course to the second-year

course in research design and analysis being too great; the absence of stand-alone courses in psychopathology and diagnostic interviewing in the graduate program), but we do not consider these gaps to be major weaknesses. We offer the following as a set of challenges facing the Department in relation to their programs:

- **Over-stretched faculty members and staff** – The Department is presently offering its full complement of programs while operating at reduced capacity. Students are aware that faculty members and staff are doing their best, but see them as overloaded. Given the increasing number of students in the various programs, this situation will continue to take a toll (and will likely become more acute) unless the Department acquires additional resources, or cuts back and/or re-organizes its offerings;
- **Breadth of undergraduate curriculum and number of options** – The number of courses that comprise the curriculum and the availability of options for specialization is both a strength and a challenge. Given the size of the faculty complement, we were surprised by what seems like a large number of courses and options. While such diversity is admirable, it might create false expectations on the part of students if certain courses are offered only infrequently or with small class sizes that do not allow many students to take the courses. A perceived need to offer such breadth might also contribute to excessive new course preparation or course revision on the part of faculty members and perhaps, more generally, to the relatively heavy teaching assignments;
- **Wait lists to enroll in undergraduate courses** – Undergraduate students reported that they were often put on a wait list for more popular courses and that they often were not able to take a desired course in the year in which they wanted to enroll in it. These problems were particularly acute for more junior students who are required to delay registering until after senior students have done so. Although we were not able to assess whether this situation has an impact on time to completion, several students did mention that they did not expect to complete their programs within the standard 4-year time frame;
- **Implications of increased enrollment in the junior years** – As current cohorts of junior students begin to move through their programs, the Department can expect increased pressure on their low-enrollment senior courses;
- **Covering the required courses in the graduate program** – Finding faculty members to teach these courses is sometimes affected by sabbatical leaves and an absence of clinicians in the community who are able to assist on a per-course basis;
- **Uncertainty with regard to the future status of professional registration of psychologists in the province** – While much of the groundwork has been laid with regard to the proposal for a PSY D program in the Department, this initiative is presently stalled. This uncertainty has the potential to sap some energy from an already stretched faculty;
- **Inefficiencies in administrative practices** – The faculty members provided numerous examples in the self-study document and in our conversations of administrative

inefficiencies that impinge on their time for teaching and research. They listed antiquated systems in the Registrar's Office; problems with Accessibility Services; an absence of assistance for web page design from Technical Services; an inefficient procedure for handling graduate student applications that is susceptible to subjective judgements; and insufficient teaching assistant support. Students also cited stresses associated with delays in departmental-based decisions about admission to the Honours program and with securing a supervisor;

- **Reliance on contractually limited term (CLT) positions** – Replacing tenure-track positions with single-year CLTs, even temporarily, is disadvantageous for both the Department, the University, and Acadia's students. Hiring persons into these positions creates less continuity in the delivery of programs and puts more strain on permanent faculty members (e.g., supervision of undergraduate and graduate student research projects, writing letters of recommendation for students, etc.). In addition, it reduces the number of persons eligible to apply for research funding.

Recommendations:

Given our assessment of the strengths and challenges detailed above, we make the following specific recommendations:

- The faculty and staff in the Department should engage in a Department-level discussion about (1) the sustainability of the breadth of their undergraduate curriculum, taking into serious account both the size of the faculty complement and the areas of expertise in which they have hired; (2) the desired capacity of their courses and strategies to deal with increasing enrollment pressures (e.g., consideration of whether the strategic offering of a few larger classes might be able to alleviate some of the strains in the program without reducing its quality); (3) the feasibility and usefulness of developing a 3-4 year rolling plan for the offering and scheduling of courses, i.e., which courses must be taught, which should be taught, and which are optional; which courses to offer multiple sections of, which to offer each year, and which to offer in alternating years; and (4) the possibility of enabling faculty members to teach more regularly in their areas of expertise, particularly in upper year seminars, rather than continuously assigning them to service courses;
- The Department might revisit the practice of cross-listing courses with other departments, with the goal of determining whether additional listings are appropriate. The current cross-listed courses appear to be beneficial for both students and faculty, and expanding this practice might help to alleviate some of the strain on the department. Where warranted, this exercise might be part of a larger institutional initiative on rationalizing resources that could extend to sister institutions in the Maple League;
- While faculty members in the Department have a good sense of what their Honours students are achieving from their undergraduate programs, they are less certain of what

their programs are providing for non-Honours students. We suggest that the Department (or another unit charged with such responsibilities) consider surveying non-Honours students with respect to learning outcomes and the extent to which students' expectations are met;

- The Department might consider having a small number of persons (e.g., 2) perform all of the student advising for a particular academic year, rather than having several persons do it every year. Currently, multiple members of the faculty and staff seem to take on this advising role. Limiting it to a small number of individuals should promote efficiency and also increase the consistency of information being provided to students. A rotational system could be implemented so that each faculty member would be responsible for providing advising every few years;
- Given the impossibility of offering a PSY D program without new resources and the protracted nature of discussions regarding registration requirements for practicing psychologists in the province, we think it prudent that members of the Department not put any more effort into conversations about the already-developed proposal for a PSY D program until there is movement by the provincial government on this issue. If and when that happens, we think the Department will be in a good position to respond quickly and effectively based on the work and planning they have already completed;
- If CLTs continue to be used, the University should consider offering extended terms rather than, in some cases, 9.5 month appointments;
- The University should seriously consider addressing the administrative efficiencies, such as with technical support, student registration and advising, identified by the faculty members in the Department. These issues were repeatedly cited as creating unnecessary additional workload burdens for both faculty and staff;
- University budget allocations to departments/units should not be tied to historical levels, but should be activity based, i.e., driven, at least to some extent, by enrollments and performance in teaching and research. The Psychology Department is seeing increased demand for its program, but this demand is not being reflected in the level of budgetary support;
- The Department should consider implementing a department-level budget planning process to ensure resources are allocated in the most effective manner.

Department of Psychology Program Review Response

October 2018

The Psychology Department received and has considered fully the Academic Program Review Report. We would first like to acknowledge the work of the Review Committee. It was a pleasure to host them during their site visit, and we very much appreciate the effort and thoughtfulness they brought to preparing the Report. The Report outlines strengths and challenges for the Psychology Department, and makes nine recommendations. In response to the listed strengths, we are pleased that the Committee noted we are achieving the aspirational goals outlined in our Self-Study, and commented more specifically on the strengths of our faculty, programs, students, and collaborations within the University and the broader community. We believe our strengths have been documented accurately. In our view, the challenges noted can all be summarized as relating to pressures on our capacity to deliver and maintain the quality of our various programs. The pressures include available teaching resources, student enrolment, the breadth of our programs, and inefficiencies in administrative processes. In general, we also agree with the Committee's summary of challenges, and have carefully considered their recommendations for alleviating them. Below we address more specifically the recommendations and their relation to our plans and initiatives for our department over the next several years. For ease of presentation, we have numbered the recommendations according to the order in which they are presented in the review (recommendations 1-9).

1. *The faculty and staff in the Department should engage in a Department-level discussion about (1) the sustainability of the breadth of their undergraduate curriculum, taking into serious account the size of the faculty complement and the areas of expertise in which they have hired; (2) the desired capacity of their courses; (3) the feasibility and usefulness of developing a 3-4 year rolling plan of course offerings; and (4) the possibility of enabling faculty members to teach more regularly in their areas of expertise, particularly in upper year seminars;*

This recommendation, in addition to others in the report (i.e., 2, 5, 6) focuses on possible ways we could efficiently utilize existing resources to lighten faculty members' load, given that Psychology faculty are described as "overworked and stretched to the limits of what they can do." We have discussed most of these options in the past. We discussed them again as a Department when formulating this response to the report, and discussed them again at our annual retreat this summer.

However, most of the suggested paths have problems. The reviewers suggested discussing the desired capacity of our courses. We discuss this issue regularly. Our course limits of 40 for third-year courses and 20 for fourth-year seminars are as big as we can go and still allow for the development

of students' written and verbal communication skills (see Self Study Program Goals iii & iv). If we reduced the course limits to lighten faculty load, we would only increase our already severe problems with waitlists. We could in theory go to larger second-year classes without affecting our pedagogical goals, but our current limit of 75 is set to maximize room availability – any larger, and there are only five rooms on campus that fit, making scheduling much more difficult. Furthermore, if we combined multiple sections of second-year courses into one larger section, it would allow us to offer more upper-year courses, including more specialized upper-year seminars. However, it would come at the cost of increased burden on the faculty, who instead of teaching 150 students across two sections, would now teach 150 in one section, plus add another whole course prep to their load. We could instead offer only one section of each of our second-year courses, with majors given priority over non-majors. However, that option would greatly increase the pressures on other programs, as we are one of the most popular choices on campus for students to fulfill their minor or breadth requirements (see Self-Study Figure 2).

We discussed the possibility of offering two sections of popular 3rd-year courses one year, then a different course the next year. This approach would still allow students access to courses in rotation, would allow more faculty members a break from teaching five different courses, and would allow faculty members to offer an upper-year seminar in the off year when they are not teaching a third-year course. We will explore this possibility, and continue to attempt to come up with creative solutions to our burdens. What would help immensely, though, is simply a reduction in the capacity of our program overall, or at least a firm cap. Set a hard limit of 80 (or 100, or whatever) majors per year, give us the permanent faculty resources needed to teach that number well, and then don't exceed it.

The reviewers suggest possibly developing a 3-4 year rolling plan of course offerings. We do try to plan ahead, but because we do not have sufficient full-time faculty, it is difficult to look ahead very far (for supporting details on our number of majors, full course equivalents, and tenure-track faculty please see Figures 2 and 4 of the Self Study). We can and do plan for upcoming sabbaticals. But we have been operating for years in an environment where we do not know from year to year how many CLT or per-course positions we will obtain to help fill our teaching needs, and often learn very late whether or not requests will be filled. This situation inevitably leads to complicated shuffling and re-shuffling of course allocations in an attempt to get core teaching needs covered while leaving a suitable package of courses left over for which it is feasible to find a qualified CLT or part-time instructor. Sometimes we fail. For example, we recently had to cancel a course for which

40 upper-year psychology majors were enrolled, because we simply could not find anyone to teach it on a per-course basis. If we had a stable and sufficient number of faculty, we could plan ahead with confidence, including enabling faculty members to teach more upper-year seminars in their areas of expertise, in rotation.

The reviewers also recommended we discuss the sustainability of the breadth of our undergraduate curriculum. We discussed this issue, and will continue to do so, but have no firm solutions at this point. We could in theory cut one or both of the Options, but we would still have to offer most of the associated courses simply to provide adequate breadth for a strong degree program. We discussed focusing the Applied Option more tightly on physical and mental health, which would better align with existing faculty members' strengths. We could in theory then drop courses such as Forensic Psychology and Industrial/Organizational Psychology from our curriculum. However, these courses are very popular, and introduce students to a range of career options they might not have otherwise considered, so it is not an easy decision. Offering these options also serves to support our program goals (see Self Study Program Goal i), and given the popularity of these options with students, we suspect they serve a recruiting function for the University (see Self Study Figure 10). We are satisfied with the number of majors we are currently attracting and believe the University is committed to, at a minimum, maintaining our enrolment numbers.

2. *The Department might revisit the practice of cross-listing courses with other departments, with the goal of determining whether increasing such listings is appropriate. Where warranted, this exercise might be part of a larger institutional initiative on rationalizing resources that could extend to sister institutions in the Maple League;*

We have already explored the option of cross-listing courses, with cross-listed courses in Biology, Chemistry, Kinesiology, and Philosophy. We believe there would also be fruitful possibilities for cross-listing courses in Business, in the area of industrial-organizational psychology. More broadly, many of our students would love to do a Business minor, but Business is (understandably) reluctant to open up their courses to non-majors. Perhaps there could be a creative solution here. For example, perhaps Business could be given an additional per-course hire or two in exchange for opening up some slots in their courses for non-majors, including Psyc majors. It would ease pressures on Business while simultaneously opening options for other students, at a relatively

low cost to the university. We are also exploring possibilities for cross-listed appointments with Music Therapy, and with Women and Gender Studies. Such appointments would increase supervision and course-work options for students in both disciplines. We are also open to considering any opportunity for cross-listing courses offered through the Maple League.

3. *While faculty members in the Department have a good sense of what their Honours students are achieving from their undergraduate programs, they are less certain of what their programs are providing for non-Honours students. We suggest that the Department (or another unit charged with such responsibilities) consider surveying non-Honours students with respect to learning outcomes and the extent to which students' expectations are met;*

The Psychology Department agrees with this recommendations. We attempted to obtain some relevant information about our majors as part of our Self Study by conducting a survey of former students(see Self Study Report item 5.). This approach is lacking because it is difficult if not impossible to get sufficient numbers of respondents to evaluate reliably our program successes and failures. We were pleased nonetheless with the information we were able to compile based on our survey (see Self Study Tables 3 through 7). Given the sheer number of Acadia students who graduate with a Major in Psychology however (see Self Study Figure 1), it is very difficult to track these students consistently, or even to send them a follow-up survey after they graduate given the resources available in our department. Perhaps the office of alumni affairs could help with this by administering an exit-survey and collecting contact information for follow-up. It is also possible that more work of this type could be accomplished within the department if we had more administrative support (see also recommendation 7).

4. *The Department might consider having a small number of persons (e.g., 2) perform all of the student advising for a particular academic year, rather than having several persons do it every year. Limiting this function to a small number of individuals should promote efficiency and also increase the consistency of information being provided to students. A rotational system could be implemented so that each faculty member would be responsible for providing advising every few years;*

The committee notes that we may have too many members of the department serving as student advisors, which may stretch our already overworked faculty while also introducing inconsistencies in

the manner in which students are advised. Our reason for doing this is that many hands lighten the load, and mandatory advising means that many hours need to be spent advising our large population of majors. Limiting the number of advisors to a small number and rotating the duties among the faculty would place a heavy burden on those who are tasked with these roles, and advising week occurs during what is arguably already the busiest month of the year (March). Even as it stands, the bulk of the advising duties are performed by the Department Head and the Administrative Assistant. The additional help from the rest of the faculty during the month of March is merely aimed at offsetting the load on these two individuals. Thus, in essence, shuffling around the duties among our faculty will do little or nothing to reduce the overall burden of advising. This said, we do agree that consistent advising is essential and we are committed to improving the advising capacity of our faculty. To that end we have established an advising committee consisting of the Head and two other members of the Department. Committee members will be trained by the Head, and assist with in-course advising sessions that we hold in March, and when needed throughout the year. Although this will not significantly reduce advising loads, people will ideally feel more confident in their advising capabilities, and they will be able to count this work as part of their service load. Again, increased administrative support would also help alleviate the burden of advising.

5. *Given the impossibility of offering a PSY D program without new resources and the protracted nature of discussions regarding registration requirements for practicing psychologists in the province, we think it prudent that members of the Department not put additional effort into conversations about the already-developed proposal for a PSY D program until there is movement by the provincial government on this issue;*

If the government would infuse more resources into our graduate program to allow a conversion to Psy.D., it could help to supply the broader community with additional mental health care workers and would also support our undergraduate program, through more faculty for supervision and some potential for cross-listing of graduate and undergraduate courses, etc. If the government is unwilling to support our proposal but still plans to proceed to doctoral-level registration, then we should shut down our master's program and free up teaching resources for the undergraduate program. Resolving this issue will soon become critical again, when Susan Potter retires at the end of 2018, and we must decide whether to replace her clinical position, or target resources elsewhere. The reviewers recommend we do not put additional effort into the Psy.D. proposal until there is some movement by the provincial government; however, that is precisely the holding pattern we have

been in for years now. We need an answer from the provincial government. We need Acadia's administration to help us get an answer on this issue from the provincial government. Either way, we could then move on with curriculum planning. There has been some recent activity on this issue. Faculty at Mount St. Vincent University are currently preparing a proposal for a joint Psy.D. program to bring to MPHEC.

- 6. If contractually limited terms (CLTs) continue to be used, the University should consider offering extended terms rather than, in some cases, 9.5 month appointments;*

Having 3-year CLTs would allow us to plan ahead for course allocations, reduce time and energy spent in searching for positions, and would help to ease supervision pressures. A 12-month position is realistically not much different from a 9.5-month position, but a 3-year position is much more valuable. It allows for course planning, student supervision, and can potentially attract research-active candidates, because they are still eligible to apply for external funding. A series of 3-year CLTs served the department well in the past, during the many years M. Leiter was serving as an administrator.

- 7. The University should seriously consider addressing the administrative inefficiencies, such as with technical support, student registration and advising, identified by the members in the Department. These issues were repeatedly cited as creating unnecessary additional workload burdens for both faculty and staff;*

We support the recommendation that the University should seriously consider addressing various administrative efficiencies, which could help us to deliver our programs more effectively. We highlighted our concerns with administrative inefficiencies in our Self Study (see item 9 for details). Additional supports from the University would help us address several of the committee's recommendations (especially 3, 4, as well as 5, 6, and 9). One potential solution is to reinstate the .5 Administrative Assistant position that was cut in 2008 when our enrollment numbers dropped along with overall University enrollment numbers. Our student numbers have since returned to and surpassed previous levels (see Self Study Figure 1), placing heavy demands for student and faculty support on our administrative assistant. The additional assistant could potentially help on a number of fronts, including student advising, exam supports, website maintenance, course evaluation transcription, tracking majors, and other everyday duties that overburden our sole admin assistant.

As an example, our department website has not been fully up-to-date in years. Although our administrative assistant is trained to edit the site, she does not have time to do so. The department requested help from technology support to improve our site but were told that they did not provide that service. Given the number of students in our department and the workload those numbers create, an additional assistant is sorely needed.

- 8. University budget allocations to departments/units should not be tied to historical levels, but should be activity based, i.e., driven, at least to some extent, by enrollments and performance in teaching and research;*

The review highlights that budget allocations should not be tied to historical levels, but should be activity based. The psychology department represents one of the most active departments on campus in terms of service courses taught, and overall student enrollments (see Self Study Figures 1 & 2; Table 1). Yet our budget allocation has not changed in many years (see Self Study Figure 5), even though our programs have seen substantial growth during this time and continue to be in high demand (see Self Study Figure 3). Our class sizes are large relative to other departments (see Self Study Figure 6) and teaching assistant support is minimal (see Self-study Figure 8). We are committed to providing students with opportunities to engage in research, and learn and practice writing skills in their psychology courses. There are expenses associated with delivering this type of coursework for large numbers of students and we are currently constrained in our implementation of delivery methods as the actual purchasing value of our budget decreases over time. Compounding this issue is the fact that budget allocations are often not ready before the start of the fiscal year (as is the case right now). This makes it especially difficult to implement a budget plan—an inefficiency that was also brought up by the committee (see recommendation 9).

- 9. The Department should consider implementing a department-level budget planning process to ensure resources are being allocated in the most effective manner.*

As noted, our budget allocation has not changed in many years and budget allocations are often not ready before the start of the fiscal year; we were never formally provided with this year's budget (2018-19), but were told when we enquired about it that it was unchanged from the previous year. This makes it especially difficult to implement a budget plan. While we may be able to do more to think ahead and prioritize our departmental budget, receiving our budget allocation from the

University is a necessary first step. This summer at our department retreat we discussed budget allocations in an effort to plan in the event we are given an opportunity to effect change in the budgeting process.

Concluding Remarks

We are willing to consider a variety of creative options to address the recommendations from the external reviewers, and are open to other suggestions from the APRC. Basically, though, the issue of faculty burden identified by the external reviewers comes down to having to teach too many students with too few permanent faculty members. Moreover, some of the recommendations from the review do not pertain to our programs or activities directly (especially recommendations 6, 7, 8), but rather highlight a lack of support and resource-allocations from the University to our Department and the academic sector more generally. We concur with these recommendations, and hope the University will take active steps to address these issues.

In closing, we wish to reiterate our gratitude to the committee for their outstanding work on this program review. We feel that the recommendations give us a concrete set of issues/challenges that we will continue to discuss and work toward finding solutions in the coming years. It is our sincere hope that the University Administration will be an active partner in this process, and will provide us with the much needed support highlighted in the review.

Respectfully submitted,

Darlene Brodeur on behalf of the Department of Psychology

Discussion Item from the A&AS Policy Committee

Proposal to restore the use of a 4.3 GPA Alpha based grading scale.

Grading System

The grade point average is the weighted sum of the grade points earned divided by the number of courses attempted. Courses with a notation of 'W' are not included in the GPA.

- The sessional grade point average (SGPA) refers to a particular session
- The program grade point average is calculated on courses offered towards a degree program and is used to determine a students' eligibility to graduate. It does not appear on the official transcript.
- The cumulative grade point average (CGPA) is calculated on all courses taken, and does appear on the official transcript.
- Only the most recent grade in repeated courses will be included in any GPA.

Alpha grade	GPA value	Rating	Percentage range*
A+	4.33		94 – 100
A	4	Excellent	87 – 93
A-	3.67		80 – 86
B+	3.33		77 – 79
B	3	Good	73 – 76
B-	2.67		70 – 72
C+	2.33		67 – 69
C	2	Average	63 – 66
C-	1.67		60 – 62
D+	1.33		57 – 59
D	1	Pass	53 – 56
D-	0.67		50 – 52
F	0	Failure	0 – 49
W		Withdrew	

S	awaiting grade from special exam/incomplete
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Some courses have a Pass/Fail marking scheme. This is not counted in the GPA.

Previous courses repeated are marked as duplicate. Only the result and credit hours of the most recent attempt is calculated in the GPA and towards the total of completed credit hours.

*These percentage ranges are provided to assist other institutions in interpreting letter grades. Their only application is with the university scholarship committee. They are not reported elsewhere.

Rationale

After reviewing the Senate minutes from 1992/93, and namely a report from the sub-committee on grade scales upon which a GPA policy was approved (attached), Acadia has been operating off side of a consistent GPA scale. What was proposed and approved was that Acadia move from a 4.3 to a 4 point scale. This is why we have both an A and an A+ equating to the same number of GPA points – 4.0. A true 4.0 scale has either none, or specific gradient ranges – alpha grades are simply A,B,C,D corresponding to 4,3,2,1 GPA points respectively – Memorial or Boston University use these for example. 4.33 GPA scales, whereby gradients within (+ and -) are worth .33 each is what we sort of have. We appear to follow this

for every letter except for A and yet have retained the .33, .67 + and - gradients associated with a 4.3 scale.

Our system as it currently stands disadvantages students. The first is for Acadia students applying elsewhere in a competitive marketplace. If an Acadia student achieves an A+ in a course, they earn the maximum of 4.0 GPA points, the same as an A. That student is automatically at a disadvantage since the highest they could achieve is a 4 while they are being potentially compared to students able to have 4.3s.

It limits both in grading for faculty, and achieving for students, the top end of the grade spectrum. What is an A and 4.0 if an A means A or A+?

Additionally, the GPA grade scales of our peer institutions has changed so that 4.3 is now the norm (Appendix A). An identical GPA usage permits far easier transferability between institutions and for application/admission to Graduate Schools.

Appendix 1. Other Canadian Institutions

University	GPA	Letter Grades Used	Respective Numerical Equivalents Range (if given)
Mount Saint Vincent	4.3 scale	A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D, F, F*	90-100, 85-89, 80-84, 77-79, 73-76, 70-72, 67-69, 63-66, 60-62, 50-59, 0-49, Fail for academic offence
Cape Breton	No	Numerical Grades Used	
Saint Francis Xavier	No	Numerical Grades Used	
University of King's College	4.3 scale	A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D, F	90-100, 85-89, 80-84, 77-79, 73-76, 70-72, 65-69, 60-64, 55-59, 50-54, 0-49
St. Mary's University	4.3 scale	A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D, F	90-100, 85-89, 80-84, 77-79, 73-76, 70-72, 67-69, 63-66, 60-62, 50-59, 0-49
Dalhousie	4.3 scale	A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D, F, (FM)	90-100, 85-89, 80-84, 77-79, 73-76, 70-72, 65-69, 60-64, 55-59, 50-54, 0-49 (Marginal Failure)
UPEI	4.3 scale	A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F	91-100, 85-90, 80-84, 77-79, 74-76, 70-73, 67-69, 64-66, 60-63, 57-59, 54-56, 50-53, 0-49
MUN	4.0 scale	A, B, C, D, F	80-100, 65-79, 55-64, 50-54
Mount Allison	4.3 scale	A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F	None given
Crandall University	4.3 scale	A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F+, F	94-100, 87-93, 80-86, 77-79, 74-76, 70-73, 67-69, 64-66, 60-63, 57-59, 54-56, 50-53, 40-49, 0-39
UNB	4.3 scale	A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D, F	None given
Bishop's University		Numerical Grades Used	A - 80-100, B 70-79, C 60-69, D 50-59, F 0-49
McGill	4.0 scale	A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, D, F	85-100, 80-84, 75-79, 70-74, 65-69, 60-64, 55-59, 50-54, 0-49 (4.0, 3.7, 3.3, 3.0, 2.7, 2.3, 2.0, 1.0)
McMaster	12 scale	A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F	90-100, 85-89, 80-84, 77-79, 73-76, 70-72, 67-69, 63-66, 60-62, 57-59, 53-56, 50-52, 0-49
Waterloo	No	A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F+, F, F-	90-100, 85-89, 80-84, 77-79, 73-76, 70-72, 67-69, 63-66, 60-62, 57-59, 53-56, 50-52, 42-49, 35-41, 0-34
University of Toronto	4.0 scale	A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F	85-100, 80-84, 77-79, 73-76, 70-72, 67-69, 63-66, 60-62, 57-59, 53-56, 50-52, 0-49
Trent University	No	A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F	90-100, 85-89, 80-84, 77-79, 73-76, 70-72, 67-69, 63-66, 60-62, 57-59, 53-56, 50-52, 0-49
University of Manitoba	4.5 scale	A+, A, B+, B, C+, C, D, F	None given (4.5, 4, 3.5, 3, 2.5, 2, 1)
University of Winnipeg	4.5 scale	A+, A, A-, B+, B, C+, C, D, F	None given (4.5, 4.25, 4, 3.5, 3, 2.5, 2, 1)
University of Saskatchewan	No	Numerical Grades Used	
University of Regina	No	Numerical Grades Used	90-100, 80-89, 70-79, 60-69, 50-59, 0-49
University of Calgary	4.0 scale	A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, F	None given (4.0, 4.0, 3.7, 3.3, 3, 2.7, 2.3, 2, 1.7, 1.3, 1, 0)
University of Alberta	4.0 scale	A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, F	None given (4.0, 4.0, 3.7, 3.3, 3, 2.7, 2.3, 2, 1.7, 1.3, 1, 0)
UBC	No	A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D, F	90-100, 85-89, 80-84, 76-79, 72-75, 68-71, 64-67, 60-63, 55-59, 50-54, 0-49
University of Victoria	9.0 scale	A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, D, E, F	90-100, 85-89, 80-84, 77-79, 73-76, 70-72, 65-69, 60-64, 50-59 (9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, 0)
Simon Fraser	4.3 scale	A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D, F, F, D	None given (4.33, 4.0, 3.67, 3.33, 3.0, 2.67, 2.33, 2.0, 1.67, 1, 0, 0 academic discipline)
Boston University	4.0 scale	A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D, F	None given (4.0, 3.7, 3.3, 3.0, 2.7, 2.3, 2.0, 1.7, 1.0, 0)
University of Maine	4.0 scale	A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F	None given (4.0, 3.67, 3.33, 3.0, 2.67, 2.33, 2.0, 1.67, 1.33, 1.0, 0)
Acadia	4.0 scale	A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F	(4.0, 4.0, 3.67, 3.33, 3, 2.67, 2.33, 2, 1.67, 1.33, 1, 0.67, 0

MOTION 1:

The TIE Committee recommends to Senate approval of that the following principles to be used when preparing the academic dates.

Principles

1. Class hours that are lost due to holidays will be rescheduled and accounted for in the academic dates. It is possible that these hours may be scheduled on days other than the regular class meeting days.
2. The first day of classes in the fall semester will be scheduled on the first Wednesday in September after Labour Day.
3. The first day of classes in the winter semester will be scheduled on the first Monday after January 5th.
4. A 5-day reading week will be scheduled in each of the fall and winter terms. In the fall, the break will be scheduled in the last week of October / first week of November. In the winter, it will be scheduled in conjunction with the Nova Scotia Heritage Day holiday.
5. At least one day will be designated as a study day and be scheduled between the last day of classes and the first day of exams.
6. It is desirable that the exam period end as early as possible. No exams should be scheduled after December 20. If required, exams may be scheduled on Sundays.
7. There will be a period of 7 working days between the first day of classes and the last day to add a course or receive a no record withdrawal.
8. The last day to withdraw from classes and receive a 'W' will be the first Friday, two weeks after the Fall and Winter breaks.
9. When possible, there will be 12 weeks of classes.
10. Due to the prevalence of Monday holidays in the fall term, courses with 3h instruction on Mondays are discouraged for that term.