

Physics and Computer Science 2015 Annual Implementation Report

Submitted by: Marek Wartak, Chair, Department of
Physics and Computer Science
On: June 17th, 2015

Recommendations from 2012-2013 Final Assessment Report

Recommendation: Student recruitment planning. (<i>Reviewers' Recommendations #2 and parts of #9</i>)	
Responsibility: Department Chair, P&CS Vision Cmte, Associate Dean: Priorities and Planning	Implementation Date: March 17 2014 for formation of Recruitment Committee and articulation of plan for 2014 admissions. Ongoing execution of recruiting strategy.
Additional Notes: Liaison with the central Recruiting and Admissions office is essential.	
Progress to Date (check one): <input type="checkbox"/> Completed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain):	
Unit Response: By visiting and delivering lectures at high schools, we promoted our Physics program. In recent months, we started sending personalized e-mails to students who showed interest in our physics program. The Department has purchased a robot called Nao that we use for promotional purposes at Laurier Open houses. Nao's programming requires skilled teamwork by a number of students and thus contributes to enhancing their Laurier experience.	
Decanal Response: The Department's recruiting efforts have been enhanced in the past year but low numbers in the Honours Physics program continues to be a serious problem. Projected enrolments for Computer Science programs for the Fall of 2015 are up nicely. Recruiting requires an ongoing commitment; I would not expect to see "completed" checked off.	
PRS Comments: Please provide a brief update on departmental initiatives related to this recommendation in next year's report.	

Recommendation: Strategic Planning (<i>Reviewers' Recommendations #8, #10, #11 and parts of #9</i>)	
Responsibility: Department Chair, All P&CS faculty, Dean, Associate Dean: Priorities & Planning	Implementation Date: Presentation of a written Strategic Plan to Divisional Council in Fall 2014
Progress to Date (check one): <input type="checkbox"/> Completed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain):	
Unit Response: We are in a process of introducing new computer courses: Data Mining and Enterprise Computing, Cloud Computing. These technologies are pervasive in the realm of IT and will continue to be important in the years to come. We are also in a process of establishing 2+2 Computer Science program with Jiangsu University.	

Decanal Response: A lot of planning was done in the past year as part of the curriculum review and the discontinuation of two programs. This was very positive, but not entirely "strategic". There would be value in articulating a more long term plan for the department and putting it into a formal document that can be discussed at Divisional Council as originally planned. This should be done in the coming year.

PRS Comments: Please provide an update on the progress made in creating a strategic plan for the department in next year's report.

Recommendation: Curriculum Review (Reviewers' Recommendations #3, #4, #6)

Responsibility: Department Chair, P&CS faculty, FoS Curriculum Cmte

Implementation Date: Rewrite course syllabi for 2014/15 courses. Comprehensive review of all programs by Fall 2014

Additional Notes: Strategic Planning and Curriculum Review are closely linked and could be treated as a single exercise.

Progress to Date (check one):

- Completed
- In Progress
- Other (please explain):

Unit Response: We eliminated our Honours Computer Science BSc/ Honours Business Administration BBA double degree program and our Honours Photonics BSc programs and closed our 2+2 Honours Photonics articulation agreement with Jiangsu University. We completed phase 1 of our modification of other programs. These program changes resulted in the elimination of some existing courses and the introduction/modification of other courses.

In the recent months, our main efforts went into modifying curriculum to accommodate budget cuts. In the near future, we plan to modify syllabi to better articulate learning outcomes.

Decanal Response: The elimination of the Photonics program and the BBA/HCCE double degree were very much in line with the streamlining that was recommended by the external reviewers. It was also consistent with IPRM recommendations. Substantial curricular changes were made as part of this streamlining. In the coming year curricular changes should be linked to strategic planning and, in particular, to an increased emphasis on data analytics and "big data".

PRS Comments: Please provide any updates related to this recommendation in next year's report.

Recommendation: CSAC Accreditation (Reviewers' Recommendation #13)

Responsibility: Department Chair

Implementation Date: Fall 2014

Progress to Date (check one):

- Completed

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain):
Unit Response: The department intends to apply for CASC accreditation in the near future. We believe obtaining the accreditation will improve the reputation of the department.
Decanal Response: Just do it.
PRS Comments: Please provide an update on any progress made to pursuing CSAC accreditation in next year's report.

Additional Comments (Dean(s)): Strategic planning for the department is very important. The proposal for a new undergraduate program in Applied Scientific Analysis should be modified to place greater emphasis on data analytics and then move forward. The proposed Master's program in Applied Computing is also very promising. With two Computer Science faculty members planning to retire in 2017, there is an opportunity to use replacement positions to redefine Laurier's areas of focus within the overall discipline.

Additional Comments (PRS): The committee appreciates the progress that the Department has made in implementing the recommendations that came out of the 2012-2013 cyclical review and looks forward to an update on these initiatives in next year's report.

Additional Recommendation from the Program Review Sub-Committee: At its November 11th, 2013 meeting, Senate Academic Planning approved the following motion: "that the Senate Academic Planning Committee, on the recommendation of the Program Review Sub-Committee, approve the inclusion of a university-wide recommendation on each Annual Implementation Report that, prior to the next cyclical review, the program develop a means for assessing program learning outcomes." A full explanation of the rationale behind the motion can be found here:
http://legacy.wlu.ca/documents/56385/PRS_Recommendation_for_Annual_Implementation_Reports_SAPC_Nov_11_2013.pdf