

Physics and Computer Science 2016 Annual Implementation Report

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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.	
2014-2015 Actions	
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>PRS Comments: Please provide a brief update on departmental initiatives related to this recommendation in next year's report.</p>	
<p>2015-2016 Progress (check one):</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Completed</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> In Progress</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain):</p>	
<p>Unit Comments: To increase number of Physics students, we are working (together with Chemistry Department) on introducing new option (tentatively called Honours Chemistry and Physics with Concentration in Materials and Nanoscience) for students high average. If successful it might be converted to a separate program.</p>	
<p>Decanal Comments: The enrolment in first year Computer Science has almost doubled in the last two years and will be about 200 for 2016/17. Physics enrolments remain small, but for 16/17 the intake of new first year students has at least recovered from a drop in the previous year when the Photonics program was discontinued. Liaison with the Recruiting and Admissions office is strong.</p>	
<p>PRS Comments: This recommendation is considered completed and there is no need to report on it further.</p>	

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
2014-2015 Actions	
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>PRS Comments: Please provide an update on the progress made in creating a strategic plan for the department in next year's report.</p>	
<p>2015-2016 Progress (check one):</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Completed</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In Progress</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain):</p>	
<p>Unit Comments: We are in the process of reorganizing HCCE (Honours Computing and Computer Electronics) program (with a possible elimination and replacement by a "hardware" option). New courses will be offered in Winter 2017 (Data Mining and Enterprise Computing, and Android Programming). Our Master in Applied Computing program has been approved by Senate.</p>	
<p>Decanal Comments: The planning process is ongoing. The main focus for 2016/17 will be the development, in collaboration with the Mathematics Department, of a new BSc program in Data Science.</p>	
<p>PRS Comments: Please provide an update on any initiatives related to this recommendation in next year's report.</p>	

Recommendation: Curriculum Review (<i>Reviewers' Recommendations #3, #4, #6</i>).	
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.	
2014-2015 Actions	

Unit Response: We eliminated our Honours Computing and Computer Electronics 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.

2015-2016 Progress (check one):

Completed

In Progress

Other (please explain):

Unit Comments: We are in the process of implementing and making relevant changes in our curriculum.

Decanal Comments: The curriculum review that was envisioned at the time of the cyclical review is essentially complete, however the development of a new Data Science program will require additions to the existing curriculum.

PRS Comments: We concur with the dean that the changes related to this recommendation when it was made have now been completed, and that curriculum revisions are an ongoing process that can be left to the department and the dean. There is no need to report on this recommendation further.

Recommendation: CSAC Accreditation (Reviewers' Recommendation #13.)

Responsibility: Department Chair

Implementation Date: Fall 2014

2014-2015 Actions

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.

2015-2016 Progress (check one):

Completed

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain):
Unit Comments: Over last several months we had some discussions within Department. No action has been taken. We plan to apply for CASC accreditation in Fall 2016.
Decanal Comments: The delay was unfortunate. It should be done in the coming year.
PRS Comments: In next year's report, the committee would like an update on whether or not CASC accreditation was sought in fall 2016 as indicated above.

Additional Comments (PRS): Good progress was made on the implementation of two of the recommendations made by the reviewers in 2013, and it sounds like the department has made some very positive curriculum changes since their review. We look forward to hearing of any further developments in next year's report.