



# Society, Culture and Environment 2015 Annual Implementation Report

Submitted by: Rebecca Godderis, Program  
Coordinator

On: June 3, 2015

**Recommendations from the 2012-2013 Final Assessment Report**

<b>Recommendation: Review the teaching needs of the program and make recommendations for further resources, if necessary.</b>	
<b><i>(Reviewers' Recommendations #1, #2, #5)</i></b>	
<b>Responsibility: Office of the Dean, Faculty of Liberal Arts, and Program Coordinator</b>	<b>Implementation Date: Academic year 2014-15</b>
Progress to Date (check one): <input type="checkbox"/> Completed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain):	
<p>Unit Response: Students could take a BA in SCE as an independent 4-year program or part of the Concurrent Education program in which students could receive the BA in SCE from Laurier and a Bachelor of Education (BEd) degree from Nipissing University (over five years). The majority of students in SCE were part of the latter program, Concurrent Education, which regularly took in 200-250 students per year. Thus, the SCE program had over 1000 students enrolled with the vast majority taking a joint BA-BEd degree.</p> <p>In December 2014 Laurier received notice that Nipissing University would no longer offer the Bachelor of Education (BEd) degree in Brantford. This has dramatic implications for the number of students that will be in the SCE program over the next two to three years, resulting in significant shifts in terms of the teaching needs of the program. With Concurrent Education students we had over 1000 majors in the SCE program; however, SCE-only majors are just under 100 students. The full impact of the loss of Concurrent Education will not be realized for at least another one to two years because we still had a new cohort of Concurrent Education students begin classes in September 2014.</p> <p>Further, the full impact of this loss remains unclear as senior administration at Laurier continues to request that the Provincial Government allocate undergraduate education seats to Laurier. If we receive these seats, SCE may again be paired with a Concurrent Education program; however, at this time it is unclear whether this will happen and what impact that it may have on the number of SCE majors (and thus the program's teaching needs). Members of the SCE program continue to work closely with the Dean of Liberal Arts to address such questions in a timely manner.</p>	
Decanal Response: We continue discussions with the Provincial Government about the possibility of undergraduate education seats in Brantford, and a new concurrent education program run by Laurier's Faculty of Liberal Arts in Brantford and Faculty of Education in Waterloo. By the end of next year, we should have an answer that will allow us to plan the future direction(s) of the program more concretely.	
PRS Comments: Please provide an update on any new developments related to this recommendation in next year's report.	

**Recommendation: 2. a) Track students and projected program outcomes; b) carefully monitor program growth and relationship with SJCE; c) maintain the integrity of the program's curricular objectives.**

***(Reviewers' Recommendations #6,#7,#8,#9,#10,#11,#12)***

**Responsibility: Program Coordinator and PCC, with administrative support as necessary**

**Implementation Date: Beginning Fall 2014, and ongoing thereafter**

Progress to Date (check one):

Completed

In Progress

Other (please explain):

Unit Response: Given the current state of flux that the SCE program is experiencing, it is likely that program members will need to make significant curriculum revisions. While the prospect of doing so brings some frustration – we recently did a major curriculum re-visioning process and just launched the new program this past September (2014) – program members are also highly committed to the core principles and curricular objectives expressed in the SCE program. Because of the dramatic changes that have occurred to the SCE program over the last year, and the potential for further curriculum changes, the program did not begun measuring projected outcomes in any formal way. However, program members do continuously refer to curricular objectives and outcomes when discussing the potential changes to the program. As we move forward in re-defining the program we will continue to closely track the link between curriculum changes and curricular objectives, while also integrating discussions about the relationship of SCE to the SJCE MA program. Throughout the past year, program members in both SCE and SJCE have been working to make the relationship between these two programs more explicit to the university community more broadly. The SCE Program Coordinator and the SJCE Director also feel that the opportunity to revise the SCE curriculum may allow the programs to be more explicitly aligned in the curriculum itself. The Coordinator and Director also continue to work closely together to address questions regarding TA responsibilities, teaching workload, and balancing the success of the undergraduate program with the success of the MA program.

Decanal Response: I agree that tracking students and projected program outcomes will give useful data after the future directions of the program has been determined. Significant progress has been made, however, in clarifying the relationship between SCE and SJCE to the university community, and I am confident that the ongoing successful coordination between the two programs regarding TA responsibilities, teaching workload will continue. With Nipissing's departure, SCE has an opportunity to align its curriculum more clearly with SJCE. Discussions about this have already begun

PRS Comments: Please provide an update on any developments related to this recommendation in next year's report. The committee noted that any discussions related to the SJCE graduate program should also involve the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

<b>Recommendation: Review service and administrative workloads and work towards an equitable distribution, and alleviation if deemed necessary.</b>	
<b><i>(Reviewers' Recommendation #3)</i></b>	
<b>Responsibility: Dean, Program Coordinator, and PCC</b>	<b>Implementation Date: Beginning Fall 2014, and ongoing thereafter</b>
Progress to Date (check one): <input type="checkbox"/> Completed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain):	
Unit Response: The Program Coordinator has worked closely with SCE program members and the Dean of Liberal Arts over the past year to discuss and address issues regarding equitable service and administrative workloads. While challenges still remain, especially in the upcoming year where a large number of SCE faculty members are on leave, in general the Coordinator feels there has been some movement towards addressing the most egregious issues. Certainly compensation for demanding administrative loads has been addressed through increased course release for the Coordinator and Undergraduate Advisor.	
Decanal Response: We have made significant progress toward this goal. I will be revisiting this often over the next few years as enrollments in SCE changes with Nipissing's departure and changes occur in the curriculum and possibly structure of the program.	
PRS Comments: Please provide any relevant updates in next year's report.	

<b>Recommendation: Work to ensure that course sizes, class caps, and appropriate ratios be maintained at equitable levels for faculty and students.</b>	
<b><i>(Reviewers' Recommendations #13,#14,#15)</i></b>	
<b>Responsibility: Dean, Program Coordinator, and PCC</b>	<b>Implementation Date: Beginning Fall 2014, and ongoing thereafter</b>
Progress to Date (check one): <input type="checkbox"/> Completed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain):	
Unit Response: The Program Coordinator worked closely with the PCC, the Dean of Liberal Arts, and the Registrar's Office to develop a clear plan regarding course sizes, class caps and ratios. The first stage of the plan was introduced in the 2014-15 schedule, and the full implementation was made for the 2015-16 schedule. For example, with the benefit of SJCE graduate students as Teaching Assistants (TAs), we created a tutorial system for our introductory course (CT100) to address the concern that it was the largest class in the program (~two sections of 130 students). Similarly, we created a course cap structure for all of the programs 200-level required courses (six in total) that kept them at 70 students. However, as noted above, with the loss of the Concurrent Education program, our numbers will likely decrease dramatically. As a result, questions about class sizes, caps and ratios will need to be re-examined in the coming years.	
Decanal Response: Significant progress has been made. We will watch this closely over the next three years to ensure equity as Nipissing winds down its B.Ed. at Brantford.	

PRS Comments: Please provide any relevant updates in next year's report.

**Recommendation: Facilitate knowledge of, and participation in, grants programs, both internal and external.**

***(Reviewers' Recommendation #4)***

<b>Responsibility: Dean and Program Coordinator in conjunction with the Office of Research Services</b>	<b>Implementation Date: Beginning Fall 2014, and ongoing thereafter</b>
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**Additional Notes: VP: Research to be made aware of this recommendation to support implementation**

Progress to Date (check one):  
 Completed  
 In Progress  
 Other (please explain):

Unit Response: The Office of Research Services recently hired a new Research Facilitator for the Brantford campus. The Coordinator is aware of several faculty members in the program who have met with the facilitator to discuss the possibility of applying for internal and external grants. Faculty members have also provided feedback to the Facilitator about recent changes to the internal granting program that make it more difficult for liberal arts-based researchers to access research monies. The main concern is that any successful internal grant must now result in the researcher applying to a larger external granting agency for that same project (such as SSHRC). One of the most significant concerns is that liberal arts-based research often requires smaller sums of money to complete the research, so that internal grants are often adequate in covering research costs. The requirement that researchers must apply for large external grants (and within specified time limits) may deter researchers in the Faculty of Liberal Arts from applying to the internal research grants program.

In general, the administrative and service burden on the Brantford campus remains high. Thus, continuing to create opportunities that encourage faculty to focus on the development of their research agendas is important.

Decanal Response: I am aware of these issues and will be working with FLA Program Coordinators to encourage grant writing next year.

PRS Comments: Please provide any relevant updates in next year's report.



<b>Recommendation: Review library resources to ensure adequacy.</b>	
<b><i>(Reviewers' Recommendation #16)</i></b>	
<b>Responsibility: Program Coordinator, Librarian, and PCC</b>	<b>Implementation Date: Beginning Fall 2014, and ongoing thereafter</b>
Progress to Date (check one): <input type="checkbox"/> Completed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain):	
<p>Unit Response: The discussion in relation to library resources needs to occur at two levels. The first is a review of current library resources to see if they align with the needs of the SCE program. The Program Coordinator has not met with the librarian given the state of flux the program is in, and the possible shifting of program focus. A shift in curriculum focus would lead to different library resources, thus it was not an appropriate time to review.</p> <p>The second level that the conversation needs to occur, and the one that faculty focused on with the external reviewers, was the near complete lack of an adequate library on the Brantford campus. The faculty were (and continue to be) less concerned with whether the small number of books available to Brantford students and faculty have an adequate representation of SCE-related materials, and rather are overwhelmingly concerned with the fact that the Brantford campus does not have a library at all. Rather, the campus shares space with the Brantford Public Library, and Laurier-owned books fill a few stacks in the basement of this building. In January 2014, Laurier did open a "Digital Library and Learning Commons" in the basement of a Laurier building. This is where the Laurier academic librarians are now housed, and there is space for students to study and access electronic resources; however, faculty members have continuously highlighted to the university administration the challenges that not having a library brings with respect to teaching and research. Faculty members have yet to have their concerns clearly answered with a concrete plan about how the nonexistence of a full library on the Brantford campus will be addressed.</p>	
Decanal Response: Discussions are underway about the possibility of a library in the newly acquired Market Square building.	
PRS Comments: The issue of library resources is a concern for many programs at Brantford. Please provide any relevant updates in next year's report.	

<b>Recommendation: Ensure that the Dean is aware of all relevant program changes and their resource implications.</b>	
<b><i>(Decanal Recommendation)</i></b>	
<b>Responsibility: Program Coordinator</b>	<b>Implementation Date: Beginning Fall 2014, and ongoing thereafter</b>
Progress to Date (check one): <input type="checkbox"/> Completed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain):	
Unit Response: The Program Coordinator and the Dean in the Faculty of Liberal Arts have been in constant contact regarding the state of the program, especially since Nipissing	

decided not to offer the BEd in Brantford. Since this time, the Coordinator and Dean have met regularly to discuss the implications of this change in programming for SCE, and potential new directions for the program. The program is still in flux, and no final decisions have been made, but the Coordinator and Dean have committed to continuing to have these conversations on a regular basis.

Decanal Response: I am confident that I am aware of program changes, possible changes in direction to the program and curriculum, and the financial implication of these decisions.

PRS Comments: The committee considers this recommendation to be completed and there is no need to report further on it.

**Additional Comments (Unit):** As is likely clear from the above comments, it is a difficult time to evaluate implementation efforts with respect to recommendations for the SCE program given the significant effect that the loss of the Concurrent Education program will have on the program.

**Additional Comments (Dean):** We should have a definitive answer from the Provincial Government in the next year about the possibility of a new Concurrent Education program in Brantford. We are doing everything we can to be in a strong position regardless of the answer we receive.

**Additional Comments (PRS):** The committee acknowledged that this was a challenging year to make progress on the recommendations in the Final Assessment Report and wishes the program good luck in the coming year.

**Additional Recommendation from the Program Review Sub-Committee:** At its November 11<sup>th</sup>, 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](http://legacy.wlu.ca/documents/56385/PRS_Recommendation_for_Annual_Implementation_Reports_SAPC_Nov_11_2013.pdf)

The committee recommends that the program begin having conversations about program learning outcomes assessment and put together a strategy for collecting and presenting evidence of this assessment in its next cyclical review.