UTQAP Cyclical Review: Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan

1. Review Summary

Programs Reviewed:	• Adult Education and Community Development (MEd, MA, PhD) • Educational Leadership and Policy (MEd, MA, EdD, PhD) • Higher Education (MEd, MA, EdD, PhD)
Unit Reviewed:	Department of Leadership, Higher and Adult Education
Commissioning Officer:	Dean, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	• Professor Jim Hearn, University of Georgia • Professor Nancy Kendall, University of Wisconsin, Madison • Professor Susan Robertson, University of Cambridge
Date of Review Visit:	November 4-6, 9-10, 2020
Date presented to AP&P:	October 26, 2021

Previous UTQAP Review

Date: March 1-2, 2012

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Significant program strengths:

- Innovative qualities and reputation of specific programs
- Strong international reputations of individual faculty
- High quality applicants
- Adult Education & Community Development: "exceptionally student-focused program"; well-integrated opportunities for learning beyond the classroom and opportunities for action research
- Educational Administration: program focus reflects current international policy and research themes
- Higher Education: strong courses in administration

Opportunities for program improvement and enhancement:

- Reducing the number of degrees offered by the unit and establishing substantive differentiation amongst them
- Rationalizing course offerings including the development of common PhD, EdD and MA seminars to enhance student learning and research opportunities
- Developing a more structured research methods curriculum
- Developing a common understanding about comprehensive examinations across the department's programs
- Assigning a research supervisor at admission
- Resolving the discrepancy between the numbers of registered and active students
- Renewing faculty at the junior level
- Developing strategies to ensure all faculty apply for research grants on a regular basis
- Developing a shared faculty vision of the Department's collective purpose and identity, and committee and administrative structures to support this vision
- Higher Education program: developing strategies to improve student success in external funding competitions

Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

Documentation Provided to Reviewers

Terms of reference; Self-study and appendices; Previous review report including the administrative response(s); OISE Academic Plan 2017-2022, and the department's academic plan; Access to all course descriptions; Access to the curricula vitae of faculty.

Consultation Process

Faculty, students, administrative staff and senior program administrators, as well as members of relevant cognate units, representatives of alumni, and community partner organizations and institutions.

Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

1.   Undergraduate Programs (n/a)

2.   Graduate Programs

Unless otherwise noted, all bulleted comments apply to all programs reviewed.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
  - ▸ LHAE programs are nationally and internationally renowned
  - ▸ Department has made real and impactful progress towards addressing recommendations from previous review
  - ▸ Adult Education and Community Development (**AECD**): Unique, impressive program with very strong commitment to critical research and community engagement
  - ▸ Educational Leadership and Policy (**ELP**): Program has shown impressive capacity to maintain its mission, vision, and quality while rapidly diversifying program options, expanding course offerings, and growing its student population
  - ▸ International ELP field (EdD) is "a superb offering for international leaders"
  - ▸ Higher Education (**HE**): Commendable use of student cohorts to facilitate learning, careful curriculum mapping, and commitment to authentic assessment
- Objectives
  - ▸ LHAE takes seriously the need to educate students as excellent researchers
  - ▸ AECD's distinctive and appropriate program mission – to engage adult and community learners in building knowledge for a more democratic world – is illustrated in the range of courses offered, an ongoing commitment to critical theory and pedagogy, and in work with communities inside and beyond the University
  - ▸ ELP's mission, objectives, and learning outcomes are internally well-aligned and well-integrated into the missions and strategic priorities of LHAE, OISE, and the University

- ▸ HE's mission, vision, and values are appropriate and evident in evolving curricular structure, faculty research, and local, national, and international engagements
- Admissions requirements
  - ▸ Admission requirements for all three programs and their degrees are appropriate and consistent with international best practices
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▸ Significant improvements in curriculum and programming since last review
  - ▸ Curriculum designs align with program learning outcomes
  - ▸ Shared research methods courses and cross-specialisation opportunities contribute to overcoming cultural and historical boundaries between programs
  - ▸ AECD: Successful development of degree pathways, offering flexibility for full and part-time students at the Master's and Doctoral level
  - ▸ AECD: PhD curriculum enables flexibility and customisation to student needs
  - ▸ AECD: Commendable diversity of teaching practices noted as central to the overall program vision
  - ▸ AECD: Changing structure of course offerings, with fewer courses enrolling more students, is appropriate given recent rationalising of the total number of staff
  - ▸ ELP: Programs emphasize students' knowledge, research literacy (MEd) or methods (all other degrees), and flexibility in course enrolment
  - ▸ ELP has worked carefully to incorporate input from various stakeholders, including alumni, into quality improvement efforts
  - ▸ ELP: Students appreciate opportunities to participate in faculty research projects; strong linkages between research and teaching are evident
  - ▸ ELP: MA program "could serve as an excellent bridge into the PhD," providing students with a solid basis in the field and in research methods
  - ▸ HE: Program requirements and learning outcomes cover key areas of theory, policy, and practice, and encompass alternative approaches to research design and analysis.
  - ▸ HE: Curriculum design prepares students to exercise agency as researchers, leaders, and practitioners and to engage as active, ethical citizens in their areas of expertise
  - ▸ HE: "appears to be well ahead of most of its peers in its attention to learning outcomes specification and assessment"; faculty have abundant data to inform decision-making and continuous program quality enhancement
- Innovation
  - ▸ ELP is a leader in developing innovative online/hybrid and geographically-based learning opportunities, expanding access to new practitioner populations and fostering scholarly inquiry on school practices and outcomes locally, nationally, and globally
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▸ Collaborative Specializations have helped with departmental integration, and were described as 'essential', 'generative', and 'loci of creativity and innovation'
  - ▸ AECD: Students value the range of critical perspectives offered in the program and opportunities to undertake a community practicum or international study

- ▸ ELP: Students reported that classes are excellent and bring together theory, practice, and evaluation in ways that model the power of research and practice to inform one another
- ▸ HE: Doctoral students described the program as a great fit and appreciate the blend of coursework and experiential learning
- ▸ HE: Program proactively addressing concerns regarding course coverage and student advising, "with likely resulting enhancements to quality"
- Quality indicators – graduate students
  - ▸ AECD: Time to completion rates across all programs are in line with LHAE, OISE and the University
  - ▸ ELP: Rapid growth in fields/specializations and modes of delivery fuelled by multiple program innovations and expansions, particularly in the practice-oriented Master's and Doctoral tracks
  - ▸ HE: data on applications, enrolments, time to completion, student evaluations, and related indicators are all quite strong
- Quality indicators – faculty
  - ▸ AECD: "Student evaluations of courses are very positive indeed, and all faculty and staff involved should be congratulated"

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Overall quality
  - ▸ ELP: Program is reaching an inflection point with challenges including significant changes in the student population, a very high number of program options and delivery modes, very high faculty supervisory loads, and inability to meet international demand for ELP's research-focused programs. These challenges impact student accessibility, diversity, and experience, and they place significant and unsustainable labor burdens on staff and faculty.
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▸ ELP: Overlap in core courses for the Master's programs and EdD/PhD programs simplifies some aspects of teaching but may create additional pressures related to course size and quality
  - ▸ ELP: Students noted the need for more advanced courses for doctoral students, and a desire for more research opportunities and professional skills to support non-academic careers
  - ▸ ELP: Reviewers express concern that International ELP field within the EdD program "will not train the next generation of educational researchers, nor will it result in international students learning alongside their Canadian peers"
- Innovation
  - ▸ ELP: Increase in online program offerings raises questions of whether varying availability of full/part-time and online delivery options for different student populations impacts accessibility and equity

- Accessibility and diversity
  - ▸ Multiple interviewees noted that Black and Indigenous students, faculty, and staff require more representation and support than they receive
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▸ Some students expressed concerns about the academic advisor assignment and thesis supervisor pairing processes, and about perceptions of inequitable RA opportunities across the Department
  - ▸ Reviewers note potential challenges in building a shared sense of community and culture of engagement with increasing part-time enrolments and growing numbers of program pathways
  - ▸ Reviewers note tension between students' need for consistent and regular advising and faculty members' heavy advising loads; with some students feeling that they do not have full or effective access to their advisors
  - ▸ HE: Some student concerns regarding high levels of faculty turnover and inconsistent course offerings
- Quality indicators – faculty
  - ▸ Reviewers express concerns regarding instructional equity and quality given rapid increases in the number of sessional instructors, but note the lack of other options given current constraints on hiring tenure-track faculty
- Student funding
  - ▸ LHAE faces "severe restrictions" in accepting MA and PhD students due to funding stipulations; reviewers note that the limited funding model for the MA "hinders the program's ability to fulfil its research training mission or to serve as an effective pipeline into the PhD program"
  - ▸ Faculty commented that the shift toward self-funded practitioner programs has real implications for accessibility and equity, and teaching patterns
  - ▸ Reviewers observe that student financial support is low but comparable in most cases to that available for students in similar programs at OISE and the University

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Overall quality
  - ▸ ELP: Ensure that program relationships and quality of student experience do not decline due to program expansion, rising enrolments, and increased demand for limited resources; reviewers note that "continued growth likely cannot occur through increased efficiencies alone"
- Admissions requirements
  - ▸ ELP: Consider whether leadership requirement for EdD admission provides enough flexibility to effectively reach international applicants interested in a doctoral degree
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▸ Consider developing a range of advanced qualitative and quantitative research methods courses to support MA and PhD students across programs
  - ▸ Ensure that required and elective courses are offered on a predictable, reliable schedule

- ▸ Clarify and consider consolidating/rationalizing the large number of Master's and Doctoral-level program pathways, while continuing to offer flexibility for full and part-time students
- ▸ AECD: Consider ways to include research training as part of the MEd program for students wishing to pursue doctoral studies
- ▸ AECD: Consider offering some courses during the summer session to enable students to move through programs more rapidly
- ▸ ELP: Program enhancements to consider include clearly delineating supervision requirements, ensuring core courses achieve learning outcomes; conducting annual student surveys; and expanding professional development opportunities
- ▸ ELP: Assess the direction and quality of students' program pathways, including collecting information on which elective courses are most often pursued by students in each degree track, determining the rate at which various courses are offered within the program, and identifying courses or specializations outside of ELP to which students might be directed
- ▸ HE: Continue building and maintaining instructional, advising, and mentoring capacity to meet student demand
- Accessibility and diversity
  - ▸ Explore new mechanisms to admit international students to MA and PhD programs
- Assessment of learning
  - ▸ Conduct an annual survey to inform development of diverse and appropriate assessment practices
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▸ Establish a cross-program working group, including students, to assess part-time and online/hybrid program pathways to ensure consistent program quality, student engagement, and sense of community
  - ▸ Review academic advisor assignment and thesis supervisor pairing processes to ensure equity in information, opportunities, and outcomes
  - ▸ Consider a central communications process to share information about mentoring opportunities with all students
  - ▸ HE: Develop and expand external relations and communication efforts, including dissemination of research findings, in order to further enhance research support and recruitment, and influence policy and practice
  - ▸ HE: Invest in more intensive alumni fundraising efforts to support students and program development, as well as the growth of a distinctive, ongoing sense of community within and beyond the program
  - ▸ Consider developing supervision requirements/guidelines to ensure a consistent supervisory experience for all students
- Quality indicators – graduate students
  - ▸ Monitor whether time to completion is impeded (or not) depending on whether students enter a PhD program after completing an MEd or an MA program
  - ▸ Consider strategies to stabilize MA program yield

- Student funding
  - ▸ ELP: Consider expanding support for PhD students to successfully apply for external funding opportunities.

3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
  - ▸ LHAE faculty are highly regarded both nationally and internationally and are well-positioned to help students build their professional networks
- Research
  - ▸ Many faculty are deeply involved in important basic and applied research, successfully securing funding from a wide range of sources, and publishing in well-known outlets
  - ▸ Range of faculty research projects provides the basis for research-informed teaching and enables students to extend their research experiences
  - ▸ Centre for the Study of Canadian and International Higher Education, associated with LHAE, is a respected centre for scholarly research
  - ▸ Faculty research addresses pressing conceptual and policy concerns of the field and their work is well-cited and influential
- Faculty
  - ▸ Faculty have a range of expertise in adult and community work in different formal and non-formal learning settings, with diverse knowledge systems and methods for researching a range of issue areas
  - ▸ Faculty play key roles in a variety of professional organizations and publications and are regularly called on nationally and internationally for their expertise.
  - ▸ Faculty research profiles, outputs, and impacts match or exceed other comparable national and international institutions
  - ▸ HE: Faculty appreciate that the challenges the program faces are being addressed via the recent and planned faculty hires, and noted their strong commitment to achieving more diversity among the adjunct faculty as well as tenure-line faculty

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Research
  - ▸ Intensive pressures to teach and advise students is likely to impact the time and attention faculty are able to put into their research agendas
- Faculty
  - ▸ Distribution of Doctoral and Master supervision varies across faculty members, with some carrying very large supervisory loads

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Research
  - ▸ Consider providing support for research collaborations, both cross-program and with external partners; reviewers note a number of "Grand Challenges" models that might be of interest
- Faculty
  - ▸ "The faculty and staff replacement plan must, at a minimum, be followed to maintain the department's capacity to deliver existing programming"; planning for further growth would prepare the program for any expansion opportunities
  - ▸ Consider long-term impacts of heavy teaching, advising, and service loads in light of faculty research commitments
  - ▸ Areas of faculty expertise to consider expanding include refugee education, immigration and education, indigenous education, health and education, and family-school relationships

4. Administration

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Relationships
  - ▸ Relationships in the department were consistently described in positive terms within and across stakeholder groups; "We were struck by the extent to which people described their colleagues as working to support one another even as they navigated expanding demands with few increases in resources"
  - ▸ "Faculty, staff, and students all indicated in their interviews that program culture was extremely supportive, that people communicated well and without fear, and that the program was administered very competently"
  - ▸ Department Chair highlighted as doing a great deal to support a shift in departmental culture
  - ▸ External organizations were highly complimentary about their relationships with LHAE, and about students' contributions to their work
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▸ Program leaders noted effective cross-program communication and planning due to regular meetings and the strengths of the current chair
  - ▸ Department stakeholders supported the organization of the department into three programs and three collaborative specializations, and commented that communication functioned well and resources were equitably distributed
  - ▸ Administrative staff undertake a demanding range of work; "They are extremely professional and are committed to the department"
  - ▸ New investments in the OISE building are intended to upgrade the quality of the space
  - ▸ Faculty, students, and staff generally expressed that the infrastructure and technology support that they have is sufficient for their work

- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - Overall, LHAE has a well-deserved national and international reputation for excellence
  - Department has been largely successful in navigating the complexities of creating a united administrative unit; rationalizing distribution of work between the department and each of the three programs; creating a broadly supportive departmental culture; creating rich opportunities for leaders, faculty, staff, and students to connect and engage across programs; supporting innovative new degree pathways that enable student growth; and beginning to address staffing shortages
  - Reviewers were impressed by the unit's efforts to contribute to education internationally, through research and consulting
- International comparators
  - Across comparator institutions, AECD benchmarks well; program "has a mixture of excellent faculty with a strong commitment to engaged research, offers critical teaching, and has an impact on the communities with which it engages and on student academic formation"
  - ELP "is clearly the most recognized program of its type in Canada, and one of the top programs globally"
  - HE: "By any measures we can identify, the program is clearly the most internationally-recognized and distinguished higher education program in Canada"

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Relationships
  - Concerns expressed about the lack of university understanding of, or support for, LHAE's (and OISE's) excellence, and about communication between OISE and the University; "there generally did not appear to be many opportunities for collaboration or synergies"
  - Residual reporting structures can disrupt information flow between LHAE, OISE, and the University and cause delays and misunderstandings
  - Some faculty commented on feeling they are not sufficiently valued in LHAE or OISE, and that their considerable experience has been overlooked
  - Internal and external relationships will experience increased strain if demands continue to increase without more resources
- Organizational and financial structure
  - Enrolments have increased significantly since last review with no corresponding increase in staff and faculty; department "appears to be understaffed in relation to expanding demands for student support and program development, management, and assessment"
  - Reviewers note concerns about the financial resources available to LHAE, the pressure to increase student numbers without additional resources, and the mechanisms available to increase departmental revenue

- ▸ Relatively low levels of staffing and resources for collaborative specializations despite being noted as "absolutely essential to the intellectual work of students and faculty"
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▸ "The greatest long-range planning challenge appears to be related to increasing demands for student enrolment, coupled with few increases in resources"
  - ▸ Resource shortfalls cause difficulty in launching new initiatives and have meant that decisions about academic programming are shaped by financial imperatives
  - ▸ "Students, faculty, and staff navigating injustices related to indigeneity, race, gender/sexuality, and poverty continue to face particular difficulties that are not always fully understood or effectively responded to"
  - ▸ University decision to require funding for all PhD students and first-year MA students has significantly limited international student recruitment

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▸ "Expanding faculty and staff is a necessity for quality growth to continue, as is investment in staff development and advancement, and faculty research and teaching"
  - ▸ Conduct a business systems audit with the goal of further smoothing and strengthening cross-program processes and reducing communication lags
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▸ If additional resources are not available, any additional growth should be carefully considered in terms of impact on the quality of programming, program culture, and departmental relationships and work environment
  - ▸ Form a working group to explore approaches to diversifying revenue streams and to raise funds for departmental priorities through mechanisms other than adding new degrees or expanding student numbers
  - ▸ Establish a cross-program and/or cross-departmental working group to deepen understanding and create an action plan to address issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion in the areas of research, teaching, outreach, institutional organization, hiring/admissions, and labor relations
  - ▸ Continue to support diversity in recruitment of faculty, staff, and students
  - ▸ Reviewers advise caution regarding the pace of change, noting that additional efforts to centralize aspects of the department should be limited in range and implemented slowly
  - ▸ Succession planning for departmental leadership roles
  - ▸ Self- or government-funded international students would bring in much-needed revenues and ensure the international nature of the cohort and the international reputation of the program

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
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FOR STUDIES in EDUCATION

Glen A. Jones, Ph.D.
Professor and Dean

Professor Mark Schmuckler
Acting Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
Office of the Vice-President and Provost
University of Toronto

June 25, 2021

Re: Administrative Response to the 2019-2020 External Review of the Department of Leadership, Higher and Adult Education and its programs

Dear Professor Schmuckler,

Thank you for your request for the administrative response to the external review of the Department of Leadership, Higher and Adult Education (LHAE) and its programs, and for the summary of the review.

The review took place during the 2019-2020 academic year; however, the site visit—originally scheduled to take place from March 26-27, 2020 was deferred due to the pandemic and took place virtually, from November 4-10, 2020. Broadly consultative and inclusive – involving the participation of faculty, staff and students – the self-study process allowed members of the department to reflect on their achievements and challenges while considering the next phase of the department's development. I would like to thank the LHAE leadership, faculty, staff, and students for embracing the review as an opportunity for reflection, and for demonstrating a collective commitment to the department's continued success. We are also appreciative of the contributions of external reviewers, professors Hearn (University of Georgia), Kendall (University of Wisconsin-Madison) and Robertson (University of Cambridge), for their consultation with us in November 2020; their report represents a thoughtful review of the challenges and opportunities facing the department. What follows is our response to the points raised (in italics) in your letter dated April 15, 2021. The administrative response was developed in consultation with Professor Nina Bascia, LHAE Chair, and reflects key elements of the unit response.

- *The reviewers observed that the cost of the funding commitment that supports MA and PhD students, including international students, has effectively led to decreased enrolments in these programs and increased enrolment in self-funded, practice-oriented MEd and EdD programs, and limits international student recruitment. This has consequences for student diversity and potentially on the international reach and reputation of LHAE programs.*

Students accepted into most research-stream programs (MA and PhD) receive funding from their department and/or Faculty; however, while the number of students in funded programs has remained relatively stable, the student funding model has made it challenging for OISE to increase enrollment in the research-stream programs, especially of international students. Based on the targets that are set annually for research-steam programs, each of OISE's four academic departments can only admit one international student per year. If the student or department is able to secure external funding, additional international students could be admitted. Previously, OISE's international students in funded programs have been successful in securing other sources of funding, mainly from their home government; however, that has been more difficult in recent years, particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic when some governments decided to postpone or suspend their graduate scholarships programs.

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The limited number of international students in research-stream programs is due to the lack of provincial funding; specifically, the absence of provincial grant funding for international students. Several years ago, the government introduced a policy that allowed universities to admit and receive provincial grants for international PhD students, similar to domestic PhD students; however, this policy was retracted in 2018.

Relatedly, increasing the recruitment and enrolment of international students in non-funded professional programs (MEd and EdD) is an important strategy for OISE for two reasons. Firstly, under its *Innovative and Transformative Pedagogy* focusing theme, OISE's Academic Plan 2017-2022 calls for redefining existing and developing new EdD programs in order to differentiate this professional degree from the PhD degree, and renew its reputation and relevance for a broad range of education leaders. The plan also envisages rethinking and redesigning our MEd programs by developing new foci and related course clusters, and by modifying the delivery where applicable using the technology to enhance the viability of this professional degree, and improve access for domestic and international students. Secondly, growing enrolment of international students in non-funded professional programs is an important budget strategy, which allows OISE to balance its budget and ensure resources in support of its academic goals.

Implementation Plan

(a) *Immediate to Medium-Term Actions (Dean's Office, Department)*

Increasing the diversity of our student population in all programs, and identifying more efficient mechanisms for student financial support are important priorities outlined in OISE's current Academic Plan.

Related to the international student recruitment and funding, in collaboration with the Office of Associate Dean, Programs and the Office of the Registrar and Student Services (ORSS), a staff position to support the departments with recruitment and retention of international students, including identifying sources of funding for international students was established within the ORSS. In the winter term of 2021, OISE introduced a policy that allows for more flexibility regarding admitting international students in research-stream programs. The policy encourages departments to optimize the use of partial scholarships and internal resources to increase the number of international students. Additionally, a subcommittee of the OISE Programs Strategic Advisory Group (OPSAC) will be established to review current and investigate new mechanisms for providing student financial support and identify means of increasing the share of student funding provided through external research grants and fellowships.

Related to student diversity, OISE's Academic Plan includes a strong commitment to increasing the diversity of our faculty, staff and students in order to better reflect the communities we serve, which, along with our commitment to equity and social justice, continues to be an important priority for all of our departments and units. Specific initiatives to support recruitment and retention of students from underrepresented populations are described below (pp 6-7). The department of LHAE participates in these OISE-wide initiatives while continuing to review and refine its recruitment and admissions strategies, and engage in program innovation to further diversify its student population and increase enrolment of international students.

- *The reviewers note comments from students that high faculty advising loads can lead to a feeling that they do not have full or effective access to their advisors; some students also expressed concern/confusion over the processes of advisor assignment and thesis supervisor pairing.*

Accessible and supportive departmental advisors, supervisors, and staff are vital to enabling students to excel in scholarship and become successful professionals. In this regard, the department endeavors to follow the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) general regulations and supervision guidelines according to which,

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students in the thesis-based programs are admitted with a faculty advisor clearly identified at the time of admission. This allows a student to seek initial guidance while considering a faculty member whose research program best aligns with their research interests and who can serve as a most suitable supervisor. Normally, the advisor later becomes a formal supervisor; however, circumstances can change along the trajectory of a student's journey impacting the ability to secure a supervisor and contributing to uneven supervisory loads. Specifically, the problem occurs when a student's area of study shifts during their 2nd year of the program, which is normally the time by which a supervisor should be identified and a supervisory committee established. Other reasons could include change in relationship with the initially identified faculty advisor; a leave of absence from studies due to financial, personal, or health issues; faculty retirements/departures; student transfers into programs other than those originally enrolled in, etc. As noted, these issues can create difficulties for students in finding supervisors and impact faculty workloads.

Implementation Plan

(a)   *Immediate to Medium-term Actions (Department)*

Advising and mentoring of students is at the core of student experience within OISE and most faculty have study groups that embrace students, provide supports and promote peer mentorship. The department is exploring ways to address the problem of uneven faculty workload including rethinking its admission strategies between the various degrees offered, and engaging in a strategic and fiscally responsible faculty renewal planning. For the 2021-2022 incoming cohort, the department will review existing and provide clearer information regarding the difference between faculty advisor and supervisor, the timing, and the process for securing a supervisor. The department also invites faculty from other departments at OISE who have a specific interest in supervising or serving on a thesis committee in LHAE to consider cross-appointments. Additional assistance to current PhD students is being offered by Office of the Associate Dean, Programs through the Thesis in Motion initiative where a senior OISE faculty member provides mentoring to students who struggle through the thesis writing phase.

In addition to the recent and upcoming faculty hires in the department that are expected to contribute to a redistribution of the supervisory load, the department hopes to utilize to a greater extent the SGS Progress Tracker, which is a relatively new online data management tool that tracks supervisory committee meetings, progress reports, and project milestones at the graduate level. In the meantime, a closer monitoring of the required annual meeting of the supervisory committee and the student, as well as a faculty meeting to discuss students at risk will be applied. It is expected that, over the next two years, these initiatives will improve issues related to supervisory capacity within the department.

- *The reviewers identify growing enrolments coupled with resource shortfalls as LHAE's "greatest long-range planning challenge," observing that enrolments have increased significantly since 2012 while staff and faculty complements have not.*
  - *They noted rapid increases in the number of sessional instructors with corresponding concerns about instructional equity and quality, and recommended that faculty and staff complement plans be developed to support any further growth in LHAE programs.*

In order to continue to offer outstanding graduate programs while maintaining flexibility in the face of budgetary challenges and changes to programs, OISE relies on a diversified academic staff including tenure-steam and teaching-stream faculty with continuing appointments, contractually limited term appointment faculty (CLTA), part-time faculty and sessional lecturers. Additionally, cross-appointed faculty from other divisions within the university, as well as a number of adjunct faculty and emeriti professors support OISE programs.

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Sessional lecturers are hired by course rather than by annual or continuing appointment, fluctuating in number from session to session. All three LHAE programs rely on a number of CLTA faculty, in order to ensure program continuity and capacity. All three programs also rely on sessional lecturers, which has been exacerbated by the combination of the reduction in faculty complement, the increase in student enrolment, and an increase in specialized programs (e.g., new fields, cohorts) intended to increase program accessibility, quality and innovation. In addition to being experienced educators and practitioners, sessional lecturers appointed in the department meet the requirements of the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) to teach at the graduate level. Furthermore, the process for hiring sessional lecturers is highly selective; the department has a pool of excellent educators to draw from many of whom have made sustained contributors to the department's programs over many years.

Implementation Plan

   (a)   Immediate to Medium-term Actions (Department, Dean's Office)

The department is committed to ensuring the intellectual quality of student experience through program structure and faculty research, and one of the strategies in this regard is access to core faculty. All students, including MEd, have core faculty, and not only sessional lecturers, teaching many of their courses. MEd students have the possibility of completing a coursework-only option or coursework plus Major Research Paper (MRP) option. MRP students, MA and doctoral students must select their research topics and complete their research projects under the careful guidance of core faculty.

Under its *Building our Community* focusing theme, OISE's Academic Plan 2017-2022 calls for identifying ways to engage and support our non-continuing instructors and faculty, acknowledging their contributions and the critical work they do. It is expected that the department's programs will continue to rely to a certain extent on expertise and input from practitioners in the field of education, such as schools and school boards, and the department will continue to engage them in teaching especially in professional programs while balancing staffing by hiring faculty in continuing tenure-stream and teaching-steam positions. In all three LHAE programs, the intent is to guide students to understand and become skilled in making theory-practice connections, so there is not a strong divergence between "academic" and "field" instructors and between continuing faculty and contract instructors.

In collaboration with the Dean's Office, strategic and principled faculty renewal planning will be critical for the department and will need to shift from the replacement-only focused model of faculty hiring to a program-needs focused model. Hiring tenure-stream and teaching-stream faculty in continuing positions will be prioritized in order to strengthen the programs and maintain balanced academic staffing within the department. To that effect, in 2019-2020, the department hired an Assistant Professor in Postsecondary Finance and Student Success. In 2020-2021, two new tenure-stream faculty were hired in the department effective July1, 2021 including: Assistant Professor, Critical Adult Education; and Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership, Policy and Social Diversity. The search for Associate Professor, Higher Education Leadership and Administration was not successful and will continue in 2021-2022. Pending approval, the department also has plans for a search in Adult Education for Equity in Organizations and Communities. If successful, these searches will strengthen the continuing faculty complement within the department.

   * *The reviewers commented on the wide range of pathways through several programs and suggested considering the effectiveness of each for supporting its target groups of students, and consolidating where possible, in light of the additional scheduling and administrative overhead in offering them.*

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The department's three programs with their multiple degrees and fields all share a commitment to excellence in academic and professional training in education, educational leadership, policy, and practice. The 2011-2012 review of the department also recommended clearer differentiation between degrees, as well as curricular coordination across multiple degrees and program areas. To this end, since the last review, the department made important changes to its programs including renaming the Educational Leadership and Policy program in 2013-2014 (formerly Educational Administration), and eliminating the coursework plus thesis option from its MEd degree in 2016-2017 in order to ensure a clearer differentiation between the professional MEd degree and research-stream MA degree.

Over the past five years, in response to the goals and priorities outlined in OISE's Academic Plan 2017-2022, the department developed and implemented several program innovations including the redesigned Doctor of Education (EdD) in Educational Leadership and Policy (2017-2018) featuring the 'thesis – dissertation in practice' as the culminating component of the program. In 2018-2019, a new field in International Educational Leadership and Policy within the ELP (EdD) was added. This innovative cohort option for working professionals is delivered online with short in-person summer institutes. In 2018-2019, the Higher Education program changed the name and focus of one of its fields from "Health Professional Education" to "Education in the Professions" to better reflect a broader scope of professional education research and scholarship and interest of professional educators.

Implementation Plan

   (a)   Immediate to Medium-term Actions (Department)

Over the past five years, the department has invested tremendous energy and resources to improve its programs and create new specializations. These initiatives have increased the number of students, which leads the department into the next phase of faculty renewal planning that will sustain the excellence in research and scholarship, while supporting quality of its academic programs. Departmental leadership intends to work with programs to review current changes and continue to act on academic priorities identified in OISE's Academic Plan. For example, following the successful modification of the Educational Leadership and Policy program's EdD and the addition of the new internationally focused field within the EdD, the Higher Education program will explore the possibility of modifying the curriculum of its EdD degree. Given that the Adult Education and Community Development program does not have an EdD degree, the program faculty will consider developing an Adult Education focused EdD or a field within one of the department's existing professional doctorates. In the spirit of enhancing its outreach to more targeted student populations, the department will also review and consider changes to its existing for-credit certificate programs, as well as encourage the development of informal learning opportunities such as a summer leadership institutes for postsecondary leaders.

Implementation Plan

   (b)   Immediate to Medium-term Actions (Dean's Office)

In recent years, the Office of Associate Dean, Programs started two initiatives that enhance inter-departmental collaboration and ensure a more systematic approach to program planning including: (1) the creation of the Student Experience Committee comprised of students, faculty and staff with a mandate to promote and support the development and implementation of student-centred initiatives and services that enhance the student experience at OISE: and (2) the establishment of the aforementioned OISE Programs Strategic Advisory Committee (OPSAC) comprised of Associate Chairs, Academic Coordinators, Graduate Liaison Officers, and other individuals at OISE involved in the planning and delivery of academic programs.

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The mandate of OPSAC is to advise on issues that have the most significant impact on the development and delivery of OISE's programs, including ensuring that our programs continue to be strong and relevant in terms of their content and learning outcomes, and that they are sustainable and meet the needs of students. Over the next two years, a subcommittee of OPSAC will be formed to review the research courses across OISE in order to ensure a solid foundation in research methodology for students in research-stream programs (MA & PhD). The subcommittee will review existing research methods courses, identify duplication and gaps/areas for course development with a view to increasing the number of and access to quantitative and qualitative research methods courses for all research-stream students consistent with the decentralized budget model at OISE.

- *The reviewers noted difficulties faced by BIPOC students in the areas of research, teaching, outreach, institutional organization, hiring/admissions, and labor relations, and recommended establishing a working group to deepen understanding of these difficulties and create an action plan for addressing them.*

As mentioned above, in addition to OISE's longstanding commitment to equity and social justice, the Academic Plan 2017-2022 calls for increasing the diversity of our faculty, staff and students in order to better reflect the communities we serve. Specifically, the plan includes an objective to "ensure appropriate admissions, recruitment and retention policies, based on clearly identified goals, in order to increase diversity among students" including Indigenous, Black, and People of Colour, as well as individuals from other underrepresented groups.

Implementation Plan

(a)   Medium-term to Long-term Actions (Dean's Office, Department)

In 2017-2018, OISE's Diverse Recruitment and Admissions Working group (DRAW) released a report on outcomes of the OISE Applicant Survey, which was distributed to the departments to help identify and address applications and admissions process issues that may inhibit diversity. Drawing on findings from this report, the Office of Associate Dean, Programs established a committee of faculty, students and staff from across OISE's departments and units who are involved in student recruitment and admissions activities. The Diverse Recruitment Committee's mandate is to develop a comprehensive recruitment strategy designed to increase the pool and quality of applicants with a view to enhancing participation of students from underrepresented groups, as well as international students in all programs. In addition to the already mentioned staff position in the Office of the Registrar and Student Services that supports recruitment and retention of international students, the Indigenous Education Liaison staff position was created within the Office of the Dean to provide administration and coordination support for Indigenous activities including Indigenous student recruitment and retention.

With a view to realizing OISE's commitment to increasing the diversity of our community and ensuring that equity is evident throughout all institutional practices and at every level of engagement, OISE's *Guiding Principles on Equity and Diversity* inform all decisions and initiatives, including recruitment, hiring, retention of faculty and staff. Relatedly, increasing unconscious bias training among search committees and providing professional development to faculty and staff about understanding our responsibilities for preventing anti-Black/anti-Indigenous racism and harassment will help support OISE's commitment to enhancing the diversity of our community. Furthermore, the Dean's Office works collaboratively with the Dean's Advisory Council on Indigenous Education (DACIE), the Indigenous Education Network (IEN), and the Black Faculty Caucus to increase participation of under-represented groups. Of note is the development of a proposal to establish a Centre for Black Studies in Education which, in addition to research, will support

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the needs of Black faculty, staff and students, and assist the OISE community in addressing anti-Black racism. It is expected that this proposal will receive governance approval in 2021-2022. Additionally, advancing the level of scholarship and bursary support available to our Black students through the OISE Black Excellence Education Initiative, will help remove financial barriers to success for Black students and support students conducting anti-Black racism research. These initiatives are intended to establish and support a critical mass of diverse scholars and graduate students at OISE and the department of LHAE actively participates in and contributes to these initiatives while working on the department-specific initiatives aimed at increasing diversity. For example, in October of 2020, the department established the anti-Black Racism Working Group comprised of students, faculty and staff. This group has already identified and begun planning for a number of initiatives for the 2021-2022 academic year, focusing on issues related to research, teaching, mentoring and outreach. The department's faculty and staff are committed to persisting in making social diversity a priority in all hiring and student admissions.

- *The reviewers noted the recommendations from the 2012 review regarding departmental integration and coordination of curricula across degree programs, and observed that the department has made "real and impactful progress" towards addressing them. However, they commented that "goals, learning objectives and plans for change or growth were rooted in the subdisciplines of the programs, not an overarching departmental vision." While their conversations with stakeholders suggested that "a comfortable balance had been found between program and department structures," some of the above issues around complement planning, student support, and staffing might be considered in relation to department integration and coordination.*

The recommendation from the 2012 review regarding the need for greater integration, collegiality and cohesion across the department' three programs has been addressed in several ways but remains a work in progress. Over the last eight years the department has sought to find and maintain the right balance between the uniqueness and autonomy of each of the department's three programs while also establishing synergies and areas of integration. Key examples of the department's progress on this front range from all-faculty departmental meetings with agendas focused on cross-program curriculum planning and related discussions, as well as peer-to-peer research presentations highlighting the exciting works of newer and more seasoned faculty members. These strategies have had a positive effect on collegiality, cohesion and have helped to foster a number of other initiatives such as growing faculty participation across each of the collaborative specializations housed within LHAE, and an increase in cross-program faculty membership on master's and doctoral thesis committees.

Implementation Plan

(a)   Medium-term to Long-term Actions (Department)

The 2019-2020 LHAE Self-study outlined a number of themes and goals at the department level that represent a starting point for developing more detailed plans and strategies. These include: (a) strengthening research and deploying strategies to enhance research funding such as augmenting the grant proposal writing process; (b) continuing to enhance coherence, collaboration and communication within and across the department's three programs; (c) engaging in a principled and strategic faculty renewal planning that meets emerging program needs; and (d) enhancing student experience (e.g., community building, academic support especially for the department's growing number of part-time students). Over the next three years, the department will revisit its current vision to ensure that it reflects the department's current state of development, its identity and values. Further, the department will develop detailed action plans to act on and implement each of the above outlined goals and will monitor their progress annually and updating actions as necessary.

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The Dean's Office will monitor the implementation of recommendations through ongoing meetings with the department leadership. A brief report to the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs, midway between the Fall 2020 site visit and the year of the next site visit, will be prepared. The next review of the department and its programs will be in the 2027-2028 academic year.

We trust that this response addresses the main areas raised by the reviewers. Please contact me if you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,

Glen A. Jones, PhD
Professor and Dean
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
University of Toronto

Cc: Professor Nina Bascia, Chair, Department of Leadership, Higher and Adult Education
          Professor Normand Labrie, Associate Dean, Programs

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3. Committee on Academic Policy & Programs (AP&P) Findings

The spokesperson for the reading group reported that the reviewers' comments were overall positive. They felt the review summary accurately reflected the full review.

In response to a question by the reading group about the steps taken to remedy the financial shortfall facing the different programs and about the faculty replacement/renewal plans,

Professor Normand Labrie, Interim Dean, OISE, noted that:

- Over the past five years the Department engaged in program innovation which increased the number of students.
- While the Department was in good financial health, it was considering alternative sources of revenue through new post-secondary certificates, advancement and increasing international enrolment.
- The next phase of the faculty renewal plan would be principled, fiscally responsible, and support program needs. The priority would be focused on hiring tenure stream and teaching stream faculty.
- Since the review, the Department had hired three tenure stream faculty with three additional searches underway.

No follow-up report was requested.

4. Institutional Executive Summary

The reviewers praised LHAE's well-deserved national and international reputation for excellence; their success in navigating complexities following the 2012 OISE restructuring; their significant improvements to curriculum and programming; Collaborative Specializations' perception as "absolutely essential to the intellectual work of students and faculty"; they highlighted faculty's significant volume of high-quality research and contributions to Canadian and international policy and practice; they described departmental culture as extremely supportive and communicative; they praised the AECD program's distinctive dual focus and the ELP program's impressive capacity to maintain quality while rapidly evolving; finally reviewers note the Higher Education program as "clearly the most internationally-recognized and distinguished higher education program in Canada", and commend its careful curriculum mapping, and assessment methods that focus on the skills and expertise required in fields that students will enter upon graduating. The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: exploring strategies to increase student diversity, including international students, in all programs, and identifying efficient mechanisms for student financial support; addressing student concerns around faculty advising loads, and confusion around advisor assignment and thesis supervisor pairing processes; addressing long-range planning challenges around growing enrolments coupled with resource shortfalls; developing faculty and staff complement plans to support any further growth in LHAE programs; considering the effectiveness of and potentially consolidating the wide range of pathways through several programs; establishing a working group to deepen an understanding of and create a plan to address difficulties faced by BIPOC

students in the areas of research, teaching, outreach, institutional organization, hiring/admissions, and labor relations; and considering issues around complement planning, student support and staffing in relation to departmental integration and coordination. The Dean's Administrative Response describes the Faculty, unit and programs' responses to the reviewers' recommendations, including an implementation plan for any changes necessary as a result.

5. Monitoring and Date of Next Review

The Dean's Office will monitor the implementation of recommendations through ongoing meetings with the department leadership.

The Dean will provide an interim report to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs on the status of the implementation plans midway between the Fall 2020 site visit and the year of the next review/site visit.

The next review of the department and its programs will be commissioned to take place in the 2027-2028 academic year.

6. Distribution

On January 15, 2022, the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan was posted to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs website and the link provided by email to the Dean of OISE, the Secretaries of AP&P, Academic Board and Governing Council, and the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance. The Dean provided the link to the Chair of the Department.