

# UTQAP Cyclical Review: Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan

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## 1 Review Summary

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<b>Program(s) Reviewed:</b>	<b>Undergraduate programs (housed within the Faculty of Arts and Science Department of Psychology):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Psychology, HBSc: Specialist, Major, Minor</li><li>• Psychology Research, HBSc: Specialist</li></ul> <b>Undergraduate programs (housed within New College):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Buddhism, Psychology and Mental Health: Minor (BPMH)</li></ul>
<b>Unit Reviewed:</b>	Department of Psychology
<b>Commissioning Officer:</b>	Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science
<b>Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• René Marois, Professor &amp; Chair of Psychology, &amp; Winkelried Family Chair in Neuroscience, Vanderbilt University</li><li>• Lee Ryan, Professor and Department Head, Department of Psychology, &amp; Associate Director, Evelyn F. McKnight Brain Institute Director, Cognition and Neuroimaging Laboratory, University of Arizona</li></ul>
<b>Date of Review Visit:</b>	June 24-25, 2021
<b>Date Reported to AP&amp;P:</b>	April 13, 2023

## **Previous UTQAP Review of Department of Psychology and its undergraduate programs**

**Date:** April 2-3, 2012

### **Summary of Findings and Recommendations**

#### **Significant Program Strengths**

- Excellent quality of applicants and students
- The high quality faculty, with strengths in the areas of cognition and neuroscience
- World-class nature of the Psychology Research Specialist program

#### **Opportunities for Program Enhancement**

- Addressing the very high undergraduate enrolment relative to the number of available teaching staff, which limit students' access to courses, opportunities for active learning, and engagement with peers and faculty in and out of class
- Adding an honours thesis to the Specialist program in Psychology, since this is often required for admission to top-tier graduate programs
- Focusing on development and personality/abnormal psychology areas, which are commonly part of the undergraduate curriculum; the Department's current focus on cognition and neuroscience means that these areas risk being neglected
- Providing additional advising to help students navigate undergraduate program options and requirements and when applying to graduate programs

## **Previous UTQAP Review of Buddhism, Psychology, and Mental Health Minor: n/a**

## **Current Review: Documentation and Consultation**

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### **Documentation Provided to Reviewers**

Undergraduate Department of Psychology: Terms of reference; Self-study; Previous review report including the administrative response; Access to all course descriptions; Access to the curricula vitae of faculty.

Buddhism, Psychology & Mental Health minor program: Terms of reference; Self-study;; Access to all course descriptions; Access to the curricula vitae of faculty.

### **Consultation Process**

Undergraduate Department of Psychology: Faculty, students, administrative staff, senior program administrator, and members of relevant cognate units as determined by the commissioning officer.

Buddhism, Psychology & Mental Health minor program: Faculty, students, administrative staff, senior program administrators, and members of relevant cognate units as determined by the commissioning officer.

## Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

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### 1. Undergraduate Program(s)

#### a. Undergraduate Programs housed within the Faculty of Arts and Science Department of Psychology

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

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
  - ▶ Department is forward looking and committed to taking an already outstanding program to the next level of excellence
- Objectives
  - ▶ Program excels in providing strong foundational knowledge in core domains of psychology
  - ▶ Research specialist program provides world-class research training for students wishing to pursue a research career and aligns well with U of T's mission highlighting "transformative education"
  - ▶ Program learning outcomes identified by the Department are generally in agreement with the American Psychological Association Guidelines 2.0 for Undergraduate Majors
- Admissions requirements
  - ▶ Admission requirements are quite stringent, especially specialist-level programs; minimum grade requirements in specific courses have been successful in decreasing program enrollments from previous levels
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Curriculum has been expanded to meet student interests, providing additional research opportunities in both Specialist programs and adding courses in developmental psychology and clinically-relevant topics
  - ▶ Unique lab courses with small enrollment caps provide in-depth knowledge of methods and research designs tailored to a specific area of psychological research; "For students headed to graduate school, this kind of training is invaluable and rare at the undergraduate level"
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Increased investment in faculty hiring, coupled with decreased numbers of majors/minors due to rigorous admission standards, has made courses more available and eased class sizes

- ▶ Second Year Learning Community program is a promising first step towards exposing students to career opportunities in psychology.
- ▶ Students commented on the outstanding teaching and support in the Department
- ▶ Students in the Research specialist program described extensive lab experience as the highlight of their undergraduate training
- ▶ Department has increased laboratory opportunities for students in the specialist program through independent study
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
  - ▶ Course evaluations regarding the overall quality of students’ learning experience meet or exceed Faculty of Arts & Science benchmarks
- Quality indicators – alumni
  - ▶ Alumni survey respondents praised course content as interesting, and reported gaining skills in critical thinking and writing, as well as insight into the mind and human behavior

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

- Objectives
  - ▶ Psychology program learning objectives “are tailored specifically and rather narrowly to serve scientific research” with less preparation for students pursuing non-academic careers
- Admissions requirements
  - ▶ Reviewers noted that basing entry into the major and specialist programs on grades alone poses “a significant barrier for students from underrepresented groups and first-generation students who may struggle in their first year of university without sufficient support”
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Curricular focus on traditional areas of psychology serves some students well, but not others; some faculty expressed interest in expanding the types of courses offered
  - ▶ Students and faculty noted that there are few courses providing broad perspectives of psychology; students commented that narrowly-focused psychology courses lack relevance to careers outside of research
  - ▶ Program requirements are highly prescribed
  - ▶ Students noted a desire for expanded statistical and coding training beyond SPSS, to include courses in R, MATLAB, and Python
- Innovation
  - ▶ Teaching Stream faculty are clearly knowledgeable about innovative methods, but resources for integrating these methods into classes appear limited
- Accessibility and diversity
  - ▶ Reviewers noted a lack of emphasis on diversity, equity and inclusion
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Few professional development resources for careers outside of academic research, which particularly affects students pursuing major and minor options

- ▶ Since the previous review student-faculty ratio has remained very high and class sizes have not decreased appreciably
- ▶ Students in the major and specialist programs commented that they have limited access to research opportunities or even meaningful interaction with faculty
- ▶ Lack of professional development activities raised as a concern by students in every program and alumni
- ▶ Reviewers noted that there appears to be little opportunity for career development activities beyond research
- ▶ Students in specialist programs expressed a desire for expansion of laboratory opportunities; reviewers observe that doing so will be difficult given current enrolments and faculty/student ratio
- ▶ Large class sizes and reliance on lectures as the primary mode of teaching noted as barriers to collaborative learning and opportunities for student-faculty interactions
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
  - ▶ While acknowledging low response rates among students in the Department, reviewers noted relatively low scores for Psychology on the National Survey of Student Engagement in several domains including collaborative learning, student-faculty interactions, quality of interactions, and supportive environment
- Quality indicators – alumni
  - ▶ Alumni survey data indicates “lack of ‘employability’ after graduation” as a consistent perceived shortcoming of the program

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Objectives
  - ▶ Current PLOs are more aligned with the specialist and research specialist programs, and could be written in a broader way to emphasize non-academic career paths for psychology majors
- Admissions requirements
  - ▶ Allow more flexibility in the number and types of courses that can be used to gain entry into the programs to alleviate inadvertent biases towards underrepresented and first generation students
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Enhance the quality of education for majors and specialists through expanded curricula, increased career and professional development activities and support beyond research
  - ▶ Expand course offerings in Abnormal/Clinical Psychology and Computational Psychology
  - ▶ Consider revising requirements to allow more electives from other departments to count towards 300- and 400-level courses, to decrease Departmental teaching burdens and allow students more flexibility in their programs
- Innovation
  - ▶ Consider expanding curriculum beyond historical or traditional topics in psychology and introducing multidisciplinary themes with social relevance.

- ▶ Increase collaborative learning in the classroom with new methods of instruction, including “flipped” classrooms and hybrid formats, allowing students to engage in small group activities, and team projects
- ▶ Support and expand the efforts of the Teaching and Learning Community of Practice to disseminate and discuss pedagogical advances
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Continue efforts to reduce class sizes
  - ▶ Increase student support with additional advising staff and integration of student supports into the classroom, and assist students with connecting to other campus support resources
  - ▶ Provide additional opportunities for meaningful interactions with faculty, TAs, and preceptors
  - ▶ Engage alumni in the Second Year Learning Community program to provide students with a broader perspective on the field, discussing career options, providing role models and shadowing opportunities
  - ▶ Consider surveying current students to learn more about their perceptions of the quality of support and resources provided
- Student funding
  - ▶ Undergraduate student awards “would be an excellent target for alumni fundraising in order to provide additional financial support” as well as enhancing students’ applications for employment and graduate programs

## **b. Minor in Buddhism, Psychology and Mental Health housed within New College**

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
  - ▶ BPMH minor is a unique, transformative program filling several of the University’s strategic educational aims that are not very well represented in other undergraduate programs; “a genuinely enriching undergraduate program that merits growing support from the University”
- Objectives
  - ▶ Program invites contemplative self-exploration with the purpose of improving the student’s mental health and well-being, and is primarily sought by students for its ability to foster personal growth
  - ▶ With its emphasis on student well-being and on experiential and community-based learning, the core mission and unique pedagogical approach aligns well with the academic/strategic plans of New College, the Faculty of Arts & Science, and the University, adding pedagogical components that are uncommon to other programs
- Admissions requirements
  - ▶ Minimal admission requirements allow students from a broad range of disciplines to enrol, “a formidable asset from a diversity of views standpoint”

- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Program requirements leave a tremendous amount of flexibility for students to carve their own curricular path
- Innovation
  - ▶ Reviewers praised the program for its unique and laudatory focus on experiential, first-person, and community-engaged learning opportunities; program employs context-based teaching using a variety of meditational and contemplative practices
- Assessment of learning
  - ▶ Most courses utilize several modes of evaluation assessing diverse forms of learning and academic mastery, and also often include a unique contemplative component
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Students expressed their overall satisfaction with the program, particularly praising the student-instructor relationship, the student community, classroom learning, co-curricular learning and personal growth
  - ▶ Program is a critical resource for the promotion of Buddhism, mental health and mindfulness across campus
  - ▶ Program is enhanced by participation of Senior Doctoral Fellows who contribute to the intellectual life of the college, including mentoring undergraduate students and participating in New College academic and community events
  - ▶ “Stellar” Buddhist Psychology Student Union is an important vehicle for enriching the intellectual, personal, and social growth of its members; BPSU conducts numerous initiatives including organizing an annual conference and supporting the publication of a peer-reviewed academic journal
  - ▶ D.G. Ivey Library at New College is a strong contributor to the academic enrichment of the program
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
  - ▶ Dramatic growth in enrolment and course offerings, as well as student satisfaction survey results, attest to the interest in the program and the value it adds to undergraduate students’ educational experience
- Quality indicators – faculty
  - ▶ Reviewers reported that program success “is largely due to the devotion of a cohort of instructors that deeply believes in the program’s core values and the merit of its pedagogical mission”

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

- Objectives
  - ▶ Program is narrowly focused on Buddhism, at the expense of other religions or contemplative approaches.
  - ▶ Reviewers noted little evidence of students availing themselves of independent study and advanced “research-based” courses to develop and refine competency in integrative, inquiry-based activity
  - ▶ Extent to which quantitative reasoning is conveyed through the course curriculum is not clear

- Admissions requirements
  - ▶ Reviewers noted a potential disadvantage of minimal admission requirements is that students entering with minimal scientific and/or statistical proficiency may not all be equally prepared for the program
- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Loose program structure has potential for students to acquire only a superficial education in Buddhist psychology, mental health & wellbeing
  - ▶ Curriculum includes little scientific training or opportunity to engage in research
  - ▶ Reviewers noted that the effectiveness of community-engaged learning (CEL) options in the program is unclear, and observe that the CEL option appears to be utilized by only a small portion of students
- Assessment of learning
  - ▶ Reviewers raised concerns related to journal writing assignments, including subjectivity, and ethical concerns about student privacy
- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
  - ▶ Student survey and course evaluation data are not specific to the program and therefore are of limited use as an additional gauge of program quality

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Curriculum and program delivery
  - ▶ Increase program requirements and create formal “tracks” (e.g., clinical, cognitive neuroscience, social applications) to create a stronger curricular structure
  - ▶ Consider allowing students to take electives from the core group of courses, to strengthen their foundation in the program’s core values
  - ▶ Expand curriculum to include other religions, or loosen its religious underpinnings to move further toward mindfulness and meditation; consider a new program name to reflect a broader focus on “contemplative studies” and mental health
  - ▶ Enhance opportunities for students to engage in research activities and to develop analytical and statistical proficiency for critical analysis of the science behind the field
  - ▶ Reviewers cautioned against increasing online course offerings in the program “as this is likely to dilute some of the most important qualities of the program”
  - ▶ Augment opportunities for community-based experiential opportunities in the program “to the extent that is it practical”
  - ▶ Offer a laboratory/independent research course embedded in empiricism in the program, and consider adding knowledge in statistics and/or research design a program pre-requisite for students taking a science track
- Assessment of learning
  - ▶ Address concerns regarding confidentiality and privacy of journaling assignments, with advice and support from the University’s Center for Teaching and Learning
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
  - ▶ Enhance academic advising tailored to the program
  - ▶ Increase opportunities for Community-Engaged Learning for students



- Quality indicators – undergraduate students
  - ▶ Future student survey and course evaluation data should allow for more specific analysis of program
- Quality indicators – alumni
  - ▶ Explore ways to collect follow-up data from program alumni to better understand how effectively the program helps students in the workplace or in graduate/professional school applications

## 2. Graduate Program(s) N/A

## 3. Faculty/Research

### a. Undergraduate Programs housed within the Faculty of Arts and Science Department of Psychology

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
  - ▶ Faculty at all ranks are highly visible and impactful on the field
- Research
  - ▶ Tenure stream faculty have a well-deserved reputation for outstanding research
- Faculty
  - ▶ Faculty complement has grown steadily since the last review, adding more representation of women and attracting excellent assistant professors
  - ▶ Department has added expertise in the area of developmental psychology
  - ▶ Teaching Stream faculty praised for their expertise and dedication; “These individuals go well beyond their teaching mission in serving the students and the Department”
  - ▶ Teaching Stream faculty are the primary source of teaching innovation within the Department, providing extensive support for other faculty in this regard
  - ▶ Teaching Stream faculty appreciate steps taken to increase their status at the University; implementation of the Teaching Stream appointment process provides opportunity for promotion and inclusion on committees and in decision-making processes

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

- Research
  - ▶ Faculty research areas are relatively siloed compared to other top ranked research departments
- Faculty
  - ▶ Teaching Stream faculty noted ongoing concerns they are not equal partners in the running of the department; “Several teaching faculty still expressed the feeling that

- they are systemically marginalized due to differential policies and an academic culture within the Department that does not value them or their teaching”
- ▶ Reviewers noted that there are too few Teaching Stream faculty to provide quality education to all students in Psychology programs
  - ▶ Teaching innovation and support in the Department are limited by lack of financial resources
  - ▶ “With such potential for clinically-relevant teaching and community experiences, it is astounding that the Psychology Department has so few faculty with expertise in clinical psychology”

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Research
  - ▶ Department will need to expand research faculty in targeted ways to build diversity, create bridges between historically separate subfields, and make stronger connections to other departments and partner institutions
- Faculty
  - ▶ Implement greater support and mentorship for junior faculty
  - ▶ Consider ways to expand the Teaching Stream faculty complement, including through moving current CLTAs to Teaching Stream positions
  - ▶ Invest in Teaching Stream faculty through funding for innovative teaching and pedagogical advancement
  - ▶ Increase communication with Teaching Stream faculty regarding appreciation for their outstanding work
  - ▶ Faculty engaging in clinical scientific research would create bridges to UTSC, OISE, and partner institutions and would greatly enhance undergraduate education and research opportunities in this area

## **b. Minor in Buddhism, Psychology and Mental Health housed within New College**

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Faculty
  - ▶ Faculty are dedicated to the program and its mission

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

- Faculty
  - ▶ Reviewers noted the desire for a more vibrant faculty community, and for increased diversity in the instructional corps to better reflect the diversity of the student population
  - ▶ Strong reliance on sessional lecturers to delivery curriculum hampers a long-term vision of the curriculum and the development of a strong faculty community

- ▶ Reviewers noted a tangible sense that BPMH faculty are spread thin due to commitments in their primary units; “One has the impression that the program would easily crumble were it not for the devotion and dedication of its leadership and instructors”

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Research
  - ▶ Reviewers noted the potential for growth in research endeavors and recommended taking more advantage of University resources situated outside the program (e.g., the Centre for Buddhist Studies)
- Faculty
  - ▶ Prioritize increasing faculty diversity to reflect the student’s (and population’s) diversity
  - ▶ Seek formal commitments from other cognate units to allow their primary faculty to commit to the teaching mission of the program
  - ▶ Allocate funds for long-term commitments of Teaching Stream faculty to the program

## 4. Administration

*Note: Issues that are addressed through specific University processes and therefore considered out of scope for UTQAP reviews (e.g., individual Human Resources issues, specific health and safety concerns) are routed to proper University offices to be addressed, and are therefore not included in the Review Summary component of the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan.*

### a. Undergraduate Programs housed within the Faculty of Arts and Science Department of Psychology

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Relationships
  - ▶ Small but successful co-operative program helps high school students from disadvantaged neighborhoods gain experience in research laboratories
  - ▶ Staff consistently commented that the Department is a good place to work, and that they feel that they have good communication with the Chair
  - ▶ Psychology has strong ties with the undergraduate Cognitive Science program, which is also supported by Computer Science, Linguistics, and Philosophy
  - ▶ Department has strong connections with multiple world-renowned institutions, including the Rotman Research Institute, the Center for Addiction and Mental Health, Toronto Western, and the Hospital for Sick Children
  - ▶ Dedicated, hard-working administrative staff truly care about the students and faculty they serve

- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ The Psychology Department at the University of Toronto is a top-ranked research department with a long history of preparing the next generation of psychological scientists
- International comparators
  - ▶ “Without a doubt, the Psychology Department ranks highly in terms of research relative to top universities in Canada, the U.S., and world-wide”

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

- Relationships
  - ▶ Faculty feel heard by the leadership, but feel relatively powerless in governance of the Department
  - ▶ Lack of interaction between Psychology and other departments that could provide breadth for undergraduate students and enrich Psychology’s research program
  - ▶ Faculty, staff, and students all expressed concerns about inclusivity and a desire to work towards building a more diverse, equitable, and supportive department; faculty and students reported that “there have been some positive steps but felt that the Department needs to do more”
  - ▶ Reviewers observed that there is a grassroots effort among faculty to create a diversity committee, but the Department does not appear to be directly involved
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ Administrative staffing levels are insufficient to provide adequate support for a major department, affecting morale among staff and likely impacting the quality of the undergraduate programs
  - ▶ Ratio of advising staff to students is significantly lower than reviewers would consider typical for a program of this size
  - ▶ Reviewers observed that the key positions identified by the Department for hiring are not sufficient to address concerns regarding student support and advising
  - ▶ Significant loss of institutional knowledge due to recent retirements
  - ▶ Current staffing levels do not allow for staff cross-training
  - ▶ Staff expressed frustration regarding a lack of communication within the Department, e.g., they are not included in discussions of new initiatives and department planning, and are not generally informed of such activities
  - ▶ Reviewers noted that the Chair of Psychology has little to no control over graduate student policies or procedures, including graduate student recruitment or priorities for placement

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
  - ▶ Improve communication between staff and faculty, between teaching-stream and tenure-stream faculty, and especially between faculty and Departmental leadership
  - ▶ Increase involvement of faculty in Departmental decision-making

- ▶ Engage alumni in career development activities and community placements, and target alumni fundraising to provide additional financial awards
- ▶ Consider increasing connections with cognate departments through joint hires, multidisciplinary research projects, and integrated undergraduate programs
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ Reviewers strongly encourage immediate assistance to expand and support the Department’s administrative staff, particularly in the areas of advising and program support
  - ▶ Improve cohesion and implement shared governance between the Tri-Campus Graduate Chair and the Department Chair
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ Reviewers endorsed Self-Study statement that Department should direct efforts away from managing an enrolment crisis towards long-term strategic planning
  - ▶ Reviewers strongly recommended that the Department “continue to develop their plans for future directions through a comprehensive strategic planning process that includes voices of all constituents” with the purpose to highlight priorities over the coming five years and to lay out tangible plans for implementation, including financial planning
  - ▶ Develop a strategic plan and prioritize improvement of diversity, equity and inclusion at all levels of the Department, including: increasing diversity among faculty, staff, and students, providing support for underrepresented and first-generation students, and infusing DEI content into all course curricula

## **b. Minor in Buddhism, Psychology and Mental Health housed within New College**

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- International comparators
  - ▶ Apt comparators for the BPMH program include the microprogram in contemplative studies and well-being at the University of Ottawa, the contemplative studies area of concentration in Rice University’s major in Religion program, and the concentration in Contemplative Studies at Brown University

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

- Relationships
  - ▶ Program is not very well connected with cognate units e.g., Psychology, Cognitive sciences, and Religious studies
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ Administrative support for the program is limited and stretched; “it is not clear that the growth of the program has been paralleled by a growth in administrative support”

- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ Program faces many challenges that have been exacerbated by recent enrolment growth, including financial precariousness, faculty and staff commitment, and isolation from cognate units
  - ▶ Few (if any) ongoing development/fundraising initiatives for the program
  - ▶ “The complete financial dependency of the program on the New College and reliance on instructional staff with primary appointments in other units keeps the program in a perpetual state of precariousness”

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
  - ▶ Explore ways for program to strengthen connections with cognate units and local Buddhist/mindfulness and Community-engaged learning (CEL) organizations
- Organizational and financial structure
  - ▶ Increase program staffing to support the increased administrative and advising workloads
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
  - ▶ Long-term prosperity of the program requires continued investment by the University to support the program’s instructional needs
- International comparators
  - ▶ Reviewers recommended that program leadership contact comparable programs to explore possibilities for program improvement and expansion



## 2 Administrative Response & Implementation Plan

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
FACULTY OF ARTS & SCIENCE

March 3, 2023

Professor Susan McCahan  
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs  
University of Toronto

Dear Prof. McCahan,

**RE: UTQAP bundled cyclical reviews of the Undergraduate Department of Psychology and the Buddhism, Psychology, and Mental Health (BPMH) minor program (New College)**

I write in response to your letter of January 9, 2023, regarding the June 24-25, 2021, UTQAP bundled cyclical reviews, held remotely, of the Undergraduate Department of Psychology, and the Buddhism, Psychology, and Mental Health (BPMH) minor program in New College (Psychology, Hons BSc: Specialist, Major, Minor; Buddhism, Psychology and Mental Health: Minor) and requesting our Administrative Responses.

On behalf of the Faculty of Arts & Science, we would first like to thank the reviewers, Professors René Marois, Vanderbilt University, and Lee Ryan, University of Arizona, for their very comprehensive reviews of both the Undergraduate Department of Psychology and the Buddhism, Psychology, and Mental Health minor program in New College. We would also like to thank the undergraduate chair of Psychology, and the BPMH program director and New College Principal's Office, faculty, and administrative staff, and all those who contributed to the preparation of their respective self-studies. We also wish to thank the many staff, students, and faculty members who met with the external reviewers and provided thoughtful feedback. The UTQAP cyclical review process is an invaluable exercise that affords us the opportunity to take stock of our academic units and programs, to recognize achievement and identify areas for improvement.

The review report was finalized on August 15, 2022, after which the undergraduate chair of Psychology, and program director of BPMH and New College Principal's Office of shared their respective reports widely with faculty, staff, and students in their respective department and program. We are extremely pleased with the reviewers' positive assessment of the overall strength of the Undergraduate Department of Psychology and the BPMH minor program, their respective program's continued evolution, and outstanding, productive faculty.

The reviewers noted that the Undergraduate Department of Psychology is a "top-ranked research department with a long history of preparing the next generation of psychological scientists" and noting

in particular that “the research specialist undergraduate program is outstanding.” The review report also raised several issues and challenges and identified areas for enhancement, including expanding the curriculum, more attention to EDI issues, inadequate administrative staffing levels, increasing teaching stream faculty, and improving participation of faculty in Departmental decision-making.

The reviewers noted that the Buddhism, Psychology and Mental Health minor program is a “transformative program that occupies a unique niche” and that it fulfills “several of the strategic educational aims of the University.” The review report also raised several issues and challenges and identified areas for enhancement, including that it is financially precariousness, there are no faculty or staff fully dedicated to the program, and the program is narrowly focused on Buddhism at the expense of other religions or contemplative approaches.

Each of these recommendations has been addressed in the attached Review Recommendations Table that outlines the Program’s response, the Dean’s response, and an Implementation Plan identifying action items and timelines for each recommendation. My Administrative Response and Implementation Plan was developed in consultation with both the undergraduate chair of Psychology, and program director of BPMH and New College Principal’s Office and with the Associate-Dean, Unit-Level Reviews, and senior leadership within my office, on their respective program responses. The Implementation Plan provided for each program identifies timeframes of immediate- (six months), medium- (one to two years), and longer- (three to five years) term actions and who (Faculty, Dean, unit) will take the lead in each area. I also identified any necessary changes in organization, policy, or governance where appropriate, as well as any resources, financial or otherwise, that will be provided, and who will provide them.

As the bundled review of the Undergraduate Department of Psychology and the Buddhism, Psychology, and Mental Health minor program was deferred by one year from its original schedule in the 2019-20 review cycle, the next UTQAP cyclical review of each program will take place no later than the 2027-28 review cycle, as specified in the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs deferral approval letter of April 7, 2020.

My office monitors progress on Implementation Plans through periodic meetings with Chairs, Directors, and College Principals, and through the Undergraduate Department of Psychology’s five-year unit-level academic planning process, which will begin at the conclusion of the cyclical review. I also acknowledge that your office will request a brief Interim Monitoring Report midway between the 2020-21 UTQAP cyclical review and the year of the next site visit in 2027-28 to report on progress made on the Implementation Plan, as outlined in the accompanying Review Recommendations Table.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to respond to the review report. The reviewers’ comments and recommendations will help inform the future priorities of both the Undergraduate Department of Psychology and the Buddhism, Psychology, and Mental Health minor program and its undergraduate programs.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M Woodin". The letters are cursive and fluid, with a large initial "M" and a stylized "W".

Melanie Woodin  
Dean, Faculty of Arts & Science  
Professor, Department of Cell & Systems Biology

cc.

Geoff MacDonald, Chair, Undergraduate Department of Psychology, Faculty of Arts & Science  
Dickson Eyoh, Acting Principal, New College  
Tara Goldstein, Vice-Principal, New College  
Alison Chasteen, Acting Associate Dean, Unit-Level Reviews, Faculty of Arts & Science  
Daniella Mallinick, Director, Academic Programs, Planning & Quality Assurance, Office of the Vice-  
Provost, Academic Programs  
Andrea Benoit, Academic Review Officer, Academic Planning, Office of the Dean, Faculty of Arts  
and Science

## 2020-21 UTQAP Review of the FAS Department of Psychology and its undergraduate programs and the Buddhism, Psychology and Mental Health Minor (New College) - Review Recommendations

Please do the following for each recommendation in the table:

- If you **intend** to act on a recommendation, please provide an **Implementation Plan** identifying actions to be taken, the time frame (short, medium, long term) for each, and who will take the lead in each area. If appropriate, please identify any necessary changes in organization, policy or governance; and any resources, financial and otherwise, that will be provided, and who will provide them.
- If you **do not** intend to act on a recommendation, please briefly explain why the actions recommended have not been prioritized.
- In accordance with the UTQAP and Ontario's Quality Assurance Framework, "it is important to note that, while the external reviewers' report may include **commentary** on issues such as faculty complement and/or space requirements when related to the quality of the program under review, **recommendations** on these or any other elements that are within the purview of the university's internal budgetary decision-making processes must be tied directly to issues of program quality or sustainability" (emphasis added)
- You may wish to refer to the [sample table](#) provided by the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs

Request Prompt <i>verbatim from the request</i>	Rec. #	Recommendations from Review Report <i>verbatim from the review report</i>	Unit/Program Response	Dean's Response
<b><u>Department of Psychology and its undergraduate programs:</u></b>				
<p>The reviewers made a number of observations and possible suggestions related to enhancing the quality of education and student experience in the undergraduate Psychology programs, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expanding and modernizing curricula, reducing class sizes where feasible, and exploring ways to enhance career and professional development activities</li> <li>• Enhancing student advising and program administration</li> <li>• Exploring approaches to developing a supportive departmental</li> </ul>	A1	"Enhance the quality of education for majors and specialists through expanded curricula, increased career and professional development activities and support beyond research. Consider revising PLOs to apply to other career paths for psychology majors, rather than focusing primarily on the goals of the specialist and research specialist programs."	<p>There have been important developments since the review was conducted that put some of these issues in context. In addition to the Department's existing alumni mentorship program (which is in high demand), the Department is participating in the new Arts and Science Internship Program (ASIP) beginning in 2024. The Department is also implementing a Psychology Careers and Applications course (PSY 204) as well as a Community Engaged Learning course (coming this year). The latter, in addition to new hires (e.g., recent hire Dr. Felix Cheung's work on the Syrian conflict) and the ever changing topics of our seminar courses (e.g., Stereotyping, Prejudice, and Stigma; The Moralities of Everyday Life) are useful in</p>	<p><b>Immediate-to-Short:</b> The Vice-Dean, Undergraduate, and the Associate Dean, Teaching and Learning, will work with the Department on proposed changes to curriculum and program enhancements. In April 2022 Arts &amp; Science (A&amp;S) allocated two new continuing status teaching-stream faculty positions to the Department, and searches are underway to fill them. These new hires, in addition to the hiring of two 3-year CLTA faculty members in September 2022, will help to ease some of the enrollment pressures.</p> <p>The A&amp;S Advancement office has begun working with Psychology regarding fundraising.</p>
	A2	"Expand undergraduate course curriculum in Abnormal/Clinical Psychology and Computational Psychology."		
	A3	"Consider expanding curriculum beyond historical or traditional topics in psychology and introducing multidisciplinary themes with social relevance."		
	A4	"Increase collaborative learning in the classroom by introducing new methods of instruction including 'flipped' classrooms and hybrid formats that allow students to engage in small group activities focused on		

community, and increasing faculty and student interaction		problem solving, application of concepts, and team projects.”	enhancing the social relevance of the curriculum.	<p><b>Medium:</b> Expanding experiential opportunities for undergraduate students is one of the strategic initiatives in the 2020-25 Faculty of Arts &amp; Science Academic Plan. To expand opportunities, A&amp;S established the Experiential Learning &amp; Outreach Support (ELOS) office, which provides administrative, pedagogical and partnership development support for experiential learning activities, including industry and community-engaged projects, field experiences, academic internships, paid work placements, and research and international opportunities. We have also recently appointed a Faculty Advisor on experiential learning. The EL Faculty Advisor is working closely with ELOS to provide strategic guidance and support to academic units interested in expanding or launching experiential learning programming. As noted by the Department, Psychology will begin participating in the Arts &amp; Science Internship Program (ASIP) in 2024. This Faculty initiative will provide significant experiential learning opportunities to Psychology undergraduate students. Students will have the option to join ASIP in their second year, thus presenting opportunities earlier in their program of study. Students in the ASIP stream of their program of study will complete 12-20 months of work experience and participate in extensive professional development programming. Students will join ASIP in the Fall semester of their second year and complete their first work term after second year, providing an opportunity for</p>
	A5	“Consider revamping course requirements to allow more electives from other departments to count towards 300 and 400 level courses in order to decrease teaching burdens in the department and also allow students more flexibility in creating individualized programs of study based on their interests and career aspirations.”	We agree students would benefit from more courses in Psychopathology as well as Computational Psychology. We believe the challenge is finding instructors for existing courses rather than developing new courses. We have been networking to find more psychopathology instructors (with the belief these courses are best taught by sessionals who are practicing therapists rather than dedicated teaching stream faculty). We also intend to explore moving existing teaching responsibilities to free some of our computational experts who are teaching computational methods at the graduate level to be available for instructing our existing (but never taught) course on Computational Psychology, PSY 474.	
	A6	“We recommend the Department (and the University) continues to work on reducing class sizes. Doing so would lead to qualitative changes in the students’ educational experience and learning.”	In terms of teaching innovation, the pandemic forced a number of instructors to investigate new methods many of which are being carried over into in person instruction. The Department took advantage of our teaching faculty’s pedagogical expertise by hosting a teaching workshop during reading week 2023 to spread information and advice regarding innovative teaching techniques. It was successful, and we would like to make this a yearly event.	
	A7	“Engage alumni in career development activities and community placements, and target alumni fundraising to provide additional financial awards for academic achievement, support for their research, and acknowledgement of student excellence.”	The Department is less sure regarding the reviewers’ suggestion of expanding 300 and 400 level electives to other departments. A previous change opened up more flexibility with 200 level courses which we feel was appropriate. However, to ensure graduates	
	A8	“We strongly suggest that the Faculty of Arts and Science provide immediate support for additional administrative staffing for the Department, raise salaries to reflect the actual workloads of these dedicated individuals, and add specific staff members to support both student advising and program administration. The Department has identified several key positions that they would like to hire, but we believe this is not sufficient to address concerns regarding student support and advising.”		
A9	“Increase student support by increasing advising staff, integrating student support into the classroom, and providing additional opportunities for meaningful interactions with faculty, TAs, preceptors, as well as helping student to connect with other resources on campus beyond Psychology.”			

		<p>are receiving a psychology education in the manner which the Department envisions it we believe it is important for students to take senior level classes through our Department. As such, we do not have plans to take action on this front.</p> <p>We are extremely sympathetic with the reviewers' desire to reduce class sizes. However, this would require significant investment of teaching and tenure stream positions from FAS given that our enrollment increases required 2 CLTA hires (completed this summer) and 2 continuing status teaching stream hires (currently ongoing) to keep up with existing demand. These hires have stabilized our teaching of 200 level courses but more tenure stream hires are needed to meet the goals of providing experiential learning, research opportunities, and up-to-date socially relevant seminar courses.</p> <p>We agree with the importance of alumni outreach (we have reached out to the Office of Advancement to begin discussions around fundraising). Indeed, we note that a number of themes emerging from the reviewers' report requires better external engagement from the Department – fundraising, student mentorship, internship opportunities, career direction. However, one challenge is that our faculty have little professional experience outside academia and our current staff are charged with other, internal responsibilities. As such, we hope to create a new staff position titled "Outreach Officer." The responsibilities associated with this role</p>	<p>students in these programs to engage in experiential learning early in their study.</p> <p>ELOS also recently launched a new Experiential Learning Faculty Fellows Program which provides financial, pedagogical and administrative support for faculty interested in building new experiential learning courses. This has led to the development of a new experiential learning course that the Psychology department will introduce in the 2023/24 academic year.</p> <p>The Office of Experiential Learning and Outreach Support (ELOS) in Arts &amp; Science will remain available to support the integration of experiential learning scaffolded across programs in the Department.</p> <p><b>Immediate-to-Medium:</b> A&amp;S Administrative HR has been working with the Department on its staffing needs. The Undergraduate Assistant, TA Coordinator and part-time casual staff member positions were created and filled in the first half of 2022. This expansion of staff has already begun to address some of the identified challenges the undergraduate program faces. The Faculty will continue to engage with the Department concerning any additional staffing needs.</p> <p><b>Long:</b> Departmental hiring priorities do not necessarily translate into tenure-stream positions because new tenure-stream</p>
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			<p>would capitalize on the synergies between various benefits of ongoing engagement with alumni. These include promoting ongoing alumni identification with the Department, fundraising, and networking to create internship and career mentoring opportunities. In addition, we envision this role as including communication responsibilities such as social media engagement and website upkeep that will benefit the Department in terms of engagement with alumni and the broader community.</p> <p>In terms of increased administrative support for students, several administrative staff have been hired since the review was conducted. An Undergraduate Assistant has been hired to work alongside the Undergraduate Administrator. A casual staff member has also been hired to support the undergraduate program on a part-time basis. A Graduate TA Coordinator supports both the Graduate Program and the hiring of TAs for undergraduate courses. As the new positions have been recently filled, the department will continue to review and assess its needs with the Administrative HR Services.</p>	<p>positions are allocated at the Faculty level. All requests for new positions across the Faculty are submitted to the Faculty Appointments Committee (FAC), which includes representation across its sectors (Humanities, Social Sciences and Sciences) and from the Colleges. The FAC reviews all requests for new positions and makes recommendations to the Dean regarding which requests should be granted. In a given year, there are many more requests than available positions. As noted in the response to point A16 below, the Unit-Level Academic Planning process will include faculty complement planning as a key feature and will facilitate clear articulation of the Department's complement plan over the five years of the plan.</p>
<p>The reviewers observed that the Department's stringent admissions requirements may pose significant access barriers for first-generation students, and those from underrepresented groups. They suggested that "allowing more flexibility in the number and types of courses that can be used to gain entry into the</p>	<p>A10</p>	<p>"Allow more flexibility in the number and types of courses that can be used to gain entry into the programs in order to alleviate inadvertent biases towards underrepresented and first generation students."</p>	<p>Although the Department appreciates the reviewers' concern here, the volume of applicants for Psychology's programs (e.g., 2725 applicants for majors, minors, and specialists this year) makes expanding the criteria for entry extremely challenging. We do have existing alternative entry options through performance in second year courses beyond the primary path of performance in</p>	<p>The Faculty recognizes the review report recommendation to pursue options to address barriers for students from underrepresented groups. The Dean's response notes that the Department has existing alternative entry options through performance in second year courses which offer additional pathways for admission to the program.</p>

programs may mitigate against such biases”.			PSY 100. As such, we do not intend to take action on this front.	
The reviewers made a number of observations and potential suggestions related to enhancing departmental communications and connections across all faculty groups, including considering approaches to increasing the involvement of all faculty in departmental decision-making, and enhancing supports and mentorship for junior faculty. They also recommended that the department prioritize expanding its complement of both teaching stream and tenure stream faculty when opportunities permit, in alignment with the size of the program.	A11	“Improve communication between staff and faculty, between teaching-stream and tenure stream faculty, and especially between faculty and Departmental leadership (eg. by establishing regular faculty meetings).”	In terms of relations between faculty and Department leadership, monthly Department meetings attended by both staff and faculty have been implemented. Further, a number of Committees have been established (e.g., Executive Committee, Budget Committee, PTR reform committee) that provide direct input into key decisions on a regular basis.	<p><b>Immediate-to-Long:</b> The A&amp;S office of Vice-Dean, Faculty &amp; Academic Life recently developed a New &amp; Recent Faculty Program in partnership with Massey College. All new faculty members (teaching and tenure stream) are invited to participate in meetings where a series of different topics are addressed throughout the year (e.g., writing, PTR process, supporting students with mental health issues) as well as attend informal lunches for new hires to facilitate community-building.</p> <p><b>Immediate-to-Long:</b> As noted above, A&amp;S allocated two new continuing status teaching-stream faculty positions to the Department, and searches are underway to fill them. These new hires, in addition to the hiring of two CLTA faculty members last year, will help to ease some of the enrollment pressures.</p> <p>As noted above, all requests for new positions across the Faculty are submitted to the Faculty Appointments Committee (FAC; see earlier response above for details).</p> <p><b>Medium:</b> The Dean notes that the Department has submitted a request to revise the workload for continuing status teaching-stream faculty to reduce the teaching load by 0.5 FCE.</p>
	A12	“Increase involvement of faculty in the Department’s decision-making. Faculty feel heard by the leadership but feel relatively powerless in governance of the Department.”		
	A13	“Greater support and mentorship for junior faculty should be implemented (eg. allocation of limited resources, such as graduate student recruitment and support, should favor junior faculty).”	In addition to our existing faculty mentorship program, the Chair’s office is now taking a more proactive approach to onboarding junior faculty including annual meetings and regular email check-ins. Further, our Graduate Chair has devised a graduate student allocation system that explicitly prioritizes junior faculty.	
	A14	“Move current CLTAs to teaching stream faculty positions and expand the total teaching faculty to at least 10. Invest in teaching stream faculty through funding for innovative teaching, and increase communication with these faculty regarding appreciation for their outstanding work.”		
	A15	“Expand research faculty in targeted ways with several goals in mind: building diversity, creating bridges between historically separate subfields of research, and connecting with other departments and partner institutions.”	Although CLTA positions cannot be turned into permanent positions, the Department is currently conducting a search for two new continuing status teaching stream positions. Our Undergraduate Director believes these positions will suffice in meeting our current teaching needs at existing class sizes. As such, we will next turn to hiring research stream positions to account for the needs of upper year students with the goal of diversity in mind. We have been capitalizing on the Pedagogical Innovation and Experimentation (PIE) Fund to better support teaching in the department generally. With respect to recognizing the contribution of teaching stream faculty, the Department is currently applying to amend our workload policy to reduce the continuing status teaching stream	

			FCE by 0.5 to account for the increased demands on this role since our workload policy was set in 2012.	
<p>The reviewers strongly recommended that the Department continue to develop plans for future directions through a comprehensive strategic planning process, involving consultation with faculty of all ranks, staff, students and alumni. They underscored that enhanced engagement with and articulation of goals related to equity, diversity and inclusion at all levels of the department should be prioritized throughout this process.</p>	A16	<p>“We strongly recommend that the Department continue to develop their plans for future directions through a comprehensive strategic planning process that includes voices of all constituents – faculty of all ranks, staff, graduate students, undergraduates, and alumni. Improvement of diversity, equity and inclusion at all levels of the Department, including faculty recruitment, should be prioritized.”</p>	<p>A departmental EDI committee has been formed and funded by the Department, and is in the stages of gathering information from all departmental members (students, faculty, staff) to determine the most impactful issues on which to focus.</p>	<p><b>Short-to-Long:</b> As a strategic priority of the Faculty’s five-year plan (2020-2025), Arts &amp; Science is firmly committed to improving equity, diversity and inclusion among students, staff and faculty. The Faculty added new training for chairs and directors in 2020-21 to ensure that EDI is supported within departments. Furthermore, as a new component of the annual activity report, chairs and directors are now evaluated on their progress in enhancing EDI within their unit. Many units have established EDI committees, including Psychology. A&amp;S hired a Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in December 2021. The Director is well-positioned to offer guidance to the Department on how to best implement EDI initiatives at the departmental level. In Fall 2022, the A&amp;S Director of EDI provided support to the Department on developing a Terms of Reference for the Department’s EDI committee.</p> <p>Upon completion of the UTQAP review, the Department will undertake a five-year Unit-Level Academic Planning (ULP) process later in 2023. The unit-level academic plan is a forward-looking document that both articulates a department’s academic plans over the following five years and also highlights progress made on the implementation plan identified in the UTQAP administrative response. The ULP includes a discussion of plans relevant to equity, diversity and inclusion at all levels of the</p>

				department. The development of the ULP involves significant consultation with stakeholders across the department (faculty, staff, and students). Senior academic and administrative leadership within the Dean's Office will meet with the Department's leadership to discuss their unit-level academic plan and provide guidance and feedback.
The reviewers observed limited interaction between Psychology and cognate units and suggested that strengthening these connections could provide breadth for undergraduate students, as well as enrich Psychology's research program.	A17	"Increasing interactions with other departments through [joint] hires and integrated undergraduate programs would greatly enhance the ability of departments to engage in large-scale multidisciplinary research, and would also greatly enhance the breadth of the undergraduate learning experience."	In 2020 the Department hired a faculty member in conjunction with the Department of Statistics and is currently arranging a CLTA research position with the Cognitive Science Program at University College.	<b>Long:</b> The Dean's response acknowledges currently existing relationships with cognate units both within Arts & Science and beyond. The Dean's office will encourage the Department to consider how best to manage and possibly expand its relationships with cognate units as part of the forthcoming unit-level planning process, to commence upon completion of the UTQAP review
The reviewers made a number of observations and recommendations related to enhancing communication, cohesion and shared governance across the tri-campus graduate Department of Psychology.	A18	"Improve cohesion and implement shared governance between the Tri-Campus Graduate Chair and the Department Chair. The current model in which the former has decisional power on graduate matters while the latter has financial control over the Department's graduate program is not conducive to the recruitment and training success of graduate students in Psychology."	The Graduate Chair and Department Chair now have regular, bi-weekly meetings to ensure consistent communication and support. The Department Chair also sits on the Graduate Committee and holds regular "Four Chairs" meetings with the Graduate Chair and Chairs of the UTM and UTSC campuses. The financial structure of the arrangement however is out of the control of the Department.	The Faculty notes that Psychology follows the separated model for the Graduate Chair position. As such, the budgetary home of the graduate program resides in the same division where the graduate program itself resides. Thus, the Psychology Department at the St. George campus, which is in the Faculty of Arts & Science, is the budgetary home of the tri-campus graduate program. The Faculty commends the efforts to hold "Four Chairs" meetings to facilitate communication and cohesion. The process, currently being led by the School of Graduate Studies, of developing MoAs between all of the constituent units should also clarify lines of communication.



Request Prompt <i>verbatim from the request</i>	Rec. #	Recommendations from Review Report <i>verbatim from the review report</i>	Unit/Program Response	Dean's Response
<b><u>Buddhism, Psychology and Mental Health Minor:</u></b>				
The reviewers observed that the BPMH minor "is narrowly focused on Buddhism at the expense of other religions or contemplative approaches" and recommended undertaking a curricular review, with an eye towards either expanding coverage to engage with other religions, or shifting the minor's focus to secular mindfulness and meditation.	B1	"The program's curriculum should be expanded to other religions or loosen its religious underpinnings to move further toward mindfulness and meditation. Under such circumstances, renaming the program 'Contemplative studies & mental health' would be warranted."	B1: BPMH appreciates the reviewers' suggestions for expanding the program's curriculum, and will consider these suggestions, along with a potential name change, as it moves forward in discussions with cognate units.	<b>Short-to-Medium:</b> Arts & Science (A&S) recognizes the review report recommendations for a curricular review and consideration of expanding the focus of the program. However, given the current lack of continuing faculty engagement in BPMH, there is a more immediate need to ensure the sustainability of the program, rather than the expansion of curricular offerings. The Dean's office will work with New College to create a working group, with representatives from cognate units (including the Department of Psychology and the Department for the Study of Religion), to discuss the BPMH curriculum, and options for the sustainability of the program, including enhanced connections with cognate units and the engagement of continuing faculty.
	B2	"We recommend increased programmatic requirements, including the creation of formal tracks (a clinical, a cognitive neuroscience, and a social application track) to give a stronger curricular structure to the program. Academic advising tailored to the program should also be enhanced"	B2: To increase programmatic requirements and provide a stronger curricular structure to the program New College will work with the Faculty of Arts and Science to create a Working Group of faculty members from cognate units such as Psychology and Religion to review and revise the program's curriculum.	
The reviewers stressed the importance of establishing formal commitments from cognate units for faculty to teach in the program, in order to ensure a long-term vision of the curriculum, increase research opportunities for students, and develop a strong community.	B3	"We do not see the need for creating tenure lines uniquely associated with the minor. That said, there should be formal commitments from (and compensation of) other cognate units to allow their primary faculty to commit to the teaching mission of the program. The association of tenure stream professors from other Departments with BPMH would have the added benefit to increase research opportunities for the students in the program. This buy-in from other depts and units will require the involvement and support of the University's	B3: To ensure formal commitments from other cognate units, New College will work with the Faculty of Arts and Science to create a Working Group of faculty members from cognate units to find tenure stream professors who are interested in teaching in the program.  B4: The involvement of tenure stream professors from cognate units will enhance	<b>Short-to-Medium:</b> As noted above, A&S will create a working group, with representatives from cognate units, to examine opportunities to support the Program with the existing A&S faculty complement.  <b>Medium-to-Long:</b> To facilitate active learning and experiential learning, the A&S Office of Experiential

		<p>central administration. Funds should be also allocated for long-term commitments of teaching stream faculty to the program. Relying strongly on sessional lecturers for teaching in the BPMH program hampers a long-term vision of the curriculum and the development of a strong faculty community.”</p>	<p>opportunities for students to engage in research activities. Tenure stream faculty often have research assistant or work-study positions that BPMH students can apply for. The BPMH Program Director will also promote the Faculty of Arts and Science’s Research Opportunities Program (ROP) among its tenure stream faculty. The ROP program provides undergraduate students the opportunity to work on a research team in exchange for academic credit. These opportunities will provide students with a chance to develop skills in analytical and statistical proficiency.</p> <p>B5: To work towards continued investment by the University New College will work with the Faculty of Arts and Science to create a Working Group of faculty members from cognate units to find tenure stream professors who are interested in teaching in the program.</p>	<p>Learning &amp; Outreach Support (ELOS) is available to provide pedagogical supports, including consulting with individual faculty and unit or program leaders interested in developing or expanding experiential learning and/or undergoing experiential learning curriculum planning. ELOS can also provide administrative support, resources, and guidance on funding for experiential learning, as well as offering partner supports, including partnership development, relationship management, and partner recognition.</p>
<p>The reviewers raised concerns around ethical/privacy issues and subjective grading for student personal journal assignments in the BPMH minor, and recommended that these issues be addressed</p>	<p>B4</p> <p>B5</p> <p>B6</p>	<p>“Opportunities to engage in research activities and to develop analytical and statistical proficiency for critical analysis of the science behind this field should be enhanced.”</p> <p>“Long-term prosperity of the program will require continued investment by the University especially in the face of the impressive growth in the number of students taking this minor. In particular, sufficient funds should be allocated to support the instructional needs of the minor...”</p> <p>“Ethical issues of privacy and subjective grading for students’ personalized journal entries should be tackled head on. We recommend the program reaches out to the University’s Center for Teaching and Learning for advice and support.”</p>	<p>B6: BPMH understands the ethical issues the Reviewers have pointed to in regards to students’ personalized journal entries and subjective grading. The program will reach out to the University’s Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation for advice and support around assignments for all its courses. The program will also consult with the Faculty of Arts and Science Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning for best assessment practices and will ensure all of its faculty and course instructors receive professional development around assessment practices.</p>	<p><b>Short-to-Long:</b> The A&amp;S Office of the Associate Dean, Teaching &amp; Learning is available to assist the Program with adopting best practices for assignments and assessments.</p>

Other recommendations not prioritized in the Request for Administrative Response	B7	“Increasing the faculty diversity to reflect the student’s (and population’s) diversity should be a priority.”	<p>B7: BPMH has already begun to make faculty diversity and diversity within curriculum a top priority. In the 2022-2023 academic year our public and student communities have been supported by many internationally prominent events focused on bringing diverse voices to our audiences. The <i>content</i> of our courses (i.e., readings, topics, and expert voices) have begun to highlight the workings of systemic oppression, climate (in)justice, decolonization and trauma, drawing on historical, structural, cultural, clinical, and personal data.</p> <p>As a member of the Faculty of Arts and Science Working Group mentioned above, New College will continue to monitor and enhance the development of the BPMH minor so it reflects principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA).</p>	<p><b>Short-to-Long:</b> As a strategic priority of the Faculty’s five-year plan (2020-2025), A&amp;S is firmly committed to improving equity, diversity and inclusion among students, staff and faculty. To that end, the Faculty added new training for chairs and directors in 2020-21 to ensure that EDI is supported within departments. Furthermore, as a new component of the annual activity report, chairs and directors are now evaluated on their progress in enhancing EDI within their unit. Many units have established EDI committees. A&amp;S hired a Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, who is available for consultation to the Program on EDI matters. As well, EDI will be a part of the discussions held by the A&amp;S working group for BPMH.</p>
	B8	“community-engaged learning opportunities is a unique facet of the BPMH program and seem to be well appreciated by both instructors and students, but few such opportunities currently exist. The program’s leadership should work on implementing more CEL.”	<p>B8: New College has recently hired a new faculty member who holds a 51% position in Community-Engaged Learning. The home unit of this faculty member is New College. The other 49% of the faculty member’s load is with the Centre for Caribbean Studies. As part of their CEL work, the faculty member will reach out to the FAS Experiential Learning Office for support in integrating CEL opportunities into all New College academic programs, including the BPMH program.</p>	<p><b>Short-to-Medium:</b> As noted above, the Program is encouraged to engage with the A&amp;S Office of Experiential Learning and Outreach Support (ELOS), for further guidance on experiential learning opportunities.</p>
	B9	“The dramatic growth of the program is borne not only by the instructors but also by the administrative staff. We recommend increased staffing to support the increased administrative load and advising.”	<p>B9: With the creation of Center for Caribbean Studies and African Studies Centre, New College will reorganize administrative support for programs and student advising in way which will benefit the program and its students.</p>	<p><b>Short-to-Medium:</b> A&amp;S will continue to communicate with the College regarding staffing for the new EDUs (CCS and ASC) and the BPMH program.</p>

	B10	<p>“Finally, given the growing interest in this program, the administration may be tempted to make some of the courses online to make those more accessible across campuses. However, we caution the program against such a move as this is likely to dilute some of the most important qualities of the program in professor-student accessibility, small group discussions, and experiential learning.”</p>	<p>B10: BPMH understands the importance of in-person professor-student interactions, small group discussions, and experiential learning, and appreciate that creating an online program track is not an option at this time.</p>	<p>At the present time, A&amp;S is not supportive of a new online track, given the more immediate need to address the existing curriculum.</p>
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### **3 Committee on Academic Policy & Programs (AP&P) Findings**

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The reading group found the summary to accurately reflect the full review. The group reported that the Dean's administrative response had adequately addressed issues identified by the review, however, asked that the Department further comment on the admissions process to the program through second-year courses, and on concerns related to potential bias and underrepresentation in the program.

Geoff MacDonald, Acting Chair, Department of Psychology, responded that students had two paths to enter the major and specialist programs. The primary path was through performance in the introductory first-year Psychology courses and the secondary path was through performance in second-year courses. He noted that the second-year option offered more flexibility to students in terms of core materials, assessment styles and adjustments to the university environment.

No follow-up report was requested.

### **4 Institutional Executive Summary**

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The reviewers praised the Department of Psychology as a top-ranked research department, with a long history of preparing the next generation of psychological scientists, noting that the unit is "forward looking and committed to taking an already outstanding program to the next level of excellence". They emphasized that the research specialist undergraduate program is outstanding, and the Department has made great strides in coping with high enrolment since the previous review, noting positive investments in faculty hiring. They observed that the Department has expanded the curriculum to meet student interests; made additional research opportunities available to specialists; and that the Department serves a very significant number of students from outside of Psychology programs. They highlighted that tenure-stream faculty have a well-deserved reputation for outstanding research; teaching-stream faculty are expert, dedicated and go well beyond their teaching mission in serving students and the Department; and staff are committed and hard-working. Finally, the reviewers emphasized Psychology's strong connections with multiple world-renowned external institutions, and the student reports of "outstanding" teaching, as well as their appreciation for the flexibility, care and support shown by faculty and staff during the pandemic.

The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: enhancing the quality of education and student experience in the undergraduate Psychology programs; addressing concerns that the Department's stringent admissions requirements may pose significant access barriers for first-generation students and those from underrepresented groups; enhancing departmental communications and connections across all faculty groups, including considering approaches to increasing the involvement of all faculty in departmental decision-making, and enhancing supports and mentorship for junior faculty; prioritizing expanding the complement of both Teaching Stream and Tenure Stream faculty when opportunities permit; engaging in a

comprehensive strategic planning process, involving consultation with faculty of all ranks, staff, students and alumni; strengthening connections with cognate units; enhancing communication, cohesion and shared governance across the tri-campus graduate Department of Psychology; undertaking a curricular review of the BPMH program with an eye towards either expanding coverage to engage with other religions, or shifting the minor's focus to secular mindfulness and meditation; establishing formal commitments from cognate units for faculty to teach in the BPMH program; and addressing concerns around ethical/privacy issues and subjective grading for student personal journal assignments in the BPMH program.

The Dean's Administrative Response describes the division, 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**

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The Dean will provide an interim report to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs no later than the midway point between the 2020-21 site visit and the next scheduled review on the status of the implementation plans, when requested by the office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs.

The next review will be commissioned in the 2027-28 review cycle.

## **6 Distribution**

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On June 30, 2023, 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 the Faculty of Arts & Science, the Secretaries of AP&P, Academic Board and Governing Council, and the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance. The Dean provided the link to unit/program leadership.