

TO: Mike Mahon
President and Vice Chancellor

DATE: December 12, 2013

FROM: Robert A. Boudreau
Chair, Academic Quality Assurance Committee

RE: Bachelor of Management – International Management, Academic Quality Assurance Review

In accordance with the U of L *Academic Quality Assurance Policy and Process*, the Academic Quality Assurance Committee approved the review of the Bachelor of Management - International Management at its December 6, 2013 meeting.

The Program Review Committee for this review was comprised of Andrea Amelinckx (Program Review Coordinator), Shamsul Alam, Wenlong Yuan, and Salvador Barragan. The review produced four documents:¹

1. Self Study Report (received May 13, 2013) – developed by the B.Mgt. – International Management Self Study Committee.
2. *Review Report, International Management Program, University of Lethbridge* (received August 7, 2013) – External Review Report by Dale Beckman (University of Victoria) and Lianxi Zhou (Brock University), based on their site visit of June 11-12, 2013.
3. *International Management, Quality Assurance Review: Response to External Reviewers Report* (received October 2, 2013) – response of the Self Study Committee to the external review.
4. *Quality Assurance, Faculty of Management, International Management Major, Response of the Dean* (received November 29, 2013) – response to the review, written by Robert Ellis, Dean of the Faculty of Management.

¹ All documents are available upon request.

Self Study

In summary, the Self Study Report noted that the B.Mgt. – International Management program is a good program, with many commendable features and some challenges. International Management (IM) is a dynamic, cross-disciplinary field that has to adapt to stay relevant.

Challenges noted in the report include:

- Declining enrolments after 2006. There are three factors in this decline: (1) competition from new Alberta universities; (2) students' concern about employment opportunities with this credential; and (3) IM Majors often struggle with second language requirements.
- Finding the best way to increase student interest in the Major, minor, and certificate programs.

The Self Study Report included several possible future directions for IM:

- Increase enrolment. Suggested actions were: post jobs for which IM students are uniquely qualified; post IM alumni profiles and video clips online, ensuring they include how the IM Major has helped in alumni careers; develop an IM-related speaker series; run IM information forums in MGT 1000; run focus groups to examine barriers for students enrolling in IM; and increase the number of tenure track and tenured faculty in IM.
- Develop international streams in other Management Majors.
- Augment promotions, marketing, and retention programs.
- Expand the existing international exchange program.
- Establish international co-op options.
- Develop additional internship training options.

The Self Study summarized the strengths of IM:

1. Many faculty have an interest in internationally-focused research, teaching, and management development activities.
2. Active faculty exchange program.
3. Up to three faculty scholarships for the short-term teaching exchange program to partner schools.
4. An office dedicated to providing international opportunities for students.
5. Scholarships for students going abroad.
6. The Burns Foundation Visiting Scholars program often presents international scholars.
7. International Management Majors are required to do a one-semester exchange. Students outside the Faculty can also participate in this exchange.
8. Strong network of 27 international sister universities in 22 different countries.
9. A maximum class size of 60 for introductory courses allow closer student-professor interaction.

The following concerns were noted in the Self Study:

1. There are tensions between: a strong management foundation and international-focused courses; the number of elective courses and the available instructors; and enrolment and applicant pool quality.
2. Hiring academically-qualified instructors and tenure track faculty is difficult.
3. There is limited course sequencing for the Major, due to the menu-driven course selection process.
4. Optimal class size and resourcing.
5. How to best advance faculty research and teaching?
6. Decreasing enrolment in the Major.
7. Student challenges in acquiring a second language.

The report noted that in the last decade each Dean has encouraged internationalization of all Management research and teaching. Many Management faculty have an interest in international initiatives. One of the Faculty of Management “Learning Outcomes,” defined in 2011, is “A Global Mindset,” which consists of: cross-cultural competencies; an appreciation of diversity; adaptability; and a broad understanding of world affairs.

External Review

In their report, the External Reviewers summarized the strengths of IM:

- The program has a solid foundation and unique features.
- The well-managed international exchange program is a highlight. It has high-quality international partners and is popular with students. The full-time international exchange coordinator provides excellent support for the student exchange component and the staff that support international exchange are enthusiastic and committed.
- The program strives to provide a global mindset and cultural sensitivity.
- Faculty and staff are dedicated and motivated. They also bring extensive teaching, professional, and research experiences.
- The University and the Faculty of Management recognize the importance of the program, and are prepared to support the quality of teaching and learning.
- The International Management program, the Faculty of Management, and the University of Lethbridge are all in strategic alignment.
- The program’s curricula and learning environments clearly meet disciplinary and university education standards.
- There is an active faculty exchange program with overseas partner schools.
- The Burns Foundation Visiting Scholars program boosts international exposure and research activities for the program.
- Methods of faculty development, teaching load determination, and assessment are of a high standard and are comparable to those in other Canadian universities.

- Faculty members have adequate funding for conferences and professional development, and are encouraged to be active in research. Some faculty have been published in top-tier journals.
- IM is the only business program in Canada that requires both language training and an international exchange.
- Graduates are satisfied with the program and work in a variety of jobs.
- The degree is well recognized.

The External Review Report noted the following concerns:

- Enrolment has risen and fallen since 1993.
- The language requirement has some issues. Having a greater depth of language training can be an advantage for the program. But it may also push students to choose IM as a minor, not a Major. If the language requirement stays unchanged, the Faculty of Management must allocate resources to promote the program widely. Consider a one-semester language requirement, with the option for deeper language training.
- It is possible for IM Majors to have a portfolio of courses that do not build a depth of knowledge in certain areas. This is because students can choose any four courses from the IM course list to fulfill Major requirements.
- The program needs to concentrate more specifically on relevant international business and management knowledge domains.
- Many of the courses offered are only loosely connected with core areas of business management like marketing, finance, and human resource management.
- Enrolment in the Major is eroding because of students opting to take the minor, probably because of the demands of the Major's language requirement.

The following recommendations were in the External Review Report:

1. Refine the intellectual domain of the program and redesign the curriculum and content. Consider developing business streams to provide more focused intellectual domains of training. Possible streams include Global Marketing Management, International Business and Strategy, Cross-Cultural Management, International Entrepreneurship, and International Finance and Accounting.
2. Increase the number of academically qualified instructors and tenure-track faculty members, giving preference to those with a Ph.D. in the relevant business field.
3. Broaden research and scholarly activities so that more faculty members are involved.

Program Response

In its response to the External Reviewers, the Self Study Committee proposed four main actions:

- IM's four key learning objectives – global mindset, cross-cultural competency, diversity appreciation, and global awareness – will be paired with stronger functional business training.
- The research methods course required for Majors will be dropped, so that IM Majors have to take five IM electives. Wherever possible, all other elective courses will be more closely tied to the objectives of the IM Major.
- Introducing functional business streams is a good idea that will enhance student learning and skills. Two additional potential streams are global supply chain management, and global commerce and sustainability. IM will prioritize curricular objectives and begin work on developing business streams in Fall 2013.
- IM will develop a plan to address issues related to the language requirement. Among other areas, this plan will address promotions, tutoring, and student support.

Dean's Response

In his response, Dean of Management Robert Ellis summarized the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for the International Management area:

Strengths:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The IM program is unique in Canada in its requirements for both language training and an international exchange.2. A six-week practicum, the Malaysia Work-Study Program offers an outstanding educational experience.3. Encompassing exchange agreements with 27 universities in 22 countries, IM exchange programs offer excellent opportunities to live and study abroad.4. The remarkable growth in the number of students taking the IM minor shows great interest in IM.5. MGT 3650 - Introduction to International Management is now part of the core B.Mgt. curriculum, providing all Majors with an understanding of management as it relates to global business.6. The core B.Mgt. courses emphasize social responsibility and business ethics (e.g., MGT 3031 – Managing Responsibly in a Global Environment).7. Markin Hall is an excellent learning environment for students.
Weaknesses:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Enrolment has declined since 2006, likely due to a drop in post-diploma students from institutions that have become degree-granting.2. The career paths for IM graduates are not as clear as for other management fields.3. Graduates struggle to connect their IM education with the workplace.
Opportunities:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Redesign the program to reflect labour market opportunities while preserving the current strengths.
Threats:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Increasing competition from Alberta and B.C. degree-granting institutions.

The Dean's Response commented on recommendations that were drawn from the External Review Report and the Program Response:

Recommendation:	Response:
Create business streams to provide more focused intellectual domains of training.	<p>This is an excellent suggestion. To address this recommendation the following steps will be taken in Spring 2014:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the Faculty of Management Executive Committee, discuss and identify appropriate business streams for International Management. • Consult with Career Services and Management Co-op to identify labour market demands and trends for International Management graduates. • Convene a task force to identify courses that could form a supply chain management stream. • Meet with Supply Chain Canada to discuss proposed and seek accreditation for the proposed supply chain management stream courses. <p>Curriculum changes will be submitted Fall 2014.</p>
Drop Research Methods as a required course so that five International Management electives are required for the program.	This recommendation is accepted.
Promote the advantages of the language and international exchange requirements.	<p>Management will ensure that these requirements are understood as program strengths by Recruiting so this can be passed on to potential students.</p> <p>Management will develop a communications plan for marketing the International Management program.</p>
Hire tenure-track faculty for the chosen International Management streams.	Agree with this need, a foundation for building a stronger academic culture.

The Academic Quality Assurance Committee is satisfied that the B.Mgt. – International Management academic quality assurance review has followed the U of L's academic quality assurance process appropriately, and acknowledges the successful completion of the review.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY:

Robert A. Boudreau

Chair, Academic Quality Assurance Committee

Cc: Andrew Hakin, Provost and Vice President (Academic)