



TO: Mike Mahon
President and Vice Chancellor

DATE: May 1, 2018

FROM: Alan Siaroff
Chair, Academic Quality Assurance Committee

RE: Archaeology Program 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 Archaeology program at its April 27, 2018 meeting.

The Self Study Committee for this review comprised Kevin McGeough (Program Review Coordinator), Stefan Kienzle, and Shawn Bubel.

The review produced four documents:¹

1. *Archaeology: Self Study Report* (received October 20, 2017) – Self Study Report, developed by the Archaeology Self Study Committee.
2. *External Review Report of the Archaeology Program, Department of Geography, University of Lethbridge* (received January 24, 2018) – by Timothy Harrison (University of Toronto) and Gerald Oetelaar (University of Calgary) based on their site visit of December 8-9, 2017.
3. *Department of Geography (Archaeology): Response to the External Reviewers' Report* (received February 25, 2018) – response of the Self Study Committee to the external review.
4. *Dean's Response to Quality Assurance Review, Archaeology and Geography* (received April 3, 2018) – response to the review, written by Craig Cooper, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science.
5. Self Study Committee response to the Dean's Response (received April 5, 2018).

¹ All documents are available upon request.

Self Study

The Self Study Report noted four main issues for the External Reviewers to provide feedback on:

1. There is a lack of enrolment capacity in Archaeology due to constraints on lab space, restrictions on field trips, and over-burdened faculty members.
2. Regarding curriculum, are the right choices being made in balancing methods courses with regionally-specific classes?
3. One faculty member teaches field training on overload. Should field training be regularized in other ways?
4. Undergraduate experiences are mostly oriented around instruction by two faculty members. Is this lack of diversity typical of smaller programs in archaeology?

The body of the report contained the following program strengths:

- The first-year course, ARKY 1000: Introduction to Archaeology, is a major service course for the university.
- 3000-level courses continue to draw students from other majors, with enrolments in these courses at or near capacity.
- The curriculum is designed to meet the needs of majors plus those taking Archaeology courses: as part of a degree in a cognate program; for their Education degrees; out of interest; or to fulfill the liberal education requirement.
- The program's commitment to quality courses and innovation in curriculum allow students to be well-versed in archaeological fieldwork and analysis, research skills, and communication.
- GIS and remote sensing has become a growth area in research, teaching, and employment for Archeology graduates.
- Third-year regional survey courses are capped at 50 students and require extensive writing assignments.
- Third-year methods courses are capped at smaller sizes.
- Students can pursue Independent Studies courses at the second and fourth year levels.
- Applied study courses give students the chance to learn in applied situations while earning course credit.
- The program is unique in North America in that it is a combined archaeology and geography program.
- A cooperative education option is available to all students in Archaeology, who most commonly take co-op options through the Galt Museum, Parks Canada, or a local cultural resource management company.
- All students must participate in at least one field program that contributes to a larger research project.
- Faculty and students in the Department of Geography are very active in liaising with the community, and the Archaeology program has a strong relationship with the Archaeology Society of Alberta.
- The program has strong relationships with the FNMI community.
- The Department of Geography has a long and successful history of offering graduate level degrees. Archaeology graduate students are integrated into the Geography graduate cohort.
- Although there is a designated Archaeology Program Advisor, core Archaeology faculty members routinely meet with students to plan their programs and ensure they are on track for graduation.
- Student retention and graduation rates are relatively high.

- The numbers of students going on to graduate studies and finding employment are higher than might be expected for an archaeology program. Graduates have gone on to further study at institutions like Harvard, Oxford, University of Toronto, and other top programs.
- Enrolments have been steady since 2007.
- The Library budget has allowed the maintenance of an adequate collection to support research in Near Eastern and Eastern Mediterranean studies and in North American archaeology.
- The student club is very active and engaged.
- There is an active tutoring program.
- All faculty members in the program have active research programs.

The following challenges were noted in the body of the report:

- A decrease in funding for sessional lecturers has impacted the diversity of course offerings.
- The program has grown to the point where it cannot be adequately supported by the current number of dedicated faculty members. Archaeology positions have been granted to other departments, but not the Archaeology program. The top priority for hiring is a specialist in Cultural Resource Management archaeology.
- Archaeology students typically take more summer classes than students in other majors, and so their programming paths diverge more than for other majors.
- The number of credit hours taught by Archaeology faculty members is consistently higher than for the rest of the Department of Geography.
- Lab courses are almost always at capacity, resulting in a cramped classroom and little space to work with artifacts.
- The budget for hiring marking assistants has been eliminated.
- The departmental website is hard to find and difficult to use.
- The Archaeology program requires students to take at least one semester of a second language, and language training is declining at the U of L.
- Archaeology is not a priority for other faculty members in the Department of Geography.

External Review

The External Review Report made the following summary comments:

- The Archaeology program aligns very well with the U of L's vision to offer a high quality liberal education.
- The program is distinguished by its rich experiential learning opportunities.
- Student enrolments are robust.

The body of the report contained several program strengths:

- The Archaeology and Geography majors align very well with the U of L strategic plan and research and academic plan.
- Students actively participate in fieldwork, and the field schools offer exceptional learning opportunities and the chance to participate in research.

- The Archaeology program is committed to community engagement, cultivating partnerships with industry and non-profit organizations. This commitment extends to the FNMI community.
- The curriculum aligns well with institutional strategic goals.
- The two core faculty members are well-respected by colleagues and students.
- The quality of instruction in the program is very high.
- Student retention and graduation rates are above average.
- Students praise the experiential learning opportunities.
- Graduates are well received in graduate programs that emphasize cultural resource management work.
- As the program is housed in the Department of Geography, students have access to computers and spatial software.

The report noted the weaknesses and challenges for the Archaeology program:

- The emphasis on experiential learning is often at the expense of more theoretical courses, which can restrict students' options when applying for graduate programs.
- Archaeology majors are often challenged to meet disciplinary standards because two faculty members can only offer a certain amount of courses.
- Students express concerns about their ability to register for courses of interest because of constraints imposed by prerequisites.
- The program relies heavily on Independent Studies courses, which may not be sustainable, given the high number of Independent Studies students that faculty members supervise.
- There is a large amount of extra work involved in running successful field schools.
- Implementing the proposed M.A. in Cultural Resource Management will put further pressure on the already overworked faculty members.
- The program is significantly understaffed and struggles to meet its curricular commitments.
- The timing of course offerings mean that some students struggle to complete their degrees in three to three and a half years.
- Most Anthropology courses have several prerequisites that prevent students from taking the advanced courses that are most relevant to their program of study.
- Archaeology students have difficulties enrolling in history courses because of the popularity of these courses and the high number of history majors.
- There is some lack of diversity in the course offerings, due mainly to the low number of Archaeology faculty.
- Some students expressed concern about their lack of exposure to anthropological and archaeological theory.
- The program needs better access to soils laboratories.
- Additional space is urgently required.
- The teaching materials are in need of renewal, and comparative collections should be expanded. The faunal, osteological, and lithic collections should be enlarged.

The report contained the several recommendations for improving the program:

1. The program needs an additional full-time appointment to supplement the faculty complement. The new hire should have research interests in the American Southwest.
2. Upgrade the program's classroom and laboratory facilities. Increase the amount of dedicated space and the analytical instrumentation.
3. Upgrade the department's comparative collections, especially the faunal and artifact study collections.

Program Response

In their Program Response, the Self Study Committee addressed the recommendations and reviewer comments from the External Review Report:

Recommendation/Comment:	Response:
The program needs an additional full-time appointment to supplement to faculty complement. The new hire should have research interests in the American Southwest.	Agreed. The new hire would have to involve a full-time teaching load.
Upgrade the program's classroom and laboratory facilities. Increase the amount of dedicated space and the analytical instrumentation.	Agreed. Archaeology faculty will explore various measures to address space issues.
Upgrade the department's comparative collections, especially the faunal and artifact study collections.	Agreed. Archaeology faculty have prepared a preliminary list of items that would upgrade the collections.

Deans' Response

In his response, Dean of Arts and Science Craig Cooper addressed the three main areas from the External Review Report:

Area:	Response:
The program needs an additional full-time appointment to supplement to faculty complement. The new hire should have research interests in the American Southwest.	Given the budget situation, funding for a new position would have to come from existing resources.
Upgrade the program's classroom and laboratory facilities. Increase the amount of dedicated space and the analytical instrumentation.	Space is limited until the new science and academic building opens, but the Dean's office will work with the Archaeology program to address space and instrumentation concerns.
Upgrade the department's comparative collections, especially the faunal and artifact study collections.	The Dean's office will work with the Archaeology program to identify the items from the preliminary list that can be ordered in the near, medium, and long terms.

The Dean's Response also addressed some minor issues raised by the External Reviewers:

Issue:	Response:
Money for teaching assistants.	Funding for TAs was eliminated in past budget cuts but was restored in 2014. This funding is held centrally. Departments must first look to graduate students to meet marking needs before tapping into the TA funding.
Student advising.	The Archaeology program should work with the Associate Dean who oversees advising to ensure effective communication to Archaeology majors.
Theoretical and regional courses.	There are a limited number of theoretical courses in Archaeology and regional courses are restricted mostly to the Near East and the northern areas. Some of these limitations can be addressed if the program is able to make a new hire.
Student challenges with taking courses in cognate disciplines.	This issue may be alleviated when double-majors are recognized in the Banner system. Archaeology can also explore cross-listing with cognate disciplines.

Self Study Committee Response

In their response to the Dean's comments, the Self Study Committee stated their appreciation that the Dean is willing to work with the program to augment laboratory and classroom space and the study collection. The Self Study committee also emphasized their commitment to working with the Dean's office to address the need for a new hire in Archaeology.

The Academic Quality Assurance Committee is satisfied that the Archaeology 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,



Alan Siaroff

Chair, Academic Quality Assurance Committee

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