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**TO:** Mike Mahon  
President and Vice Chancellor

**DATE:** March 30, 2021

**FROM:** Alan Siaroff  
Chair, Academic Quality Assurance Committee

**RE:** Marketing 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 Marketing Program at its March 26, 2021 meeting.

The Self Study Committee for this review comprised of: Mike Basil (Program Review Coordinator), Debra Basil and Rhiannon Mesler.

The review produced 4 documents:

1. Self Study Report. Written by the Self Study Committee and received July 31, 2020.
2. External Review Report. Written by Kelley Main (University of Manitoba) and John Pracejus (University of Alberta) based on a virtual site visit November 23-27, 2020 and received December 8, 2020.
3. Program Response. Written by the Self Study Committee and received February 4, 2021.
4. Dean's Response. Written by Kerry Godfrey, Dean of the Dhillon School of Business and received March 5, 2021.

The Program Review Committee was given the opportunity to respond to the Dean's Response and they chose not to do so. An Action Plan was crafted based on these four documents to provide guidance from the Provost & Vice-President (Academic) to the Dean of the Dhillon School of Business.

## **1. Self Study Report**

The body of the report noted several **strengths** of the Marketing area:

1. Satisfied students and alumni with the Marketing program.
2. Steady graduation figures in the Marketing program.
3. Steady class enrolments in Marketing, supported by strong enrolment in Marketing minors by non-Management students.
4. Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accreditation.
5. Marketing remains in high labour market demand in Canada.
6. Increasing number of work-integrated learning experiences, e.g., co-ops, for students.
7. Strong complement of talented researchers and instructors.

The following **weaknesses and challenges** were mentioned in the body of the report:

1. Uncertain future enrolments tied to the increase in degree-granting institutions in Alberta.
2. Decreasing grant funding and the challenge to do more with less (loss of one faculty role and one administrative support role).

3. Challenging to offer variety of curriculum that meets students' needs with reduced faculty complement.

The Self Study Report asked for External Reviewer **feedback** in several areas:

1. How we could broaden our appeal.
2. How course offerings could be improved.
3. How to make the degree distinctive in the province.
4. How to react to the increasing financial pressures we face.
5. How to maintain teaching quality in the online environment.

The self-study report identified **key priorities** for the area in the next two years:

1. Identify ways to broaden the appeal of the marketing major in recruiting and retaining students at the University of Lethbridge
2. Contributing to new opportunities for revenue generation.

## **2. External Review Report**

The External Reviewers' Report noted many **strengths**:

1. Dedicated faculty members.
2. Clear alignment with and support of institutional and school strategic goals.
3. Availability of minors that complement major and marketing minor that complements other majors.
4. Availability of a variety of work-integrated learning opportunities for students.
5. Active scholarship and research by veteran and new faculty members.
6. The socially responsible marketing concentration is seen as very valuable. It is embraced by students and leverages the research of several professors.
7. The marketing major requirements are interdisciplinary in nature (including economics, psychology, statistics, and sociology). This is unique and can be a point of competitive differentiation.
8. The inclusion of social media content in 3215 and 4215 (the Marketing Communications courses) is great and seen as valuable by students. The Ecommerce class (3862) is also well regarded. Taken together it is obvious that the curriculum is doing well at keeping up with technological changes in the discipline.
9. The faculty were responsive to prior review comments which included adding a Sports Marketing Course as an elective.

The External Reviewers' Report discussed **challenges** in the report:

1. Prohibitive overlap of Marketing Research Course (3220) and Business Research Course (2700).
2. Need for more data analytics in the program.
3. Need to refresh curriculum with a view to eliminating repetitiveness of assignment or content, as well as shelve courses that are no longer offered.
4. Unpredictable or infrequent scheduling of marketing options on the Lethbridge campus.
5. Predictable and repetitive scheduling of marketing options on the Calgary campus.
6. Potential understaffing on the Calgary campus and in Applied Studies.
7. Declining marketing major enrolment numbers and possible higher attrition rates.

The External Reviewers' Report contained 10 **recommendations** for improving and/or maintaining the Marketing area:

1. Explore more formal mechanisms for including alumni in the experiential learning process. The DSB has an active and engaged alumni group. The current switch to digital meetings also allows easier involvement of Alumni located in other cities. In relation to this, perhaps consider how to offer more of the Applied Studies course to increase links with alumni? There is a resource issue in advising so perhaps the course can be offered with one faculty supervisor for several projects (perhaps counting as a course for the instructor after a certain number is reached) to increase capacity.
2. Consider adding a social media certification as a component of a class or classes (Google and Facebook) so the students have opportunities to get these extra credentials. There was a consensus among the alumni that these two certifications would be highly valuable on the job market and in first jobs. The review

team recommends a policy of including these certifications as a portion of marks in particular required courses. This would ensure that all graduates have this job market advantage.

3. Update curriculum content across all courses (not just within the same courses). There was a sense among alumni and students that there are unnecessary redundancies across courses. For instance, one thing mentioned was too many marketing plans across the classes. There are likely to be others.
4. Refresh Marketing Research (3220) and consider its overlap with the Business Research class (2700). A careful removal of overlap might allow analytics to be added without an additional course.
5. Remove outdated courses in calendar (e.g., Services Marketing), or set a recurring and predictable schedule for when they will be offered.
6. Given that “global mindset” is a program learning goal, Cross Cultural Marketing (4220) should be offered more heavily in rotation.
7. Future orient course scheduling to improve student planning and increase elective offerings. This does not require new electives, or even more sections, just more predictable, possibly cyclical offerings.
8. Review the learning goals for the marketing major and consider which ones can be added and/or covered in upper level marketing courses.
9. In the long term – consider focusing strategically on Southern Alberta Agribusiness and food marketing in the way, for example, that the University of Alberta School of Business has a focus on Natural Resources and Energy, as a point of strategic differentiation.
10. Increase promotion of Co-op program. Mention was made of more jobs than applicants for this valuable offering.

### 3. Program Response

In their Program Response, the Self Study Committee addressed the 10 recommendations from the External Review Report:

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<p>1. <i>Explore more formal mechanisms for including alumni in the experiential learning process. The DSB has an active and engaged alumni group. The current switch to digital meetings also allows easier involvement of Alumni located in other cities. In relation to this, perhaps consider how to offer more of the Applied Studies course to increase links with alumni? There is a resource issue in advising so perhaps the course can be offered with one faculty supervisor for several projects (perhaps counting as a course for the instructor after a certain number is reached) to increase capacity.</i></p>	<p>These are good ideas. We will explore these with the people involved with our alumni and Applied Studies program. The Dean and Associate Dean will be included on this review and we will explore the recommendation of a single faculty supervisor for co-ops, who would receive credit for their effort (this currently falls as piecemeal for no instructional credit).</p>
<p>2. <i>Consider adding a social media certification as a component of a class or classes (Google and Facebook) so the students have opportunities to get these extra credentials. There was a consensus among the alumni</i></p>	<p>We are currently doing this in individual courses – Management 3215 (Advertising and Social Media) and 4215 (Advanced Advertising and Social Media). We should, however, institute this more formally in each of these courses. The university now allows micro certifications, so this could be instituted for more formal recognition on graduation.</p>

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*that these two certifications would be highly valuable on the job market and in first jobs. The review team recommends a policy of including these certifications as a portion of marks in particular required courses. This would ensure that all graduates have this job market advantage.*

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| 3. <i>Update curriculum content across all courses (not just within the same courses). There was a sense among alumni and students that there are unnecessary redundancies across courses. For instance, one thing mentioned was too many marketing plans across the classes. There are likely to be others.</i> | We will look into organizing and rationalizing the content across courses. As it stands a Marketing plan is only dictated as part of 2020 (the Intro Marketing course) and 4230 (Marketing Management), though there are instructors who may choose to require a marketing plan that may lead to this feeling of redundancy. But we will look into an overall strategy in requirements for all marketing courses (for example, historically we used 3210 Consumer Behaviour to introduce students to literature reviews, and then built on this in 3220 Marketing Research to demonstrate how a literature review can be an important foundation for marketing research). I believe this could best happen at a Marketing Area Program Assessment Audit. |
| 4. <i>Refresh Marketing Research (3220) and consider its overlap with the Business Research class (2700). A careful removal of overlap might allow analytics to be added without an additional course.</i>   | Since Rhiannon Mesler (Marketing) has taught 3220 and is currently slated to teach 2700, she will be able to provide good insights on how this may be accomplished. One critical issue will be the possibility of teaching analytics with a limited focus on statistics, an area that our marketing students are typically limited in. This should also be discussed by the Area, and would benefit from a Marketing Area Program Planning Retreat.  |
| 5. <i>Remove outdated courses in calendar (e.g. Services Marketing), or set a recurring and predictable schedule for when they will be offered.</i>  | We will do this at a planning retreat and as part of our next program review.  |
| 6. <i>Given that "global mindset" is a program learning goal, Cross Cultural Marketing (4220) should be offered more heavily in rotation.</i>  | We will consider this at our next Area Meeting. Cross Cultural Marketing is something that we had hoped to offer again, especially since it does fit not only with our overall goal, but also with the International major. The previous instructor has limited interest in offering it again, and we are not likely to hire in the immediate future, so this is a good opportunity to consider how we could offer this course.  |
| 7. <i>Future orient course scheduling to improve student planning and increase elective offerings. This does not require new electives, or even more sections, just more predictable, possibly cyclical offerings.</i>   | Most definitely agree with this. As the scheduling has been moved away from the marketing area, and our financial situation is limiting, this may be a challenge. But our area will work toward explaining and developing a more strategic approach to course scheduling.  |
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8. <i>Review the learning goals for the marketing major and consider which ones can be added and/or covered in upper level marketing courses.</i>	This is good advice. We will try to implement it through a Marketing Area Assessment and Planning Retreat.
9. <i>In the long term – consider focusing strategically on Southern Alberta Agribusiness and food marketing in the way, for example, that the University of Alberta School of Business has a focus on Natural Resources and Energy, as a point of strategic differentiation.</i>	Agreed. While we have a major in Agricultural Management we will explore and pursue opportunities to contribute to this program
10. <i>Increase promotion of Co-op program. Mention was made of more jobs than applicants for this valuable offering.</i>	The School has recently hired a new manager in this position and this role will involve exploring more business partnerships and co-op positions. We believe this role will also focus on ways to engage students in the program.

#### 4. Dean's Response

The Dean of the Dhillon School of Business responded to the 10 recommendations from the External Review Report:

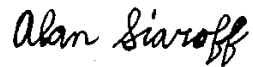
1. <i>Explore more formal mechanisms for including alumni in the experiential learning process. The DSB has an active and engaged alumni group. The current switch to digital meetings also allows easier involvement of Alumni located in other cities. In relation to this, perhaps consider how to offer more of the Applied Studies course to increase links with alumni? There is a resource issue in advising so perhaps the course can be offered with one faculty supervisor for several projects (perhaps counting as a course for the instructor after a certain number is reached) to increase capacity.</i>	It will be important for the Marketing Area to work proactively with DSB Link and the University's offices of alumni affairs and co-op and career services to explore how they can build stronger alumni engagement and connections into programming. The notion of having a single faculty member responsible for this, however, does not relate well with the notion of community engagement and impact. This needs to be a collective responsibility, and the participation of all faculty in applied and experiential learning activities which has been endorsed on a school-wide basis. We will, however, need to find a way to better account for and recognise faculty participation in these activities as part of faculty workloads. The Dean's office will work on the latter during the 21/22 academic year. The Marketing Area will look to explore alumni engagement opportunities at their next faculty retreat as 'experiential learning' is a key strategic goal of all programming within the Dhillon School.
2. <i>Consider adding a social media certification as a component of a class or classes (Google and Facebook) so the students have opportunities to get these extra</i>	The Marketing Area is strongly encouraged to consider the requirements for and methods of assessment associated with different social media certifications and see where they can possibly be built more formally into the curriculum. This would probably be best presented as a curriculum mapping exercise against key external certifications (e.g.,

<p><i>credentials. There was a consensus among the alumni that these two certifications would be highly valuable on the job market and in first jobs. The review team recommends a policy of including these certifications as a portion of marks in particular required courses. This would ensure that all graduates have this job market advantage.</i></p>	<p>Google/Facebook etc.) to identify gaps and opportunities, and then develop a plan for how and where these could possibly be addressed within the curriculum and in co-curricular learning opportunities. This is similar to what the Finance Area has done in mapping their curriculum against the CFA designation. The Marketing Area will explore this during the 1st year of this post review cycle.</p>
<p>3. <i>Update curriculum content across all courses (not just within the same courses). There was a sense among alumni and students that there are unnecessary redundancies across courses. For instance, one thing mentioned was too many marketing plans across the classes. There are likely to be others.</i></p>	<p>The Marketing Area will review its curriculum portfolio as part of a major curriculum mapping exercise. It may be that different courses emphasise different aspects of marketing plans, which build on the introductory nature as presented in MGT 2020. It may be appropriate to consider how students build skills in different aspects or dimensions of marketing plans through successive courses, which are then returned to in a collective fashion in MGT 4230. The Marketing Area will explore this during the 1st year of this post review cycle, and make recommendations for action during the 2nd follow-up to the review.</p>
<p>4. <i>Refresh Marketing Research (3220) and consider its overlap with the Business Research class (2700). A careful removal of overlap might allow analytics to be added without an additional course.</i></p>	<p>The DSB Curriculum Committee alongside the Marketing Area will review these two courses to ensure they are substantially different. The growing and significant relevance of data analytics to all disciplines cannot be overstated, and it will be vital that the Marketing Area and the wider school ensure course resources are used effectively to avoid unnecessary duplication, and build and expand concepts (see note 3 on marketing plans). The Marketing Area will explore this during the 1st year of this post review cycle, and report its findings and recommendations to the DSB Curriculum Committee during the 1st year of this post review cycle.</p>
<p>5. <i>Remove outdated courses in calendar (e.g. Services Marketing), or set a recurring and predictable schedule for when they will be offered.</i></p>	<p>The Marketing Area will review their entire course catalogue and develop a plan that will lead to the elimination of redundant courses where appropriate, and develop a two-year rolling schedule to ensure remaining courses are offered on a regular cycle to facilitate student enrolment against faculty availability. Not sure why 'Services Marketing' however is singled out as 'outdated' when the service industry and the marketing of services represents a significant element of current and future economic activity. The Marketing Area will explore this during the 1st year of this post review cycle, and report its findings and recommendations to the DSB Curriculum Committee during the 1st year of this post review cycle.</p>
<p>6. <i>Given that "global mindset" is a program learning goal, Cross Cultural Marketing (4220) should be offered more heavily in rotation.</i></p>	<p>Similar to the curriculum issues noted in the previous points, the Marketing Area will review their entire course catalogue and develop a plan that will lead to a regular schedule of relevant course offerings. Where courses are required for other majors (and as possible optional electives for others), consistency in offering becomes quite important. The Marketing Area will explore this during the 1st year of this post</p>

	<p>review cycle, and report its findings and recommendations to the DSB Curriculum Committee during the 1st year of this post review cycle.</p>
<p>7. <i>Future orient course scheduling to improve student planning and increase elective offerings. This does not require new electives, or even more sections, just more predictable, possibly cyclical offerings.</i></p>	<p>As noted above, the Marketing Area will review their entire course catalogue and develop a plan that will lead to a regular schedule of relevant course offerings. The scheduling of courses has been centralized in DSB to remove some of the burdens and challenges associated with faculty engagement, and to help ensure that non-Area needs are taken into account in course scheduling. The Marketing Area will undertake the course mapping and review process during the 1st year of this post review cycle, and report its findings and recommendations to the DSB Curriculum Committee during the 1st year of this post review cycle.</p>
<p>8. <i>Review the learning goals for the marketing major and consider which ones can be added and/or covered in upper level marketing courses.</i></p>	<p>The Marketing Area will be tasked with reviewing its 'major specific' learning outcomes and see where they are best addressed across the marketing core curriculum. If all the Area's learning outcomes can be achieved through the introductory marketing course, then it begs the question why any other marketing courses are required to complete the major, implying the remaining courses are all electives. As that is 3</p> <p>highly unlikely to be the case, as part of the Area's course mapping and review process, during the 1st year of this post review cycle, the Area will examine the distribution of its learning outcomes and report its findings and recommended changes to the DSB Curriculum Committee by the end of the 1st year of this post review cycle.</p>
<p>9. <i>In the long term – consider focusing strategically on Southern Alberta Agribusiness and food marketing in the way, for example, that the University of Alberta School of Business has a focus on Natural Resources and Energy, as a point of strategic differentiation.</i></p>	<p>The Marketing Area will be encouraged to examine how it can contribute to the overall success of the School through learning opportunities in marketing which are relevant to other specializations within the School. It will be important for all discipline Areas to pursue collaboration and examine opportunities for cross-over and specialisation in functional areas of business. In this particular case it could be ensuring B2B marketing is explored in more detail, and using AgBusiness cases where appropriate. As part of the Area's curriculum mapping and review activities, these opportunities will be explored, with recommended changes presented to the DSB Curriculum Committee during the 1st year of this post review cycle.</p>
<p>10. <i>Increase promotion of Co-op program. Mention was made of more jobs than applicants for this valuable offering.</i></p>	<p>It remains perplexing why co-op education is seen in such a passive light at the University of Lethbridge, when co-op education at other universities in Canada is seen as delivering a competitive advantage across all disciplines. Indeed, co-op offerings are over subscribed in most programs at other institutions, with student demand creating wait-lists to enrol and placing a premium on student entry requirements. The focus on co-op is clearly a bigger than just the responsibility of the Marketing Area, and will need a more concerted effort to develop and understand how co-op can be enhanced. However, it will be important for Marketing (and other Areas) to be engaged with their alumni (see point 1 above) to expand interest and opportunity in support of growing the co-op program. The Marketing Area will be encouraged to examine this during their curriculum review activities, and report back to the DSB Curriculum Committee and School Executive Committee on how this facet of experiential learning can be enhanced.</p>

The Academic Quality Assurance Committee is satisfied that the Marketing program 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alan Siaroff". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Alan Siaroff  
Chair, Academic Quality Assurance Committee  
Professor, Department of Political Science

cc Erasmus Okine, PhD., PAS, FICN  
Provost & Vice-President (Academic)