

Disaster and Emergency Management, BDEM, MDEM

School of Administrative Studies, Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies

Cyclical Program Review – 2007 - 2014

Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan

Reported to Joint-Committee on Quality Assurance: April 18, 2016

Program Description

The Undergraduate Certificate was established in 2005. The Master of Disaster and Emergency Management was launched in 2007 and in 2010 Bachelor of Disaster and Emergency Management (BDEM) degree, with various options, was established and is broadly conceptualized into three areas of study: 1) disaster and emergency management, 2) management, and 3) interdisciplinary studies.

Program	Accepts 2014	Enrolment FTES 2014	Degrees Awarded 2014
BDEM	22	69	Hons 7; 90-credit 9; Certificate 11
MDEM	27	27	29

Reviewers appointed by the Vice-Provost Academic:

Jane Kushma, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Emergency Management, Jacksonville State University, Alabama

Joanne Nigg, Ph.D., Professor Emerita, Sociology and Graduate Program in Disaster Science and Management, University of Delaware,

Gabriella Colussi Arthur, Ph.D., Italian Studies, Department of Languages, Literatures and Linguistics, York University

Site Visit: October 26 and 27, 2015

The Reviewers met with Vice-Provost Academic, Alice Pitt, Dean/AVP Graduate, Barbara Crow, Vice-Dean, Kim Michasiw, School of Administrative Studies Director, Peggy Ng, Graduate Program Director, Niru Nirupama, Undergraduate Program Director, Marcela Porporato, and the Coordinator for BDEM, Ali Asgary. In addition they met with the incoming Graduate Program Director, David Etkin. The reviewers had an opportunity to meet with the faculty members and part-time faculty members, university librarians, students from the certificate and undergraduate programs as well as graduate students. Visits to administrative offices, program offices, a computer lab, and classrooms were included in the itinerary for the two days.

Outcome:

The Joint-Committee on Quality Assurance concluded that the Decanal response adequately addressed the review recommendations. Progress on the recommendations will be included in the Follow-up Report due October 31, 2017. The next Cyclical Program Review will begin in the Fall of 2022 and be aligned with the other management programs offered by the School of Administrative Studies.



Strengths:

- The academic programs emphasize interdisciplinarity, experiential learning, innovation, and applied research to meet the critical needs of the rapidly evolving profession of DEM.
- The programs also play a very important service role by promoting disaster risk reduction and the application of evidence-based policies and practices in the process.
- The external review report noted that *“Top-notch support and resources are available from the York University Libraries.”*
- The undergraduate program delivery is augmented by part-time faculty members who are highly regarded and experienced practitioners, which not only lends credibility to the program in terms of its relevance but also helps students to better identify with the profession.
- A unique feature of the graduate program is the requirement for students to participate in an “overnight, annual, mandatory, and hands-on emergency exercise,” permitting faculty to assess emergency management competencies and the acquisition of skills, and provide informal feedback to students.
- Faculty members have included students in a wide variety of research and professional activities and can boast of numerous publications co-authored with students.

Opportunities for Enhancement:

- The existing curriculum should be examined with respect to student engagement (e.g., more summer offerings, first year course for undergraduates), curricular gaps and/or duplication, and pedagogical approaches. In the undergraduate program the flexibility and student choice to customize individual degree plans is laudable, but requires careful academic advising.
- The enrolment and registration process for students is hampered by the fact that BDEM courses are not listed separately but fall under the heading of ADMS. A separate rubric for DEM courses would help this situation.
- Given the overlap of courses in the three areas of study in the undergraduate program, the framework and design of the program should be revisited and core requirements reassessed with attention to greater specification of learning outcomes and assessment strategies.
- In the graduate program there is potential for overlap in the core courses. A review of the conceptual framework for the design of the program will determine whether core requirements are adequate to assure consistent achievement of learning outcomes, or whether additional core courses might be indicated. In addition processes associated with MRP supervision and review/acceptance should be revamped.
- A review of the governance and administrative support of the program should be undertaken to ensure pursue important strategic partnerships and collaborations on a university-wide basis and beyond.
- Ways to create a greater sense of community and more active engagement within the program, as well as with the broader university community, should be explored.

Dean’s Implementation Plan (selected):

- A comprehensive curriculum review of the undergraduate, including core courses, will be undertaken by the Department, with a focus on articulating clear domains of practice, essential disciplinary knowledge bases, and core knowledge requirements.
- The Department will establish clear documentation of how students will be introduced to the learning outcomes for the program, how these outcomes will be assessed and a clear articulation of how degree level expectations and student-learning outcomes have been articulated in the new curriculum.
- The Department should ensure there is more practice based material in particular subject areas (such as an emergency preparedness course) and strengthening connection to the practitioner and stakeholder community.
- Measures to eliminate student challenges with enrolment and registration are already underway,

including the establishment of a rubric for DEM and careful consideration of access to courses aligned with the program.

Action	First Responsibility	Final Responsibility	Timeline
Course Rubric Change	Department	Department	September 2016
CAS Filtering	Department	Department	September 2016
Math Requirement	Department	Department	September 2016
Curriculum Review and Revival	Department working with the Teaching Commons	Department with Review by the Dean's office	Significant Progress by the 18-month review
Development of "practice-based" material/stronger connection to the stakeholder community	Department working with Stakeholders	Department in consultation with the Dean's office	September 2017

- At the graduate level, the curriculum will be reviewed and consideration given to core and capstone courses, as well as intentional service learning and practical experience.
- The Dean's Office, along with the Program, will consider the administrative structure of the Disaster and Emergency Management programs, with careful consideration of both the resource implications and the profile of the program in the York University context.

Action	First Responsibility	Final Responsibility	Timeline
Develop a core course and capstone course	Graduate Program	Department in consultation with the Dean's office re: resources	September 2017
Develop more "practice" based graduate curriculum	Graduate Program	Department in consultation with the Dean's office re: resources	September 2017
Doctoral Degree	Graduate Program	Dean's office review of proposal	September 2018 (if at all)

Alice J. Pitt
 Vice-Provost Academic
 York University