

Children’s Studies, Humanities Department, 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: June 6, 2016

Program Description

The Children’s Studies program began in the 2007-2008 academic year. It is an interdisciplinary program situated in the Department of Humanities, offered as an Honours BA only. Teaching and research by the faculty of the program focus on fields of children’s childhood, youth studies, children’s rights, children and youth cultures, historical and global diversity in constructions of childhood and youth. Studies include representations of children and youth in literature, music, theatre, dance, television, new media, art, play, games and sport, as well as philosophy, religion, politics, law and history.

Program	Accepts 2014	Enrolment FTES 2014	Degrees Awarded 2014
BA	197	374	65

Reviewers appointed by the Vice-Provost Academic:

Dr. Karen Wells, Assistant Dean, Geography, Environment and Development Studies, Reader in International Development and Childhood Studies, Birkbeck, University of London

Dr. Sarah Flicker, Associate Professor & Community Arts Practice Cert. Coordinator, Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University

Site Visit:

The reviewers met with Alice Pitt, Vice-Provost Academic, the Vice-Dean of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies, Kim Michasiw, Humanities Chair Andrea Davis, Peter Cummings, Program Coordinator and the incoming Program Coordinator Cheryl Chowdy. In addition the reviewers met with the University and Associate University librarians, program faculty members, and students registered in the program.



Outcome:

The Joint-Committee on Quality Assurance reviewed the documentation that was generated by the cyclical program review, including the Dean's Implementation. The Committee members concluded that the Decanal response and implementation plan adequately addressed the review recommendations. Progress on the recommendations will be included in the Follow-up Report due December 2017. The next cyclical program review will begin in the Fall of 2022.

Strengths:

- Faculty members in this program are active researchers.
- The program emphasizes social justice, one of York's core values, and students who want to work with children and/or children's services are drawn to the program for this reason.
- Students have the opportunity to develop a broad range of communication skills.
- The library resources available to students are impressive.
- The Program Level Outcomes have been articulated and the curriculum has been mapped to these outcomes.

Opportunities for Enhancement:

- The Department and Program need to clarify what it means that this Children's Studies is grounded in a humanities perspective and when and how the social sciences perspectives are included.
- Interdisciplinarity as it relates to this program needs to be more clearly defined to enhance student understanding of the different perspectives brought to bear on children and childhood.
- Social justice for children should be added as an area of focus, and, in general, greater curriculum coherence developed.
- It is imperative that there be consistent grading by contract faculty. The program should consider the implications of reliance on contract faculty, particularly for capstone course.
- Learning objectives and their associated assessment methods could be more tightly aligned and perhaps simplified. This would help address concerns about duplication, particularly in first and second year courses.
- Issues with retention need to be addressed. Clearer program goals would reduce misunderstandings for students interested in early childhood education. The high GPA required in first and second year courses contributes to attrition between first and second year and should be reconsidered.
- The academic leadership of the program should be strengthened and a more strategic direction for the program developed.

Implementation Plan (selected)

The Dean's Implementation plan focuses on three major areas as outlined below.

Curriculum Clarity and Renewal

The program must focus on the curriculum coherence rather than full-time faculty research specializations. The two lists of optional courses must be revisited to ensure greater clarity for students. Discussions about the curriculum and the high number of withdrawals should include full-time faculty, contract faculty and TAs.

Action	First Responsibility	Final Responsibility	Timeline
Reviewing 1970 and 2690	Program	Program	January 1 st , 2017
Reviving 4 th Year course offerings	Program	Program	January 1 st , 2017
Examining Experiential Education	Program	Program	April 2017
Review A and B lists of optional courses	Program	Program	January 1 st 2017
Hold a "teaching stakeholder" meeting of the program to review offerings	Program	Program	Fall 2016
Examine the value of creating a 90 credit BA Program	Program	Dean's Office	Fall 2016

Learning Objectives

The Program should review its learning objectives and how they are implemented and assessed in student's work. This work could be done in conjunction with the curriculum review outlined above. It is expected that the program will complete this review in the Fall of 2016.

Resources

Prior to any request for additional resources for undergraduate or for any potential graduate program, the program must clearly articulate its curriculum goals and the learning outcomes and assessments of students.

The Dean's implementation plan includes a commitment to moving all faculty to one location by September 2017.

Alice J. Pitt
Vice-Provost Academic
York University