



18- MONTH FOLLOW-UP REPORT to the FAR-IP for the Masters (MA or MSc) in Interdisciplinary Health (INDH) AND PhD in Rural and Northern Health (IRNH)

PREAMBLE:

The IQAP report was submitted to ACAPLAN in May 2021. The 18-month follow-up report for Senate was originally due in Nov 2022. Due to the CCAA, the program requested a one-year extension. On March 1, 2022, we were granted that extension by the Vice President, Academic and Provost to Nov 2023. All timelines listed below have been adjusted by one year from the original plan presented to ACAPLAN in May 2021. Also, please note that the review was conducted pre-CCAA, and the response and proposed follow-up were written in the early days of the CCAA. Since then, the School of Rural and Northern Health (SRNH), the home of the INDH and IRNH programs, was disbanded. Additionally, at this time, only two of the five SRNH faculty remain, and one faculty member is now the graduate coordinator for both the IRNH and INDH programs. As a result of this upheaval, some concessions had to be made regarding follow-up, which are reflected in the actions below.

NOTE: The original plan refers to the “Dean of Health”. Post-CCAA, this position is now the Dean of Education and Health. As well, the original plan refers to the Dean of Graduate Studies. This position no longer exists; its responsibilities fall under the Vice President, Research and Graduate Studies. Below, these titles have been left unchanged to reflect the original plan.

1. MARKETING

| Recommendation | Proposed Follow-up | Responsibility for Leading Follow-up | Timeline | Status Update |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|---|-----------------|----------------------|
|-----------------------|---------------------------|---|-----------------|----------------------|

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---------|--|
| 1. Provide resources to expand and improve program marketing strategies to take full advantage of the opportunity to grow the program. | Create virtual graduate program fair for the Faculty of Health targeted especially for students in third and fourth years | Dean of Health with Liaison and individual program coordinators, Graduate Studies and Alumni office as relevant | Ongoing | <p>COMPLETE/ONGOING – Program Coordinator has attended and provided written information to 4th Year classes (HK, Gerontology, Psychology, Sociology) to provide information regarding INDH graduate studies. Program coordinator has also created an information slide deck for INDH and IRNH to share broadly (e.g.. graduate coordinators in nursing, human kinetics, Orthophonie, psychology, social work, science communication, and Indigenous relations were asked to share IRNH PhD info slide deck). Virtual Graduate Fair presentations for IRNH and INDH were delivered January 24, 2022. Google ads for INDH and IRNH were posted Feb 2022 and January 2023. Postings were also posted on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. Record applications were received for the 2022-23 academic year. 2023-2024 has a record number of new students who accepted offers of admission.</p> <p>From Graduate Studies Jan 2024: -Graduate Studies has established a Digital Viewbook for graduate programs. The Viewbook is widely distributed and has information about Interdisciplinary Health and Rural and Northern Health programs - Graduate Studies attends Laurentian Open Houses; Ontario University Fair; Graduate Program University Fairs (started to participate in 2023) to promote graduate programs</p> |
|---|---|---|---------|--|

| | | | | |
|--|--|---------------------|----------------|---|
| | | | | <p>- Laurentian promoted Graduate Studies and mentioned the Rural and Northern Health program in sponsored content distributed throughout Northern ON. Link to content for Thunder Bay:</p> <p>https://www.baytoday.ca/spotlight/pursue-your-dream-the-transformative-value-of-a-graduate-studies-degree-at-laurentian-university-7909433</p> |
| 2. Encourage active faculty involvement in recruiting | <p>i. Continue to develop robust programs of research that include funding for development of HQP, and with engagement in the field that ensures an informal recruitment network.</p> <p>ii. Add publications to LUZone, Research Gate etc. where they would be accessible to Internet searchers</p> | Program Coordinator | Ongoing | <p>i. COMPLETE/ONGOING – Faculty continue to conduct high-quality research and recruit. A loss of core faculty due to CCAA has limited the supervisory pool. A recruitment drive for supervisors from ALL faculties across the institution was conducted in Nov 2021. As a result, 16 new faculty were accredited for supervision or co-supervision in IRNH and INDH. Three of those new faculty had applicants for Sept 2022. Recruitment of new supervisory faculty continues as an ongoing activity</p> <p>ii. COMPLETE – Major papers and theses from INDH and IRNH are now routinely added to LUZone</p> |
| 3. Track and promote alumni success stories as means of marketing the program | Initiate discussions with Alumni Office | Program Coordinator | September 2022 | <p>ONGOING – additionally, the program maintains ongoing contact with Alumni, especially in the IRNH PhD program.</p> <p>From Graduate Studies Jan 2024:</p> |

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|-----------|---|
| | | | | -Marketing and communications did a story to celebrate graduates from the PhD in Rural and Northern Health https://laurentian.ca/news/phd-rural-northern-health-celebrates-graduate-milestone |
| 4. Keep website current | i. Make full profile on website a condition of a faculty member's association with program ii. Follow up with administrative assistant | Program Coordinator | Ongoing | i. COMPLETE/ONGOING – Faculty are regularly reminded to keep their profile updated. For those with no profile a very brief listing of research and a link to their Google Scholar profiles has been added. Additionally, students contacting the program coordinator regarding supervisors are encouraged to examine their research interests on Google Scholar. ii. COMPLETE/ONGOING – Program coordinator has made (and will continue to make) website updates for INDH and IRNH rather than the administrative assistant. |
| 5. Consider promoting the graduate program via social media. | Follow up with LU marketing unit | Dean of Health with Dean of Graduate Studies | June 2022 | COMPLETE - INDH and IRNH have a Facebook page and are promoted via the Program Coordinator's Twitter account. Google ads were posted in Feb 2022 and January 2023. |

2. ADMISSIONS

| Recommendation | Proposed Follow-up | Responsibility for Leading Follow-up | Timeline | Action |
|---|---|--------------------------------------|-----------|--|
| 1. Explore the implications of using | Discuss with Graduate Studies—policy should | Program Coordinator | June 2022 | COMPLETE – WES will continue to be the “gold standard” and other options for |

| | | | | |
|--|---|---------------------|---------|--|
| WES vs ICAS in admission assessments. | affect all Graduate Studies programs | | | students would be decided on a case-by-case basis as done previously. |
| 2. Explore ways to improve financial support for incoming students to increase competitiveness with programs in other universities. | Discuss possibilities with Graduate Studies, bearing in mind that members of program also share some responsibility | Program Coordinator | Ongoing | <p>INCOMPLETE/ONGOING – CCAA has resulted in fewer GTAs and scholarships being available.</p> <p>From Graduate Studies Jan 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - all full-time PhD students with at least a 75% average are guaranteed a GTA - full-time Masters students in the thesis stream with at least a 75% average receive a GTA - most full-time Masters students with at least a 75% average in the Masters major paper stream receive a GTA - graduate students in the research stream can also apply for a \$1000 summer fellowship - graduate students also have access to a travel award when presenting at a conference - Deans are allocated Entrance Scholarships to support Masters and PhD students - Deans are also allocated International Fee Waivers to support full-time graduate students |

3. CURRICULUM

| Recommendation | Proposed Follow-up | Responsibility for Leading Follow-up | Timeline | Action |
|----------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|----------|--------|
|----------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|----------|--------|

| | | | | |
|--|---|---------------------|---|--|
| 1. Embed more Indigenous content in core courses to fulfill “core competency” (“Capacity to integrate Indigenous perspectives, community engagement and integration of strength-based approach in health research”) added in May 2019, | i. Make IRNH 6306 – Indigenous Perspectives in Health and Wellness a required course. ii. Ensure Indigenous learning outcomes are clearly reflected in all core courses iii. Contact Master’s of Indigenous Relations (MIR) Program to inquire if IRNH students with the appropriate prerequisite background may enrol in MIRE 5016 Indigenous Methods. | Program Coordinator | i. June 2023 ii. September 2022 iii. September 2022 | i. INCOMPLETE – with the loss of the CRC in Indigenous Health, the program no longer has an Indigenous faculty member to teach this course. Until the IRNH program is able to guarantee stable instruction for this course, it will not be made a requirement. SKHS has requested a new faculty position to be filled by an Indigenous scholar with expertise in health. ii. COMPLETE – Required readings and content in the area of Indigenous health and perspectives has been added to all IRNH and most INDH required courses. iii. COMPLETE – MIR has opened courses to IRNH and INDH students. |
| 2. Revise research courses with a view to: i) clarifying laddering between the master’s and PhD level courses, ii) include approaches for integration of sex and gender in health research across all pillars of health research, and iii) include models / approaches to knowledge translation | i. Undertake a coordinated curriculum review and mapping exercise in conjunction with the INDH Master’s program. This process will include all core and elective courses in our programs and will ensure that sex and gender are considered. ii. Investigate the availability of on-line modules offered for researchers, which the | Program Coordinator | June 2023 | i. COMPLETE – Research course content has been reviewed between INDH and IRNH to ensure progressive development. CIHR Gender-based analysis modules, a three-hour workshop on gender-based analysis, and a KT and communication workshop have been added to IRNH required courses. ii. COMPLETE – a series of additional on-line modules/webinars have been added to IRNH courses (e.g., TCPS2 Research Ethics Tutorial and Certificate; D2L module Indigenous Cultural Humility Training) |

| | | | | |
|--|---|---------------------|-----------|---|
| (e.g., integrated KT) to support evidence-based changes / improvements in policies and practices to enhance health and healthcare that community-based stakeholders were looking for. | students will be required to complete as part of the current course structure, but may do so at no additional costs to either the student or the program, and may complete the learning at their own pace within the first term of the program. | | | |
| 3. Examine course titles and descriptions for congruence to core concepts of the degree | Include as part of curriculum review | Program Coordinator | June 2023 | COMPLETE – we believe that the course titles and descriptions are congruent with core concepts of the degrees. Changes to the description and title of IRNH 6216 are currently proceeding to CELP. |
| 4. More frequent or better offering of electives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Work with the Dean of the Faculty of Health to incorporate electives into annual workloads and course offerings on a cyclical basis ii. Provide students with an annual list of graduate level electives available to them across the Laurentian campus | Program Coordinator | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. ONGOING – continue to work with Director and Dean to ensure appropriate numbers of electives are available to allow students to meet program requirements ii. COMPLETE/ONGOING – All incoming and returning students are annually provided with a list of potential electives prior to Fall registration. Additionally, a new course has been added (INDH5706 Program Evaluation), which will be offered for the first time in Winter 2024. <p>From Graduate Studies Jan 2024: -The Office of Graduate Studies also maintains a list of graduate courses that are open to any graduate student. The list is</p> |

| | | | | |
|--|---|---------------------|-----------|--|
| | | | | updated at the beginning of each term and shared with graduate program coordinators at Graduate Council. This has also increased the number of electives available to students |
| 5. Revise the rigid timetable and procedures for the PhD comprehensive examination and proposal defense | While the timetable is officially rigid, the program is flexible in allowing deviations—so make such flexibility official (i.e., outline in handbook) | Program Coordinator | June 2022 | COMPLETE – students are made aware of flexibility on a case-by-case basis during the orientation and all courses. We have not made changes to the handbook as the handbook reflects the typical timetable and not exceptions. From the start of the program, students have always been able to request timeline extensions and these have been granted in all cases. |

4. STUDENT ISSUES

| Recommendation | Proposed Follow-up | Responsibility for Leading Follow-up | Timeline | Action |
|--|---|--|-----------------------|---|
| 1. Faculty/course instructors must provide instruction on culturally appropriate methodologies and epistemologies without relying on Indigenous students to provide this instruction to their peers | Ensure participation in the cultural safety training that will be provided for all SRNH core faculty, Master's teaching faculty, and Master's students. | Program Coordinator | June 2022 and ongoing | The D2L module for Indigenous Cultural Humility Training is incorporated as a requirement in core courses. As of January 2023, all teaching faculty in the IRNH and INDH program have completed the D2L module. |
| 2. Examine the issue of the current tuition structure and its financial implications | i. Consider the practicality of a “pay by course” option | Dean of Health with Dean Graduate Studies and Executive Team | June 2022 | From Graduate Studies Jan 2024: i) The VPR and Registrar meet annually to discuss potential |

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| <p>for part-time students (versus a program fee structure when courses are finished, and students are completing their theses pay a continuation fee).</p> | <p>ii. Discuss support for part-time students with Development Office with a view to establishing targeted scholarships</p> | | | <p>changes to the way tuition is charged for programs. Course-based masters programs are charged by course. Thesis-stream programs are charged by term. It is important to remember that students in thesis stream programs have access to scholarship programs, GTAs, and international fee waivers. Students should also be reminded they can request to go inactive or register part-time if they are not able to complete work to advance their studies. Laurentian also has a tuition refund schedule for students in a thesis stream to provide a partial tuition refund for the term in which they are graduating.</p> <p>https://laurentian.ca/office/graduate-studies/graduate-refund-schedule</p> <p>Note: - the person responsible should be the Registrar and Provost.</p> <p>- any changes to the fee structure for thesis streamed Masters or PhD programs would have implications across all graduate programs</p> <p>ii) STATUS UNKNOWN: Lead responsibility for Activity: Dean of</p> |
|---|---|--|--|---|

| | | | | |
|---|---|---------------------|----------------|---|
| | | | | Health with Dean Graduate Studies and Executive Team – Additionally, Advancement should be listed as a lead responsibility here as Advancement leads fundraising at the University |
| 3. Improve course scheduling to better accommodate part-time students and improve networking | i. Examine the potential of offering some courses in the evenings. ii. Meet with the part-time students to get further feedback on how the program may be able to address this issue | Program Coordinator | June 2023 | i. COMPLETE – Based on feedback from our students in 2021, programs moved to remote synchronous to allow for participation and improve student access. Evening courses will be considered depending on the annual complement of international students as differences in time zones may make evening offerings inaccessible to these students. ii. See above |
| 4. Better accommodate students studying in Indigenous communities who often take more time to progress through the program given the requirement to work with the community. | i. As part of the curriculum mapping and review process, current time frames for full and part-time students will be examined with respect to some of the challenges that are part of community-based involvement. ii. Make the case that there is a need for special funds to support students conducting | Program Coordinator | September 2022 | i. COMPLETE – Students are made aware of flexibility on a case-by-case basis during the orientation and all courses. From the start of the program, students have always been able to ask for extensions to timelines, and these have been granted in all cases. ii. ONGOING – We agree and will continue to advocate for student funding. |

| | | | | |
|---|--|-----------------------|----------------|--|
| | rural and northern health research. | | | |
| 5. Graduate Studies must develop clearly articulated policies, including ones for GTAs, that are accessible in written form for reference by students, faculty, and staff. | Consult Dean of Graduate Studies and work out plan of action | Dean Graduate Studies | September 2022 | <p>COMPLETE/ONGOING: Lead responsibility for Activity: Dean Graduate Studies</p> <p>From Graduate Studies Jan 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The VPR is unclear on what this action requires - GTAs have a collective agreement through CUPE - Every student awarded a GTA has a "Duty Set" form that is completed by their GTA work supervisor. The duty set is seen by the faculty member and the student and it indicates the number of hours estimated for tasks/duties - Graduate Council updated the Graduate Student regulations which were passed at Senate (Dec. 2023) - Graduate Council is also updating GTA regulations to align with the Graduate Regulations. |

5. FACULTY AND STAFF ISSUES

| Recommendation | Proposed Follow-up | Responsibility for Leading Follow-up | Timeline | Action |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|----------|--|
| 1. Develop strategy to implement some team teaching | Dean of the Faculty of Health to plan workloads that could be mutually beneficial for the SRNH and another unit. | Dean of Health ¹ | Ongoing | INCOMPLETE/ONGOING – Given loss of faculty due to CCAA, team teaching is not possible at this time. The program will continue to heavily utilize guest lectures to ensure students have interdisciplinary and breadth of perspectives. |

¹ This position is now the Dean of Education and Health.

| | | | | |
|--|--|---------------------|-----------------------|---|
| 2. Fill anticipated vacancies due to retirements and expand teaching / supervision capacity in the future with tenure-track faculty | Prepare case for Dean of Health | Program Coordinator | As required | ONGOING – With CCAA, this has now become the responsibility of the Director of the School of Kinesiology and Health Sciences (SKHS). An SKHS Committee for faculty renewal has been established on which the Program Coordinator is a member. |
| 3. Improve orientation and create accessible on-line policies for supervisors outside the unit to enable them to support students' progression and success through the program. | Consult supervisors as to specific needs and develop plan to meet them | Program Coordinator | June 2022 and ongoing | COMPLETE/ONGOING – All supervisory faculty are given access to the shared program Google drive where all policies, student handbook and all forms are provided. All supervisors are invited to student orientation sessions in IRNH and INDH. All new supervisors are sent the Student Handbook directly. |
| 4. Ensure only active faculty are listed as supervisors | <p>i. Review the list of accredited faculty members.</p> <p>ii. Re-engage with less active external faculty members.</p> <p>iii. Invite new faculty members to contribute to the program in an effort to increase supervisory capacity in the program.</p> | Program Coordinator | June 2022 and ongoing | <p>i. COMPLETE – this list is confirmed annually</p> <p>ii. COMPLETE/ONGOING – program notifications and invitations to events are regularly sent to supervisory faculty.</p> <p>iii. COMPLETE – Nov 2021 Coordinator sent a letter (via all Deans) to all faculty to invite all who have interest in supervising and committee membership in IRNH and INDH programs. As a result, 16 new faculty were accredited for supervision or co-supervision. Three of those new faculty had applicants for Sept 2022.</p> |

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| | iv. invite all faculty members affiliated with the program and potential new faculty members to a mini-retreat to provide updates about the program and to reconnect with the members to enhance engagement with the program. Ensure documents related to program policies are shared and available. | | | iv. INCOMPLETE – Due to CCAA and COVID-19, time availability and ability to meet face-to-face has been significantly limited for all faculty. Engaged with faculty via email instead and will try to engage in-person post-CCAA. In addition, all faculty were invited to the orientation sessions for both the INDH and IRNH programs. |
|--|--|--|--|---|

6. LIBRARY SUPPORT

| Recommendation | Proposed Follow-up | Responsibility for Leading Follow-up | Timeline | Action |
|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| 1. Hire a data specialist librarian to support researchers in this program. | Work with University Librarian | Deans of Health and Graduate Studies | June 2022 and ongoing | COMPLETE – Dan Scott is the LU librarian responsible for DLI and data needs. |

7. PLANNING

| Recommendation | Proposed Follow-up | Responsibility for Leading Follow-up | Timeline | Action |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|-----------|---|
| 1. Incorporate alternate modes of delivery on an | As part of the curriculum review, discuss the potential of expanding | Program Coordinator | June 2023 | COMPLETE – Programs have been moved permanently to remote synchronous delivery to improve accessibility. This was |

| | | | | |
|--|---|---------------------|-----------|--|
| ongoing basis, even after the pandemic restrictions are lifted, providing access to students in remote areas using flexible means so that even those with limitations on Wi-Fi, for example, can participate fully. | the “regular” program delivery (i.e., delivery not determined by the pandemic) to include synchronous remote delivery or a hybrid of synchronous and in-person delivery (potentially including one-week intensives or delivery in time blocks). | | | completed for the 2022-2023 academic year. |
| 2. Create ladder between Masters and Doctoral programs | Develop procedures for laddering as part of curriculum review | Program Coordinator | June 2023 | COMPLETE – Program course content has been reviewed to ensure progressive development, particularly in research methods. |

Respectfully Submitted,



September 21, 2023

Elizabeth Wenghofer, PhD

Graduate Coordinator, Master’s in Interdisciplinary Health & PhD in Rural and Northern Health

APPENDIX A

Additional supporting information for clarification RE 18-month IQAP follow-up report for the PhD Rural and Northern Health and for Masters of Interdisciplinary Health

Section 4.2: In addition to the VPR and registrar consultation on fees, any other relevant offices needed for tuition fees should also be consulted (i.e. Institutional Planning).

Section 5.2: The "committee for faculty renewal" is the SKHS academic council. All faculty renewal decisions have been made by the council as a whole. Council is composed of 18 members plus some representative votes (1 for staff, 1 for students). Council meets once per month.