

Adult Basic Education

Faculty of Education, Community and Human
Development

Dean's Summary

Submitted by:

Dr. Tracy Ryder-Glass, Acting Dean, Faculty of Education,
Community and Human Development

Accepted by:

Senate in February 2022

Academic Planning and Priorities Committee in January 2022

MEMORANDUM

Academic Planning and Priorities Committee

APPC Chair: James Mandigo

APPC Assistant: Melinda Saretzky

TO: Joanne MacLean, Chair, Senate

FROM: James Mandigo, Chair, Academic Planning and Priorities Committee

CC: Tracy Ryder Glass, Acting Dean, Faculty of Education, Community and Human Development;
Mary Saudelli, Associate Dean, Professional Studies; Greg St. Hilaire, Department Head, UUP;
Claire Carolan, Associate Director, PDQA

DATE: February 10, 2022

RE: Adult Basic Education Program Review

The Adult Basic Education Program within the Faculty of Education, Community, and Human Development (formerly Faculty of Access and Continuing Education) underwent a program review in 2020-21. The Academic Planning and Priorities Committee reviewed all of the documentation related to the program review and accepted them at its January 19, 2022 meeting and recommend to Senate for approval.

The external review report recognized the department's collaborative efforts to ensure each student's disparate needs and challenges are addressed to ensure student success across the disciplines. The external report also noted that "Often ABEUP students are amongst the best prepared students entering university studies." APPC noted that recruitment is being considered and that international student experiences and enrolments have been generally positive. The APPC also recognized and appreciated the focus Indigenization.

SUGGESTED MOTION:

THAT Senate accept the Dean's Summary Report of the Adult Basic Education Program Review as presented.

Attachments:

- Dean's Summary Report

Remainder of the documents located:

- UFV Drive: S:\Public\UFVinfo\APPC\ELS Program Review
- Blackboard: COM-APPC (Senate Committee – APPC)

Adult Basic Education Program Review

Faculty of Access & Continuing Education

Dean's Summary

Submitted by:

Dr. Sue Brigden, Dean, Faculty of Access & Continuing Education

Accepted by:

Senate in

Academic Planning and Priorities Committee

Adult Basic Education (ABE) Program Review

Dean's Summary, December 2021

Introduction

The Adult Basic Education (ABE) program offered by the Upgrading and University Preparation (UUP) department, which is housed within the Faculty of Access and Continuing Education (FACE), underwent a program review in 2020-21.

In accordance with Policy 189 (Academic Program Reviews), the Program Review External Committee (ERC) conducted a site visit in May 2021 that was entirely online due to the pandemic. The ERC's review was guided by the ABE self-study as informed by the Dean's scope letter. Data provided by Institutional Research and collected from student surveys provided information that informed the self-study.

During the site visit, the ERC met online with several stakeholders, including current and former students, faculty, and several UFV senior administrators.

The External Review Report (Report) was received in June 2021. The ERC included the following in Section 7 (Conclusion: Building on Strengths) of the Report (p. 14):

UFV ABE programs are effective in allowing students, especially marginalized students access into higher education, supporting values under which UFV was founded. ABE and ABEUP faculty members and support staff, collectively are a group of professionals working to deliver needed curricula to an academically vulnerable population.

One common sentiment echoed in all review meetings was that students need to be met where they are (physically, emotionally, educationally). Efforts to meet these students is a collaborative effort extending throughout the department, from front-line support staff to faculty and administration. As such, both staff and faculty stated that ABE is a collegial, supportive, and rewarding place to work allowing them to contribute the benefits of UFV to their communities, places where they feel they have strong roots. It was discovered that the ABE and ABEUP faculty members and support staff collectively are deeply concerned with the academic, social, and mental well-being of their students.

Since ABE and ABEUP student populations have disparate needs and challenges, they both require and benefit from interdisciplinary collaboration across programs. This cross disciplinary effort works in serving this vulnerable student population as evidenced by the increasing success in delivery with decreasing faculty and resources. Often ABEUP students are amongst the best prepared students entering university studies.

The ABE and ABEUP interdisciplinary environment is one where faculty and support staff working with these students witness firsthand the developmental changes in underprepared students as they progress to university entrance. Faculty being assigned to teach these preparatory classes see this as a process of nurturing students and proving to them that they not only belong in university but that they can excel in their studies.

Work in the ABE and ABEUP program is personal, and Dean Dr. Sue Brigden is to be commended for assembling such a diverse, talented group of employees. Dr. Brigden needs to be recognized for her efforts in opening doors into academia that disadvantaged students had thought closed. The current faculty, support staff and structure of the UFV ABE department is one that works well together.

Contribution to the University's Strategic Goals, Vision, Mission, Plans, and Values

On page 3 of the Report, the ERC stated the following:

ABE and ABEUP have remained at the core of UFV since it opened in 1974. The skills taught in this program are needed in every community, every industry, and every university program. The program makes significant contributions to UFV's efforts to Indigenize and to address systemic racism. Its programming and pedagogy embody the Mission as well as align with elements of the Strategic and Education Plans.

In addition, the ERC included recommendations related to the University's strategic goals, vision, mission, plans, and values (see Recommendation 2 below).

Alignment with Institutional Learning Outcomes

With respect to UFV's ILOs, the ERC included the following on page 6 of its Report:

The department noted in its self-study that students feel they are getting the skills stated in UFV's ILOs, that it is "genuinely challenged to develop program-level learning outcomes and to align them with UFV's ILOs," and that course learning outcomes are taken directly from the articulation standards of the Ministry.

They also recommended that the department continue to work on ILO and program alignment (see Recommendation 3 below).

Ministry, Professional/Industry and Academic Standards

The ERC was satisfied that the department ensured the ABE program meets relevant standards and included the following points on page 8 of the Report:

- All Advanced & Provincial pre-requisite courses are provincially articulated and up to date in meeting provincial standards. ABE faculty hold regular subject area meetings to ensure provincial standards are met by all instructors. Articulation by this faculty is taken seriously, and there are provincial representatives in most subject areas taught. UFV has over 30 ABE courses provincially articulated on the transfer grid at all levels (from fundamental to provincial) and the courses are regularly rearticulated.
- Collaboration and collegiality are central tenets to the ABE Faculty. They share teaching strategies with each other and work to ensure a high teaching standard in ABE.
- Subject area Instructors in ABE have working groups and work closely together to ensure standards across teaching levels for a subject.

However, it recommended that the department continue to participate in provincial articulation meetings (Recommendation 5, p. 15). Although it was not included as a recommendation, the ERC also suggested that the department work to articulate more of its courses so they can be included in First Peoples ABE transfer grid. On page 8 of the Report, it states the following:

As ten percent of ABE students are indigenous, it may be worth articulating other courses (like English, EDCP or Biology) through the FPABE in addition to the subject area. As many of the subject instructors have already significantly Indigenized their curriculum, it should not require substantive work to put the courses on the First People ABE transfer grid.

Standards of Educational Practices

The ERC was satisfied that ABE instructors endeavour to be current, relevant, and forward thinking; connected to civic and personal obligations and growth as central to learning; and committed to inclusivity. It made no recommendations related to standards of educational practice.

Utilization of Resources

The ERC recommended that instructors “continue and increase utilization of institutional resources”, especially those related to research and PD funds, the Teaching and Learning Centre, and the library (see Recommendation 4 below).

Faculty and Staff

The ERC was very positive about the faculty and staff:

One of the best resources of ABE is the dedicated Faculty and Staff that work in the department. They are passionate, engaged, conscientious and develop personal connections with students. They meet students where they are and help them find their path and achieve their goals. Faculty are stable and have a progressive mindset.

ABE Faculty and staff are exemplary in their efforts to reach out to students lacking prerequisites for university programs or who did not graduate high school or lack skills needed for employment. These efforts must be recognized as increasing the opportunities for individuals in the community to change their lives and for improving the quality of life in the Fraser Valley. (Report, p. 13)

Conclusion: Overview and Recommendations

The External Report included six (6) recommendations.

The ERC Comment, the Department response included in its Action Plan Report (Plan), and the Dean’s comments are presented below each recommendation.

NOTE: The Dean’s Comments are provided by Dr. Sue Brigden, who will leave her dean’s position at the end of 2021. They are intended to provide guidance for the future Dean of the Faculty of Education, Community, and Human Development.

Recommendation 1: Educate senior management about the department and usefulness to the institution

ERC Comment:

The representative from the Senior Administration of UFV does not seem to have a clear picture of what ABE is, who the students are, what it does for the Institution, or the strengths of ABE students carry into further education. ABE needs to promote themselves more to the institution at large. (From Page 12, Program Review: Adult basic Education May 31, 2021)

Department response and action plan:

The ERC suggested approaches of disseminating a position paper, setting up a meeting and gathering persuasive data are probably best done after the projected restructuring of our faculty. The existing Faculty of Access and Continuing Education with the associated departments, including UUP, is planned to coalesce with several Professional Studies departments and become the Faculty of Education, Community, and Human Development.

Projected response time: After consultation with dean in new faculty, Fall 2022.

Regarding increasing representation on institutional committees, ABE program faculty are involved with various UFV committees. However, a tally of individuals and membership on committees will be made and will then work the faculty to further increase membership.

Projected response time: February 2022.

Dean's comment:

The Dean supports the ERC's recommendation and encourages the department to educate the UFV community and the communities it serves about the value and importance of ABE programming at UFV. Given that the UUP department will be part of a much larger Faculty with a new Dean, who will have to learn much about many new academic units, it is imperative that the department prepare and disseminate a position paper and increase faculty and staff participation on University committees.

Recommendation 2: Continue and expand efforts concerning Indigenization and EDI

ERC Comment:

Diversity in ABE classrooms, the sense of community amongst the dean, faculty, staff, and students, as well as the informed, critical pedagogy of the department form the nexus of EDI work. The departmental emphasis on EDI is to remove barriers to education and create a sense of belonging for all students by providing a place for them to start their studies in a safe, nurturing, inspiring environment. (From Page 3, Program Review: Adult basic Education May 31, 2021)

Department response and action plan:

Some faculty members are part of a standing committee for EDI within the faculty. These individuals are committed to bringing EDI information obtained at the University and Faculty level down to the department level.

The department understands Indigenous pedagogy as a different ontology, not just inclusion of Indigenous content/subject matter. Its faculty view Indigenization through a lens of awareness, a critique of western ways of being and knowing, and a commitment to decolonization. This is important for ABE since it has a higher number of Indigenous students compared to the rest of the institution (10% vs 6 or 7%). Different subjects use a variety of pedagogical approaches to Indigenize their curriculum. For instance, Chemistry investigates how Indigenous communities use various elements, Biology how ecological knowledge held by Elders and communities is influencing ways of knowing and understanding the ecosystem. English has been using books that integrate Indigenous stories, and the Adult Literacy Fundamentals (ALF) now requires Indigenization as part of their curricula delivery. (From Page 3, Program Review: Adult basic Education May 31, 2021)

Faculty will continue efforts to bring Indigenization and aboriginal ways of knowing to their courses. Indigenization will be brought forward to department meeting when possible.

Projected response time: February 2022.

Dean's comment:

The Dean supports the ERC's recommendation and encourages the department to continue Indigenizing its courses and programs.

Recommendation 3: Continue to revisit and refine program ILOs and alignment with institutional ILOs

ERC Comment:

Alongside the materials already produced by the department at retreats, a recommendation is to use the “UUP Department Purpose Statement and Goals” on p. 18 of the Self-study Report to initiate another discussion about departmental learning outcomes because that is, essentially, what those goals are. Then, they could be fleshed out such that there is a “how” beneath each one. The how connects to the course outcomes. (From Page 6, Program Review: Adult basic Education May 31, 2021)

Department response and action plan:

ILO discussion and refinement will continue to be addressed at department meetings.

Projected response time: May 2022

Dean’s comment:

The Dean supports the ERC’s recommendation and encourages the department to work to align the ABE program with UFV’s institutional ILOs.

Recommendation 4: Continue and increase utilization of institutional resources

ERC Comment:

UFV provides both time and money to their instructors for professional development (PD). Instructors use their PD time effectively every year. Not all instructors, however, access the \$1500 set aside for conferences and courses; sessional faculty especially do not appear to access funds. Perhaps there could be more encouragement to use the funds provided or conversation about why the funds are not being used. (From Page 12, Program Review: Adult basic Education May 31, 2021)

Department response and action plan:

With respect to research and PD funds, faculty will be encouraged to apply for ROSA course releases, engage in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning at the University, use PD funds for approved activities, and attend conferences, give presentations, and publish when possible. Currently, faculty do share PD activities at department meetings, but further activities will, when possible be further fortified.

Projected response time: May 2022

SOTL is recognized as a research area in UFV. Perhaps there is a way for the department to encourage research grant/leave applications? Both the Office of Research, Engagement and Graduate Studies and the TLC may be able to help Faculty with research opportunities. Given the transitional nature of ABE students, it can be difficult to use student researchers. However, impressively, one Faculty member has managed to take advantage of student researchers. (From Page 12, Program Review: Adult basic Education May 31, 2021)

Collaboration with SoTL and encouragement for faculty to “Check under the Hood” will commence with a guest from Teaching and Learning to address the faculty at an upcoming department meeting.

Projected response time: February 2022

Some Faculty, like English Faculty, make excellent use of the library liaison to teach information literacy to their class. Other subject areas do not appear to use the Librarians in this way, but they are happy to tailor the information literacy session for other subjects as it is important to teach students how to manage information in a digital world to help sort out credible and noncredible sources of information. It is possible to use library resources & reference sessions for help in this for all subject

areas. (From Page 11, Program Review: Adult basic Education May 31, 2021)

A continuation of faculty involvement and cooperation with the library will continue. Use of funds for books and journals will carry on as well as use of student library orientations. An invitation of a library liaison person will occur in an upcoming department meeting.

Projected response time: February 2022

Dean's comment:

The Dean supports the ERC's recommendation and the department's plan to meet it.

Recommendation 5: Continue to participate in Provincial Articulation meetings

ERC Comment:

Many ABE Instructors are constantly upgrading themselves through taking courses relating to teaching and learning and assessing courses and workshops at the TLC. Instructors have used their PD for a variety of interesting and innovative educational practices. (From Page 10, Program Review: Adult basic Education May 31, 2021)

Department response and action plan:

UUP courses will continue to be articulated via participation at BC ABE Articulation working group meetings which generally occur once per year. As well, the UUP department will continue involvement at the BC ABE Articulation Steering Committee meetings which also occur once per year.

ABE students are diverse, and their diversity is celebrated in the classroom. Ten percent of ABE students are Indigenous which represents a larger proportion than other university departments. Faculty are active members of the EDI standing committee. The faculty emphasizes EDI to remove barriers to education. ABE faculty and staff strive to provide a place for students to start their studies in a safe nurturing environment. (From Page 10, Program Review: Adult basic Education May 31, 2021)

The UUP department to contact in First peoples ABE Working Group and work towards participating in their annual meetings and, when possible, start the process of articulating any courses that might be appropriate for that committee

Projected response time: May 2022

Dean's comment:

The Dean supports the ERC's recommendation and encourages the department to work with the incoming dean to ensure it can continue its strong support of the provincial articulation process.

Recommendation 6: Gather more data from Institutional Research Office and internally

ERC Comment:

UFV graduates have taken at least one ABE course (16.2% in 2019-2020), and there has been a 6% increase over the last 5 years. In the program, students gain a sense of belonging inside a university environment through acquisition of a social structure, an opening up of their perspectives and worldviews, excitement about subjects, and relationships with faculty. (From Page 4, Program Review: Adult basic Education May 31, 2021)

Department response and action plan:

Quantitative Information was gathered in 2020 regarding items such as how people entered the ABE program with UUP department, performance in UFV English and Math from those who came from UUP courses versus those who came from outside the University.

Projected response time: May 2022

The qualitative information for students who graduated from UFV but began with the ABE program in the UUP department as well as the experiences and performances of Indigenous students will be accomplished through student testimonials. Some UFV student testimonials have been collected and contact with Indigenous students regarding their experiences could be done at the Hope and Chilliwack campuses through the UUP Coordinators.

Projected response time: May 2022

Dean's comment:

The Dean supports the ERC's recommendation and encourages the department to work to align the ABE program with UFV's institutional ILOs.