

Bachelor of Integrated Studies

College of Arts

Dean's Summary

Submitted by:

Dr. Sylvie Murray, Dean, College of Arts

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: Sylvie Murray, Dean, College of Arts; Michelle Rhodes, Program Chair; Claire Carolan, Associate Director, Program Development and Quality Assurance

DATE: February 10, 2022

RE: Bachelor of Integrated Studies Program Review

The Bachelor of Integrated Studies Program within the College of Arts 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 Dean's summary report noted that the current success of this program is largely due to the work of the Director, Integrated and General Studies, Transfer & Partnerships, College of Arts. It was also noted that this program will move to the newly formed Department of Arts Studies and that program advising is being evaluated. The APPC noted that the term 'residency' may cause confusion with international students and that it is a term embedded in UFV language and may be difficult to modify. It was also noted that offering a fully online degree may be considered and that it may be beneficial to look at other disciplines to consider where the focus should be in curriculum development.

SUGGESTED MOTION:

THAT Senate accept the Dean's Summary Report of the Bachelor of Integrated Studies 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)

Dean's Summary Report, Bachelor of Integrated Studies, Program Review

Dr. Sylvie Murray, January 11, 2022

In May 2021, a Program Review site visit took place in accordance with Policy 189. The External Review Report (ERR) was received in June 2021 and the program committee submitted its response to the external review in August 2021. The Program Review was informed by a self-study prepared by members of the Integrated and General Studies Program Committee (IGSPC) and the Director of the Centre for Experiential and Career Education. The self-study was informed by the Dean's scope letter. The self-study committee members relied on data provided by Institutional Research and from surveys conducted with students. The External Review Committee (ERC) met with several stakeholders, including students, faculty, sessional instructors, staff and members of UFV's senior administration.

The Bachelor of Integrated Studies (named Bachelor of General Studies prior to 2019) has been administered, with support from the College of Arts, by a program chair from 2015 to 2019; the responsibility was folded in a two-year temporary Director's position in 2019 (along with responsibility for transfers and partnership, and administration of the General Studies diploma). The Director is supported by the IGSPC, whose purpose is to ensure that the curricula satisfy the requirements for depth and breadth of study, and support the needs of BIS students.

The program (BIS/BGS) headcount was 482 in 2019-20 and 448 in 2020-21, double the 2015-16 Headcount of 220. The degree is an interdisciplinary and flexible program offering students individualized program paths to meet their personal, career and educational goals. In addition to two required Portfolio courses (398: *Bridging University and Career* and 399: *Career Development*), students take courses in a range of subjects in order to meet the required competencies (communications, numeracy, scientific literacy, digital competency, intercultural engagement, and professional competency) and may design a specialization by selecting a theme or minors. The program facilitates the recognition of professional training and prior learning, with students allowed to transfer up to 90 credits using Prior Learning Assessment Review (PLAR), course or block transfers from other institutions.

The most popular subject areas that BGS/BIS **domestic** students have selected in 2019-20 and 2020-21 (as measured by course enrollments) are:

- Geography (n=347)
- English (n=315)
- History (n=291)
- Sociology (n=270)
- Psychology (n=266)
- Communications (n=219)
- Kinesiology (n=203)
- Business (n=198)
- Adult Education (n=188)
- Criminal Justice (n=171)
- Education (n=114)

The most popular **minors** that BGS/BIS students have selected in 2019-20 and 2020-21 are:

- Business (n=36)
- Communications (n=36)
- Sociology (n=35)
- History (n=25)
- English (n=21)

Apart from the Professional Pilot Training (fix wing), the Thematic Options are selected by a small number of students each year

- 2019-20: Pilot n=12; all other options n=11
- 2020-21: Pilot n=7; all other options n=8

The External Review Committee's report was positive, noting in particular the flexibility of the degree which positions it well to meet the needs of students in the 21st century, and the significant contribution to the university's strategic and education goals.

What follows is a list of recommendations as ordered in the External Review Report (ERR), as Phase 1: Short Term Recommendations and Phase 2: Long Term Recommendations. Responses by the program committee and dean are noted under each, with specific action items.

The BIS' companion program, the General Studies Diploma (GSD), underwent a parallel review and some of the recommendations apply to both.

PHASE 1

1. Program Stabilization: The ER team recommended the appointment of a Bachelor of Integrated Studies Director for a 5-year term with the option of renewal. In their views, "The Director position is key to maintaining the integrity of the BIS program and providing consistency for students, staff and faculty, and oversight of the BIS Curriculum Committee" (External Review team). The program committee agrees but the Dean favours a different approach, one that would provide the degree with a departmental home after the current temporary Director position ends on Sept 1, 2022.

Background: In summer 2020, the Dean of Arts created the temporary two-year term position of *Director, Integrated and General Studies, Transfer and Partnerships*. The position was tasked with two sets of responsibilities: 1) administer the BIS and the GSD, including conducting review of the programs; 2) facilitate the development, approval, and maintenance of transfer and partnership agreements associated with the BIS, GSD and/or other programs within the College of Arts. The latter was partly a response to backlog in transfer and partnership work, need to create an inventory of agreements, and streamline process. Pairing IS/GS administration with transfer and partnerships represented a departure from the more conventional approach that the College of Arts had utilized in previous years to support the BIS/GSD, namely course releases for a BIS/GSD Program Chair (3 annually in 2019-20 and 2018-19; 2 annually in 2017-18 and 2016-17; 1 in 2015-16) and part-time staff assistance.

The Dean is committed to restoring the level of support previously extended to the BIS and GSD--i.e. 3 releases annually--and in addition proposes that the degree and diploma be put under the stewardship of the recently created Department of Arts Studies. Situating the degree and diploma in an academic unit--as opposed to these programs being administered by a director, with the assistance of a part-time staff and advisory committee--will provide additional support in the form of faculty service time and student-oriented collaborative space (see section 2 below, D3 renovation).

The Arts Studies department was created in late Spring 2021 and administers the two courses that are currently required in the BIS (PORT 398 and PORT 399) as well as UNIV 101, a course that is taken by most students in the GSD. Faculty members in Arts Studies have expertise in integrative career and capstone learning (1 FTE), University Studies (1.4 FTE), interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary learning (1 FTE), and 2 faculty members are cross-appointed from the Department of Communications, with specializations in Interdisciplinary Writing Studies, Intercultural and Adult Education. The Arts Studies department also includes sessional instructors who teach the PORT and UNIV courses for the BIS and BA. A change to the name of the Department, to "Arts and Integrated Studies", would signify its broadened mandate.

The College of Arts is not in a financial position to continue supporting Transfer and Partnerships through a dedicated half-time position as it has since Sept 1, 2020. This responsibility falls under the Vice-Provost office.

The Dean will continue to provide administrative support to the Director of IS/GS, Transfer and Partnership, until Aug 31, 2022. Administrative support for IS/GS through .25% increase to the Arts Studies Department Assistant will be provided, effective Sept 1, 2022.

Action: The Dean to engage the Arts Studies department about the department hosting the BIS/GSD, effective Sept 1, 2022, including changing the name of the department to "Arts and Integrated Studies", with financial support as described above.

2. Student Engagement Plan: The External Review team noted the need to enhance students' sense of belonging and connection, and identified several strategies to be explored to accomplish this goal (these included: chartering a Bachelor of Integrated Studies Student Association; surveying students; developing a mentoring program; use of targeted social media and/or a website to provide information to students; regular communication with students; use of storytelling to celebrate student and alumni successes; added representation on the BIS curriculum Committee).

This recommendation is supported by the program committee and by the dean. While the program committee responded that most of these activities are dependent on a permanent director and assistant, the Dean believes that having a departmental home will facilitate development of the plan and implementation of strategies (for instance, through use of faculty service time). Further, the Dean notes that a sense of belonging to an academic community will be facilitated when the renovated D3 floor opens up for occupancy in 2022-23. Like other departments situated on D3, the AS department has embraced a student-friendly, collaborative design that will facilitate greater student interactions and student-faculty connections. AS will be co-located with the Department of Communications on D3,

which will further enhance student engagement as many students in the BIS and GSD also take Communications courses.

Action: Arts Studies Department to develop a Student Engagement Plan for BIS and GS diploma students in Fall 2022, taking into account the strategies suggested by the External review team and taking advantage of the collaborative space currently being renovated on the third floor of the D building.

3. Assessment of Academic Advisor Capacity: The external team recommends, and the program committee supports, reviewing the BIS Advisor's scope and capacity, including the type and amount of advising time required for BIS students, specialized professional development needed to serve this program, and optimum ratio of BIS students to advisor. Additional recommendations include exploring strategies for streamlining advising (group advising, peer-to-peer support, etc.) for this particular group of students; surveying students to determine ways to make the program requirements visible and obtainable, and to determine needs and support such as workshop development on topics like utilizing PLAR, challenging courses, etc.

The Dean consulted with the Director of Advising and is proposing seconding a faculty advisor on the model utilized by Science (faculty partly released to Advising for a 2-year term, funded by the College, and trained by Advising).

Action 3.1: That a faculty advisor be seconded for a two-year period to advise students in the BIS/GSD to start in Fall 2022.

Action 3.2: Faculty advisor and other advisors supporting BIS students to review external team's suggestions for streamlining and report to Director of Advising and Dean in Fall 2023 with the view of addressing BIS students' unique advising needs.

4. Articulation of the BIS with Indigenous Funding Agencies: The external committee heard that most Band Councils do not fully understand the scope and nature of the BIS and are not likely to approve student tuition requests for this degree. They recommend improving communications with Band Councils to enhance opportunities for Indigenous students to receive funding to participate in the program.

The program committee noted, and the Dean agrees, that this is part of a broader institutional situation and that it may relate to degrees other than the BIS as well.

Action: For the Dean to explore with the Senior Advisor to Indigenous Affairs and the Vice-Provost reasons for lack of band funding for the BIS and act on any recommendations that they may have to remedy the situation.

5. Revisions to the Integrated and General Studies Program Committee (IGSPC): The external committee recommended the dissolution of the IGSPC and, instead, the creation of two committees in its stead: (1) A BIS and GS Advisory Committee, with space for community partners, the PLAR manager,

the CAC Practicum Coordinator, UFV International, students, and some of the members of the current IGSPC; and (2) A BIS and GS Curriculum committee where the focus is on programmatic needs, curriculum design, development, and delivery, and is comprised of faculty who teach in the program as well as other members of the current IGSPC. (See p. 16/18, External Review Report).

The program committee disagrees with the suggestion to dissolve the IGSPC. The dean favours the direction recommended by the external team, specifically replacing the IGSPC by an Advisory committee (and align it with UFV policy 60) and a curriculum committee (to be situated in the AS department). Both should include faculty representation from the current IGSPC to ensure continuity.

Action: For the Dean to consult with the IGSPC and the AS department for the development of Terms of Reference for an External Review committee and a Curriculum committee, for implementation in Fall 2022.

6. Development of BIS-Specific Course Curriculum: At the moment, the BIS includes two courses required of all students: PORT 398: *Bridging University and Career* (prerequisite: 60 credits) and PORT 399: *Career Development: Designing Career Mobility* (prerequisite: 75 credits). PORT 399 is also a core requirement of the Bachelor of Arts (and PORT 398 is required by students in the Bachelor of Environmental Studies). Both courses (PORT 398 and PORT 399) are delivered by the Arts Studies department.

The external review team recommended introducing a BIS specific course that would support students in the development of a stronger sense of self-reflection, assessment, and personal and professional agency. This would be of special importance for direct entry students in their first and second year, to help them develop stronger connections between theory and practice, and their own developing skills, competencies, and areas targeted for growth. To this end, they propose the introduction of a new course designed to assess each student's place in the program, and to map their work towards BIS capacities, Indigenization, and EDI. Mature learners should have the opportunity to PLAR the course or have it waived. The course would reflect the education pathway of each individual student and would be guided by their future career and education goals. It would be aligned to PORT 399 so that it serves to scaffold PORT 399 and not replicate or duplicate the content.

The program committee also sees the usefulness of a course (albeit optional) for students entering with 0-60 credits to help them navigate their program.

The program committee also expresses a preference for a capstone-style course using integrative, project-based learning, as proposed in their self study. The intended focus is on supporting the learner to build stronger connections between courses completed in the program, to help develop leadership skills, and to collaborate in team settings on challenges related to core competencies. This course would build in EDI considerations, response to UNDRIP, and create a space where students map their course of study to program competencies. This course would be for all BIS students, and most likely would not be PLAR-friendly (both because of the limited number of required courses in the program and because of resources needed to manage PLAR request.)

The Dean notes that the review is inconclusive on the exact nature of the course revision needed. The Dean sees value in the external reviewers' suggestion, which could be implemented through revision to PORT 398 or adoption of ARTS 299: *Exploring University and Career* (the latter required in the BA); the program committee's suggestion for a capstone is a good one and could be incorporated in a revised PORT 399.

Action 6.1: That discussion take place between the Director and Arts Studies faculty to develop an early-program course, taking into account current revisions to 398 being done by Arts Studies faculty and potential overlaps with ARTS 299. (Service to the Bachelor of Environmental Studies should be taken into account as well.)

Action 6.2: That discussion take place between the Director and Arts Studies faculty to clarify whether PORT 399 is compatible with a capstone project or whether a capstone course should be added.

Curriculum revisions should take into account budget implications, including hiring of an additional faculty specializing in integrative learning.

7. Discontinued use of PORT 398 as a Program Requirement: To help students focus on the new BIS course and PORT 399.

As per 6.1

8. Add Math 123 as an option for fulfilling the 100-level statistics requirement with the caveat that students opting for this be informed about any limitations that it may place on graduate level program options.

The committee and the dean agree with this recommendation.

Action: That the Director bring this recommendation to IGSPC, then to UEC for review, as soon as practical.

PHASE 2

9. Create a Partnership Coordinator Position: The external review team observed the need for a new position in recruitment and partnerships to support BIS program growth. They imagined this Coordinator providing oversight for the various partnership agreements, liaise with employers on the nature and value of the BIS, provides insight for recruiting future students, and build stronger relationships with local Indigenous band Councils. The program committee agrees, indeed recommended that this be considered a phase 1 priority, to serve the entire university not only the BIS: "A university partnership coordinator ... would support programs outside of the College, and the BIS would continue to benefit from this. Current agreements into the BIS involve training and programs that are not Arts-specific."

The Dean agrees that a Partnership coordinator (or similar) position would benefit the BIS, but this should be a University rather than Arts-specific responsibility, especially since many partnerships into the BIS also involve non Arts-specific programs, either internal or external to UFV (e.g. Aviation, MacDonald's, Applied Management concentration). Other functions related to increasing pathways for all programs (including assisting with PLAR coordination and assessment) could be enhanced through such a position. Liaison with employers on the nature and value of the BIS is valuable and falls under the purview of a program external advisory committee.

See also discussion related to recommendation #1.

No action recommended for College of Arts or BIS.

10. Expand Experiential Learning Opportunities: Expand cooperative learning, practicum options, and service learning opportunities that students can select from to yield greater theory to practice opportunities for students. All agree.

Action 10.1: Director to explore with the Director of CECE creation/expansion of co-op opportunities for BIS students.

Action 10.2: Director and Advisors to encourage students to take advantage of ARTS 280 and ARTS 380: *Practicum/Internship courses*, and Director to continue to work with Arts Practicum Coordinator to identify opportunities for BIS students.

11. Strategic and Intentional Growth: Working with targeted enrolment numbers plan strategically for program growth while monitoring workload and program capacity (Director, Advisors, Program Assistant, PLAR, etc.).

Suggested cap on enrolment is not favoured by the program committee or the Dean. Better use of enrolment projections and MyGradPlan would be useful. The program highly aligns with UFV's Strategic imperatives (in particular, but not only, by providing accessible and flexible opportunities to support personalized, lifelong learning] and continuing to "tell the story" of this flexible program will benefit UFV as a whole. Several recommendations presented here are meant to continue to stabilize the program and represent an increase in resource allocation. Workload and program capacity will continue to be monitored over the next few years.

No action recommended

12. Provide On-line options for high enrollment BIS courses: To ensure flexibility and access ensure further online options are available to BIS students.

As noted by the program committee, it has no control over courses offered in the degree. General increase in online/hybrid offerings as a result of the pandemic might help address this situation. The College of Arts is working closely with its departments in 2021-22 to publish a two year course rotation

schedule, which will include delivery mode and will assist students/advisors with planning. If/when partnerships warrant cohort-style offerings (i.e., numbers of students are sufficient to offer dedicated courses), delivery mode can be adjusted to meet the demand.