

# **Child, Youth and Family Studies Program Review**

Faculty of Professional Studies

## Dean's Summary

Submitted by:

Dr. Tracy Ryder Glass, Dean of the Faculty of Professional Studies

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**To:** Dr. Eric Davis, Chair APPC

**From:** Tracy Ryder Glass  
Dean, Faculty of Professional Studies

**Date:** November 23, 2018

**Re:** **Executive Summary** - Program Review of the Child, Youth & Family Studies Department

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Based on the Report of the External Review Committee (ERC) of the University of the Fraser Valley Child, Youth & Family Studies Department (CYFS) programming and the Response to the Report from the CYFS Academic Unit, I would like to make the following observations on the review of the CYFS programming.

### **Process**

The general intent of the review was to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the CYFS programming, to highlight factors which contribute to or inhibit the success of the CYFS programming, to ensure institutional learning outcomes are being addressed and to use the recommendations from the review to shape the vision of the CYFS programming over the next five years.

The ERC was comprised of two members external to UFV and one member from within UFV but external to the program area. As part of the review process, the CYFS Department completed a self-study of their unit and this information was provided to the ERC. The self-study report included information on the history of the CYFS Department, detailed descriptions of programming offered, description of the CYFS Department's administrative structure, data from surveys conducted with students and the external community on the effectiveness of the CYFS Department and the CYFS Department's own reflections on their challenges and opportunities. In addition, the ERC conducted a two-day site visit and met with a number of stakeholders including students, faculty, sessional instructors, staff, members of UFV's senior administration, and members of the external community.

Overall, the site visit and subsequent review was quite positive. The ERC was extremely complementary of the faculty, staff, students, the programming, and of UFV.

In providing their recommendations and feedback, the ERC organized their report thematically by the five factors identified in the UFV Policies and Guidelines for reviewing instructional programs and units as follows:

1. Programs' Contribution to the University's Strategic Goals, Vision, Mission, Plans and Values
2. Alignment with Institutional Learning Outcomes
3. Ministry, Professional/Industry and Academic Standards
4. Standards of Educational Practices
5. Utilization of Resources

What follows is a summary of the feedback and recommendations received pursuant to each of these themes.

### **A. Programs' Contribution to the University's Strategic Goals, Vision, Mission, Plans and Values**

The ERC commends the CYFS department for the strong alignment between UFV's strategic directions and the ECE and CYC programs. They highlight in their report that the *"emphasis on experiential learning, collaboration, local citizenship and responsiveness to students and the community are highly visible."*

As further commented in their report, to further strengthen the alignment between the CYFS department and the University's overall strategic vision, the ERC supports the work of the department in relation to Indigenization and Internationalization and offers the following recommendations:

*For both CYC and ECE programs to develop and commit to a fulsome plan with regards to Indigenization and reconciliation of CYFS curricula, student experience and faculty engagement. In doing so consider alignment with the Truth and Reconciliation Committee (TRC) Calls to Action and ways in which practicum experiences can serve as a way for students to take-up reconcile-action in a meaningful way. (Recommendation 1)*

*Develop a consistent site overseas for CYC students to use for global practica experience and in doing so seek resources (including funding) from UFV International. (Recommendation 2)*

## **B. Alignment with Institutional Learning Outcomes**

In assessing the CYFS department's alignment with Institutional Learning Outcomes, the ERC was impressed with the extensive curriculum mapping project that the department undertook. They comment that it *"was an ambitious endeavour that demonstrates not only a high degree of alignment between institutional learning outcomes and individual course learning outcomes but also the requirements of external professional bodies."*

As the result of interviews with stakeholders and faculty, some areas of potential development came to light including interest in developing further engagement opportunities between students, alumni, and professionals working in the field and interest in re-developing a student association. The ERC, therefore recommends the following:

*Develop a program level mission statement and department goals for CYFS in relation to the Education Plan that meet guidelines described in UFV's Teaching & Learning Workbook and in doing so consider meaningful ways in which to respond to the TRC Calls to Action and the post-secondary Child and Youth Care Education Consortium's current revisions of the provincial learning outcomes. (Recommendation 3)*

*Work with CYFS students, the Child and Youth Care Association of BC (CYCABC), the Early Childhood Educators of BC (ECEBC), local Early Years tables, and CYFS Advisory Committee in the development of an active student association that hosts a professional one-day conference on a bi-annual basis. (Recommendation 4)*

## **C. Ministry, Professional/Industry and Academic Standards**

### **ECE Curriculum**

The ERC was quick to point out that the “*ECE curriculum goes ‘above and beyond’ with regards to meeting the requirements of the Ministry in ECE programming.*” However, they also point out that this could be a double edged sword in that it may also be a reason for enrolment challenges in the program. And despite the feedback from the External Program Advisory Committee that they are very pleased with the ECE graduates, they comment that the “program is not sustainable unless some significant changes are made to the ways in which it is offered.” Such concerns include part-time status of the program, student readiness, and scheduling of courses from 4-10 pm.

### **CYC Curriculum**

The ERC was impressed with the changes in the curriculum that the CYC program has undertaken. They highlight “*the embedding of general concepts in the first and second years of the program that are returned to in the later years: this is powerful pedagogy that actively supports the learning needs of students of all ages.*” The “*intentional inclusion of Indigenization content into coursework in a meaningful way and the professional development that some CYC faculty have undertaken in support of this cause*” was also highlighted. However, the ERC also shared that there is further work that can be done to better align the CYC curriculum learning outcomes with the revised BC Child and Youth Care Education Consortium’s revised post-secondary degree learning outcomes and that UFV CYFS faculty are in a position to be able to assist with the development of professional standards for the province.

The ERC therefore makes the following recommendations:

*That the ECE program no longer wait for government directives, but rather move ahead with their own curricular innovations at once. See section four for details on this recommendation. (Recommendation 5)*

*Review and revise CYC course learning outcomes in response to the revised BC Child and Youth Care Education Consortium’s revised post-secondary degree learning outcomes. (Recommendation 6)*

*That the CYFS department continue to work on suitability and standards of practice for CYC, bringing this work forward to the BC Post-Secondary Education Consortium to hopes of developing provincial standards and processes to ensure suitability for the field. (Recommendation 7)*

*Explore opportunities to bolster bridging between ECE, CYC and Teacher Education. (Recommendation 8)*

#### **D. Standards of Educational Practices**

The ERC views the most pressing challenge for the CYFS programming around educational practice at this time is the “*principle of flexibility, or providing various modes of program delivery.*” To assist the CYFS department with this challenge, the ERC recommends the following:

*Investigate the benefits, challenges, implications and opportunities of online/ blended delivery methods and summer courses as a way to enhance flexibility in program delivery methods. See section five for details on this recommendation. (Recommendation 9)*

## **E. Utilization of Resources**

The ERC was complementary to the CYFS department in their ability to put at the forefront the themes of growth, transformation, change, and complexity. They comment that the *“high degree of investment in collaboration and relationship building within the university community, within the department, and with the local community is a key strength of the department.”*

### **i. Research**

One area that the ERC supports the CYFS department in, as identified in their self-study, is the *“desire for an increased research presence.”*

The ERC therefore recommends the following:

*Work in collaboration with the Program Advisory Committee and Research Engagement and Graduate Studies to build on the CYFS Research Strategy to create a CYFS Faculty and Student Research Plan. See section six for details on this recommendation. (Recommendation 10)*

### **ii. Faculty Recruitment and Retention**

As stated in their report, based on what the ERC heard with regards to the CYFS department’s plans for growth and transformation coupled with the anticipated turnover of long-term faculty in the next 10 years, they recommend the CYFS department:

*Continue to work with finance to support the hiring of additional CYC faculty as outlined in the self-study being mindful of the diverse population that is served by UFV. (Recommendation 11)*

*Develop a transition plan that includes time for knowledge transfer as faculty members and staff retire. (Recommendation 12)*

### **iii. Sessional Instructors**

The ERC stresses the need to ensure that sessional instructors are well prepared and supported in delivering the courses assigned. To this end, the ERC recommends:

*Continue to strive to develop a greater sense of belonging and cohesion between the institution, regular faculty, and sessional instructors. (Recommendation 13)*

### **iv. Space**

While the ERC was pleased to learn of the relationship CYFS has with the Teacher Education Department and the sharing of space, in addition to added classroom learning space provided this fall 2018, they also pointed out the additional value of having a dedicated student space, an outdoor classroom, flexible



classroom space, much needed storage space and a private small group observation room with a 2-way mirror.

The ERC therefore recommends the following with respect to CYFS space needs:

*Jointly pursue, with the Teacher Education Department, an on-campus student space at the Abbotsford campus. (Recommendation 14)*

*Continue to press the institution for an outdoor classroom space on the Abbotsford campus. (Recommendation 15)*

*That the department continue to work with the University to secure the means to create a small group observation room with a 2-way mirror. Given the success of collaborative space sharing already underway the Panel believes that this could also work for a unique learning space such as a viewing room. (Recommendation 16)*

*That the department continue to monitor the need for storage space and work with the University to acquire it, thus saving faculty and sessions from needing to store supplies in office space and transport it across campus. (Recommendation 17)*

*That the department acquire dedicated classroom space on the Chilliwack campus for the ECE program. (Recommendation 18)*

*That the department work with the University to identify a classroom that can be made sound-proof to allow for therapy and music teaching so as not to disrupt other classes nearby. (Recommendation 19)*

*Continued investment in theme bins/instruments that students can loan from the library. (Recommendation 20)*

#### v. **Marketing**

With the launch of the new Graduate Certificate in Graduate Studies and Community Health, together with the strong reputation that the ECE and CYC programming have in the community, the ERC believes that more should be invested in the marketing of the department and that UFV is well positioned to do so. They therefore recommend the CYFS department:

*Revisit and streamline the marketing goals/plan as outlined in the Self-Study to ensure clarity between MarCom and departmental responsibilities and capture additional specific recommendations made in section six of this report. (Recommendation 21)*

vi. **System Support Issues**

In identifying the ongoing challenges of growth within a University around IT and admissions, the ERC recommends the following:

*Develop and streamline admissions procedures and systems with the Office of the Registrar that are mutually supporting. (Recommendation 22)*

*Consider a means of monitoring and documenting student support needs over the next 1-2 years to understand the impact of younger students entering the program in terms of their need for support, and utilization of resources, time, and faculty and staff assistance. (Recommendation 23)*

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the ERC was very complementary of the CYFS department faculty and staff. As they commented in their concluding remarks:

*Pride and ownership of the program, a strength-based ethical stance and strong collaborative relationships are clear strengths of the CYFS department. These strengths serve as a strong foundation enabling the department to move forward in 'a good way', enriching student and faculty experience and service provision to children, youth and families.*

In response to the recommendations made by the ERC, the CYFS Department collaboratively produced a response and action plan.

I look forward to supporting the CYFS department as we move forward together with the action plan.



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