

FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

PERIODIC PROGRAM REVIEW (PPR)

Bachelor of Applied Science Occupational Health and Safety And Public Health Faculty of Community Services

In accordance with the Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), this final assessment report provides a synthesis of the external evaluation and the internal response and assessments of the undergraduate Occupational Health and Safety and Public Health Programs. This report identifies the strengths of the program, together with opportunities for program improvements and enhancements, and it sets out and prioritizes the recommendations that have been selected for implementation.

This report also includes an Implementation Plan that identifies who will be responsible for approving the recommendations set out in the final assessment report; who will be responsible for providing any resources entailed by those recommendations; any changes in organization, policy, or governance that will be necessary to meet the recommendations, who will be responsible for leading those recommendations; and timelines for acting on and monitoring the implementation of those recommendations

SUMMARY OF THE PERIODIC PROGRAM REVIEW OF School of Occupational and Public Health (SOPHe)

TMU's School of Occupational and Public Health (SOPHe) is a leader in injury and disease prevention education. SOPHe is committed to excellence in teaching, relevant curriculum, innovative research, and service to the community. SOPHe's graduates are industry leaders committed to protecting the health and safety of people and their communities.

SOPHe's vision is to be a leading centre for applied research and professional education in occupational and public health and safety. SOPHe's mission is to advance knowledge in occupational and public health and safety; address societal needs through innovation and excellence in research and teaching; and prepare students for successful professional careers and leadership in industry and the community.

The school currently offers two undergraduate programs: a Bachelor of Applied Science (BASc) in Occupational Health and Safety and a Bachelor of Applied Science in Public Health. The latter program is accredited by the Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors (CIPHI). Both programs are currently offered in three formats: 1) a four-year program, 2) a five-year cooperative (co-op) program and 3) a two-year program for university graduates (also referred to as a fast-track option). The co-op option consists of three, four-month paid work terms integrated throughout a student's undergraduate studies. Additionally, the Occupational Health and Safety program has a three-year co-op program option for

university graduates (with two work terms), along with a two-year degree-completion pathway for graduates with a Diploma in Workplace Safety and Prevention from Lambton College, Seneca College or Cambrian College, which commenced in 2020.

This document comprises the The Faculty of Community Services' Dean's response to the Peer Review Team (PRT) Report and the School's response, in accordance with the directions of the 2020 Periodic Program Review (PPR) Manual and with Section 8.2 of Senate Policy 126, Periodic Program Review of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs. The site visit by the external PRT for the Periodic Program Review was carried out between April 18 - 19, 2024. The School of Occupational and Public Health submitted a list of potential Peer Review Team (PRT) candidates to the Office of the Dean who then selected

Dr. Chris McLeod, Associate Professor, School of Population and Public Health, University of British Columbia

Dr. Amardeep Thind, Professor, Department of Epidemiology & Biostatistics, Western University

Overall, the reviewers were impressed with the SOPHe breadth of education programming, and the vision and ambitions presented in the pre-review documents and heard during their visit. They appreciated and recognized the successes the School has had in transitioning from a teaching intensive program to one that is focused on teaching and research. Further, SOPHe within the FCS, is uniquely positioned within Ontario to address current and growing public and occupational health EDI concerns given connection to the community in the greater Toronto area and focus of TMU in working with marginalized and historically disadvantaged communities.

The PRT Report offered the following 9 critical recommendations, and the School has responded thoughtfully to each to generate their Implementation Plan. The Dean's Office is in full support of the School's responses to the PRT recommendations.

The School of Occupational and Public Health submitted its response to the PRT report to the Dean of the Faculty of Community Services to which the Dean responded on August 6, 2024.

The Academic Standards Committee completed its assessment of the School of Occupational and Public Health on December 5, 2024. The Committee indicated that a thorough, analytical and self-critical program review was conducted. The program provided a detailed plan for future growth and support for development.

The Academic Standards Committee recommends that the program continue, as well as provide a one-year follow-up report, as follows:

The mandated One-Year Follow-up Report be submitted by June 30, 2026 to include:

1. Updates on the status of the initiatives outlined in the Implementation Plan.

Presented to Senate for Approval: January 21, 2025

Start date of next Periodic Program Review: 2029/30

SUMMARY OF THE REVIEWERS' RECOMMENDATIONS WITH THE PROGRAM'S AND DEAN'S RESPONSES

RECOMMENDATION 1: Create a concentration in “public health inspection” under the aegis of the broader Public Health undergraduate program.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

This recommendation aligns with our Recommendation 1 in the PPR. We agree with the PRT that the public health inspector market is limited primarily by the availability of practicum positions at public health units Ontario. As part of the Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors (CIPHI) certification requirements, graduates of accredited programs (such as the SOPHe Public Health program) must also complete a 12-week practicum position as a student public health inspector. However, these practicum positions are limited for various reasons and very competitive for the large number of graduates of our program, and our students also compete with graduates of the other CIPHI-accredited program in Ontario (Conestoga College). Only once students complete a practicum are they then eligible to apply for and complete the certification exam to work as a public health inspector in Ontario or elsewhere in Canada. Therefore, even among students in our program that wish to pursue this career path, they face market-related barriers to being able to find practicum placements.

As noted in the PPR, another important motivator for this recommendation is that many students in the Public Health program decide that they are not interested in becoming a public health inspector as they progress through the program. For example, in a class survey conducted in one instructor's upper-year course in Winter 2024 (which included both four-year and two-year fast-track Public Health students), only 51% of 99 students that completed the survey indicated a desire to obtain CIPHI certification and to work as a public health inspector after graduation. Approximately 21% expressed wanting to work in other areas of public health, 20% did not know yet or were deciding between different options, and 8% were interested in graduate school or medical school. Implementing this recommendation will allow the program to broaden its coverage of other areas in Public Health and provide more flexibility to students in the program to explore other career pathways and options in this field.

Finally, our most recent accreditation report from CIPHI has required that all core courses in the Public Health program that contribute to learning of key CIPHI Instructional Objectives must be changed to have a passing grade of 60%. This is a new requirement of our accreditation that must be implemented by the next accreditation visit in 2027. We have determined that this passing grade will need to apply to 30/40 courses in the Public Health program. This recommendation will help us to mitigate the impact of this pending change, by allowing upper-year students the option to take alternative courses and

pathways that do not require these strict passing grade requirements.

The School agrees with the PRT that a reflection of mid- and long-term goals of the program is important as part of the development of this concentration, and we plan to engage with our Program Advisory Council (PAC), students, employers, and alumni as the proposal is developed and put together to obtain feedback on this. We also note the importance of differentiating this from the proposed broader core program and will develop a plan for communicating this to students and stakeholders in the proposal. We have started discussions with the TMU Curriculum Quality Assurance team about different options for moving forward (e.g., concentration, optional specialization, or program splitting).

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

This is a significant recommendation that aptly recognizes both the importance and the constraints presented by the School's longstanding commitment to preparing students for careers in public health inspection. Notwithstanding very tight accreditation requirements to maintain the public health inspection pathway, the Dean agrees with and supports the School's response to this recommendation inasmuch as this involves a more profound exploration of new professional pathways for students outside of public health inspection and a broader approach to public health education. All the ideas put forward by the School in relation to creating a public health inspection specialization within a public health program that allows for much broader career trajectories are valuable and will be supported.

RECOMMENDATION 2: Strengthen marketing of TMU as a "brand" and of public health as a career option, especially in GTA high schools.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

We also acknowledge the importance of increasing TMU's visibility and the prominence of the public health profession in order to recruit a richly diverse and qualified pool of students. To this, we will develop a marketing strategy with help from FCS and TMU's marketing and communications department with a targeted campaign that will represent what it means to study occupational and public health at TMU. The campaign will include samples of alumni's success stories, the impact of public health professionals, and what makes TMU's programs unique. Media channels including social media, local papers, and our participation in events in the community in the GTA will be included in our approach. We will attempt to partner with high schools in the GTA to reach yielded students.

Building on our alumni outreach and storytelling will be critical so we will develop a pipeline of ambassadors to TMU and the occupational and public health programs. These ambassadors could be current students and alumni who will serve as point-people to participate in outreach, share their stories, mentor prospective students and advocate for public health at TMU in the community while simultaneously serving as career role models for students and graduates. Ambassadors will be featured on the TMU website and promotional materials to feature the career trajectories of graduates. Building and leveraging supportive relationships with high schools and guidance counselors is pivotal, so we believe that scholarships and incentives should be placed to attract high-achieving students and students

from underrepresented groups who might have an interest in pursuing occupational or public health at TMU. Through this effort, which includes social media advertisement targeting, we hope TMU's reputation as a top global institution for occupational and public health education will increase, and the applicant pool for diverse students who want to make a difference in society will surge.

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

The Dean agrees that there is considerable room for expanding understanding of and interest in public health as a career for high school students and guidance counsellors. To this end, the Dean is eager to commit resources to our FCS communications and marketing team to work with the School on a marketing strategy.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Develop an equitable funding model between the Chang School and SOPHe. If students are allowed to take courses at Chang in lieu of SOPHe, ensure that course offerings at Chang are comparable in academic rigor to the in-person course.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

While this issue is critical for fairness and academic integrity, it is outside the direct scope of work for the department. Decisions and strategies about the funding model and course offerings between our department and the Chang School must be made by the Dean and upper-level administrators. We recognize the significant budgetary impact to our department and faculty that having our day-school students take Chang School has. However, we are not allowed to forbid them to take these courses.

We have confidence in the Dean and the appropriate administrative authorities to act in a way that is fair and equitable and maintains our high standards, and at the same time does not hamper the ability of our students to succeed.

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

The Dean agrees that there are considerable challenges with serious implications embedded in the current arrangements that have many program students complete courses in the Chang School certificate. We agree with the PRT and the School that there is a need for ongoing discussions about continuing certificate opportunities for community members while protecting the academic integrity of the program and ensuring equitable financial arrangements for all parties. These issues extend beyond SOPHe and will require exploration and discussion at the Provost level along with Deans from all Faculties across TMU.

RECOMMENDATION 4: Increase core elective offerings, offer more liberal studies options, and create minors in Public Health and Environmental Health.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

We are pleased to see that the PRT agreed with our PPR Recommendations in these areas (2, 5, and 7). The reviewers commented that the CIPHI accreditation requirements are quite strict in terms of core

courses that need to be offered to meet their Instructional Objectives, which limits the courses that have traditionally been offered in our Public Health program. Similarly, while it is not currently tied to accreditation requirements, the Occupational Health and Safety program is also at the minimum percentage of open electives and liberal studies compared to core course that is currently allowed at TMU (i.e., both programs have only 10% of courses as open electives and 15% as liberal studies). However, the Board of Canadian Registered Safety professionals have indicated that program accreditation will be implemented in the near future and so we will have to ensure that our Occupational Health and Safety program meets these pending accreditation requirements.

To create a concentration or specialization in public health inspection (see Recommendation #1 above), it will be necessary to add more core and open electives to upper years of the Public Health program so that students can choose alternative course options and career pathways. Therefore, as part of our planned major modification proposal to make this change, we will be proposing a restructuring of upper years in the program to reduce the number of core courses, adding some of these to a core electives table (which is common among other programs at the university), and increasing the number of open electives. We will investigate making this change to both the Public Health and Occupational Health and Safety programs, even though no concentrations or specializations are planned for the latter program at this time. However, once we are required to ensure accreditation for the Occupational Health and Safety program, this will be a driver to create a concentration or optional specialization within this program. Overall, these changes will increase flexibility for students and add more diversity, choice, and ability to specialize for students in both programs. We plan to develop some new core electives applicable to both programs in areas that are of strong interest to our students and that would also have wide appeal to students from other programs across the university. The School Curriculum Committee is currently compiling core elective course ideas and will review those and obtain feedback from students and stakeholders before narrowing down a list to include in a major modification proposal.

As noted in the PPR, the School's only liberal studies course has been very successful, with high demand among students from across the university. The School is eager to develop additional liberal studies courses that would increase the profile of the department and could attract students to other courses we offer (e.g., that they could take as open electives), as well as new minors. The Liberal Studies Curriculum Committee was not accepting new course proposals this year (2024) while it addresses the impacts of generative artificial intelligence on the writing requirements in those courses. The School's Curriculum Committee will solicit and prioritize potential new courses that could be developed and offered in this area for submission in future years.

The PRT and our PPR notes that there is an opportunity for the department to offer new minors in Public Health and in Environmental Health. Currently, the School offers only one minor in Occupational Health and Safety. Offering new minors based on already existing courses would be a strategic and cost-effective way to attract students to our courses and increase the branding and awareness of our programs to the wider university and student population. Proposals for these minors will be included in the follow-up major modification proposal.

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

The Dean supports the School's plans to explore opportunities for broader course offerings, including liberal studies and potentially minors, in an effort to move toward a major program modification proposal. This approach is consistent with Recommendation 1, which, as mentioned, the Dean strongly supports as a way of ensuring that SOPHe's relevance is expanded beyond the relatively narrow public health inspection focus. There are two caveats of note here: First, any program modifications that have significant resource implications will be subject to financial analysis for viability; and second, pending possible accreditation of the Occupational Health and Safety program, any requirements flowing from that will have to be considered.

RECOMMENDATION 5: Reduce class section sizes.**PROGRAM RESPONSE:**

We agree with the PRT that large class section sizes must be reduced in our undergraduate programs to improve learning outcomes and the student experience. This was one of the major issues discussed in the PPR, with supporting data from the University Planning Office showing that the School has some of the largest class sizes and student-to-faculty ratios across the faculty and university. The PRT noted that this issue was also brought up in their interviews with SOPHe undergraduate students during the site visit.

The School acknowledges that some progress has been made in this area with the splitting of some large courses in both programs into two sections for the first time in the 2023/2024 academic year. Some of these courses were also part of the university's hybrid teaching pilot, where one of the sections was taught online and the other in person to provide more learning flexibility to students. The School plans to continue with offering some courses and sections in a hybrid format moving forward. However, additional efforts are needed to strategically reduce class section sizes for our program courses, particularly those in upper-years of the programs. Creation and implementation of the proposed concentration or optional specialization, restructuring of both programs to allow more core and open electives, and an additional faculty growth hire should help to reduce class sizes moving forward.

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

The Dean agrees that SOPHe has, for many years, offered very large classes. Considerable efforts have been made more recently to reduce class sizes in some courses by creating additional sections, which has created additional expenses. Nevertheless, it is fair and reasonable to continue to work strategically toward smaller class sizes where this can substantially improve pedagogical considerations and student learning outcomes. It is also fair to take into account the additional burden on faculty members teaching large classes. To this end, the Dean is committed to working with the School to continue to make progress on class size reductions where possible.

RECOMMENDATION 6: Ensure a minimum level of guaranteed funding for TA/GA support, and for

laboratory maintenance and upkeep.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

Over the last number of years the School has been successful at maintaining a substantial level of TA/GA support and also in gaining internal funds for maintaining and upgrading laboratory equipment and supplies. Even though these line items are subject to yearly budget discussions between the School and Dean's Office, the Dean's Office has been quite supportive and has recognized the importance of these for the effective functioning of the teaching programs. The School will continue to work with the Dean's Office to ensure that suitable funds are available for both TA/GA support and laboratory maintenance and upkeep, including the purchase of new equipment for use in class activities.

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

Excellent work has been done to maintain appropriate levels of TA/GA support for SOPHe. The intention is to continue along existing patterns. TA/GA resources are not base-funded at TMU and it is therefore difficult to provide for guaranteed minimum allocations. Nevertheless, as indicated by the School, there has been a very positive pattern of TA/GA allocation over the past few years that has met the needs of the School.

With respect to lab upkeep and lab equipment, the Dean's Office will ensure that the School is supported in accessing all available internal and external infrastructure and pedagogical funding mechanisms.

RECOMMENDATION 7: Ensure predictable availability of classrooms and teaching times year upon year.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

The School agrees that the current university course scheduling approach is inadequate, inefficient, and negatively impacts staff, faculty, and student planning and the overall learning experience. Each year and semester, course dates, times and classroom locations are seemingly randomly allocated to the School (and presumably to all or most departments across the university). Often, due to our large class section sizes, our School courses are assigned to and taught in the Cineplex movie theater (DSQ), which is an environment not conducive to learning or student engagement and participation in classroom discussions and other activities. Our courses are also often assigned to other rooms in Kerr Hall and other older buildings where the teaching technology is often inadequate, outdated, or malfunctioning. What is particularly peculiar and perplexing, is that our own building, the Daphne Cockwell Complex (DCC), has several large and modern classrooms but our courses are rarely assigned to these rooms. Having consistent use of modern teaching classrooms, ideally within our own DCC building, would provide an enhanced learning and teaching experience for our students and would provide them with a greater sense of community and belonging. We urge the faculty to negotiate with university scheduling to make changes to their current approach, so that DCC classrooms can be prioritized for FCS departments and courses.

As noted above, assigned course dates and times also vary from year to year, and are not communicated

to staff, faculty, and students until within a month or two of the start of each semester. This is likely a historical scheduling process that is still used by the university, but is unfortunately very inefficient and archaic. The university should explore moving to a system that provides, wherever possible, a consistent date, time, and location (classroom) for core program courses from year to year, which is the approach used at many other comparable universities in Ontario and Canada. This would greatly support both faculty and students in planning their semester well in advance and provide more consistency and predictability to the programs and learning environment.

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

The Dean agrees that DSQ is not an appropriate learning space. Given SOPHe's location in the DCC, where large classrooms are available, it would be much more desirable to have classes scheduled there. Maintaining course location in DCC would also significantly enhance students' experience and draw students closer to faculty and the School more generally given colocation in DCC.

Scheduling is a complex undertaking at TMU and while the Dean understands the challenges embedded in scheduling for a large institution, concerns about the implications of continuously shifting class times and teaching locations are valid, and therefore, the Dean supports a structured exploration of possible improvements to this process.

RECOMMENDATION 8: Recruit additional faculty (tenure track or sessional) to ensure smaller class/section sizes (and obviating the need to use DSQ).

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

The School agrees that at least one additional tenure-track growth hire is needed to address the PRT recommendations and the PPR implementation plan. While the School will always require some sessional (i.e., CUPE) instructors to teach certain courses and sections due to various course releases (e.g., for faculty in leadership and administrative roles) and sabbatical leaves, tenure-track faculty provide more sustained and long-term capacity and growth in teaching, SRC, and service that are needed to address the School's implementation plans. It is also preferable from the student learning experience and teaching perspective to have more consistency in their course instructors through tenure-track faculty (who tend to teach the same courses for multiple years and make iterative improvements), compared to sessional instructors who are only on a short-term contract and may not return or teach the same course in future years. In addition, tenure-track faculty can support and enhance the School's graduate program through graduate student supervision and service.

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

SOPHe currently has an allocation of 16 faculty members, which, by any metric, is on the high side for the Faculty of Community Services when compared to other Schools. New faculty positions are not envisioned in the near term. Nevertheless, given other recommendations about diversifying the focus of especially the public health programs, there will be a need to re-examine the faculty complement and the specific areas of expertise represented within that complement. It is entirely possible that

responding positively to the recommendation of diversifying the School's focus to include broader areas of public health will result in growth, which could then result in further allocations of faculty positions.

RECOMMENDATION 9: SOPHe should more effectively use quality indicator metrics whether already used by TMU or otherwise develop to track faculty, student and post-graduation outcomes to better monitor and improve teaching and research. These metrics can be used to address and implement other report recommendations (e.g., Recommendation 2 around brand and marketing).

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

In order to address Recommendation #9, the School must develop and implement quality indicator metrics as these do not currently exist at TMU. These metrics should track faculty, student, and post-graduation outcomes. We have identified possible metrics to be implemented as follows:

Faculty Metrics

General note: These metrics are already tracked via yearly annual reports.

- Research productivity: Track publications, conference presentations, and successful grant applications. This can highlight areas where faculty members excel and identify opportunities for additional support or collaboration within the department.
- Teaching effectiveness: Utilize student evaluations, peer reviews, and teaching awards to assess and improve teaching quality. Incorporate data on faculty participation in professional development activities related to pedagogy.
- Service contributions: Measure involvement in university committees, community outreach, and professional organizations to ensure a balanced workload and recognize faculty contributions beyond teaching and research.

Student Metrics

- Admission and enrollment data: Monitor application-to-admission rates, demographics of incoming students, and retention rates to address and better understand enrollment challenges and trends.
- Academic performance: Track GPA distributions, course completion rates, course drop-out rates, Chang-to-day school course ratios, and trends in probation or required to withdraw status. This can be analyzed quantitatively.
- Student satisfaction survey: Conduct yearly surveys to gauge student satisfaction with their education experience and identify problematic areas that can be addressed by the Curriculum Committee. This survey can also gauge faculty interaction, availability of resources, and extracurricular offerings if needed.

Post-Graduate Outcomes

- Employment rates and career pathways: Capture employment rates and career pathways for those who have gone through a program, including job sectors, and growth and progress to more senior roles or other supporting roles.

- Graduate studies: Count the percentage of graduates either enrolled in graduate school or professional certificates to measure the program's alumni who continue their education.
- Alumni satisfaction survey: Provide regular alumni satisfaction surveys and ongoing events to maintain engagement.

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

The Dean agrees that quality metrics are an essential component of assessing the quality of the programs and ensuring continuous quality improvement. TMU already has an extensive set of metrics, but there are opportunities for further collaboration between schools/departments and the University Planning Office to ensure that the data collected is available and accessible and reflects the metric priorities of individual programs.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN: SCHOOL OF OCCUPATIONAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH

Priority Recommendation #1

Develop and offer a concentration or optional specialization in "public health inspection" within the Public Health undergraduate program and modify the existing Public Health program to allow for more core electives of core courses that were originally targeted for the accredited CIPHI program.

Rationale: (short description of information from the self-study that supports the recommendation)

Enhanced Student Flexibility: Offering a concentration or specialization in public health inspection within a broader Public Health program will expand elective options for students. This approach aligns with SOPHe's commitment to student-centered learning, as it offers them greater flexibility to tailor students' educational experience according to their career aspirations and interests.

CIPHI Accreditation: The curricular change will enable SOPHe to continue to meet current Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors (CIPHI) accreditation requirements. More importantly, it will allow SOPHe to adapt seamlessly to pending changes such as the requirement for a minimum grade of 60% in all core courses for CIPHI certification eligibility among students after graduation.

Labor Market Alignment: UPO data and market trends indicate limited availability of public health inspector positions post-graduation. Reconfiguring the Public Health program to be broader in scope, while maintaining the program's roots and focus on public health inspection through a concentration or optional specialization, SOPHe will prepare students for a more diverse range of career options and will be aligning the program to meet current and future labor market demands. It is estimated that at least 40% of Public Health students opt not to pursue CIPHI certification post-graduation. The proposed change would allow students that are truly interested in public health inspection to continue to follow that career pathway, while other students will be able to explore broader public health career options. This curriculum modification will add a layer of versatility to SOPHe's program offerings, preparing students for a wider array of sectors in public health employment or further academic pursuits.

Implementation Actions:

- Meet with the Curriculum Quality Assurance Team to review program modification options (e.g., concentration, optional specialization, or separate program) with Curriculum Committee
- Develop curriculum change proposal and review with faculty and other stakeholders
- Develop a major modification proposal containing the new curriculum change and implementation process
- Clearly communicate the changes and registration process to students
- Develop new core elective courses as required
- Monitor student enrolments upon implementation

Timeline: (What are the estimated timelines for acting on implementation of the recommendation?)

2024-26 academic years with submission of proposal to VPA by end of 25-26 academic year

To commence Fall 2026 at the earliest

Responsibility for

a) leading initiative: Program Director and Associate Directors

b) approving recommendation, providing resources, and overall monitoring: FCS Dean's Office and the School, Academic Standards Committee, Senate

Priority Recommendation #2

Provide more open and core electives to students in the undergraduate programs.

Rationale: (short description of information from the self-study that supports the recommendation)

This recommendation is supported by student feedback and is required to allow the creation of program concentrations and/or optional specializations. New elective options, particularly at the upper level (3rd and 4th year), will allow students to take more specialized and relevant courses that best fit their interests and career plans. There are many relevant topic areas within public health that are not currently covered in the SOPHe program due to the need to meet CIPHI Instructional Objectives, and similarly for the Occupational Health and Safety program, elective options are currently limited due to the need to cover content necessary for students to pursue various post-graduation certifications (e.g., BCRSP). New electives could include courses that were previously taught and had to be removed from the program during the major modification process (e.g., global health) and courses in other relevant and timely areas (e.g., climate change and health, chronic disease prevention, rural and remote health).

Implementation Actions:

- Restructure the undergraduate programs, particularly at the upper levels, by moving certain core courses to a core elective table and allowing core electives along with more open electives
- Review proposed changes with the School Curriculum Committee and faculty and TMU Curriculum Quality Assurance
- Integrate the proposed changes into a major modification proposal
- Clearly communicate the changes to students
- Develop new core elective courses required
- Monitor student satisfaction and experience with the changes after implementation

Timeline: (What are the estimated timelines for acting on implementation of the recommendation?)

2024-26 academic years with submission of proposal to VPA by end of 25-26 academic year

To commence Fall 2026 at the earliest

Responsibility for

a) leading initiative: Program Director and Associate Directors

b) approving recommendation, providing resources, and overall monitoring: FCS Dean's Office and the School, Academic Standards Committee, Senate

Priority Recommendation #3

Enhance marketing of both undergraduate programs

Rationale: (short description of information from the self-study that supports the recommendation)

This recommendation is supported by the low applicant to registrant ratios for both undergraduate programs (from UPO data) as well as the program SWOT analysis. It is also a need that has been increasingly discussed and raised by SOPHe faculty members in recent years. Raising awareness of the programs among high-school students in Ontario, specifically, will help to increase the number of applicants to the four-year programs, improve the entering average of students accepted, improve program retention, and enhance the reputation and profile of the school.

Implementation Actions:

- Develop a marketing strategy with help from FCS and the TMU Marketing and Central Communications
- Investigate media channels for promotion of the program (e.g., social media, events)
- Investigate partnerships with high schools in the GTA
- Reach out to alumni to include their success stories in the campaign
- Monitor success and reach of the campaign through various media channels

Timeline: (What are the estimated timelines for acting on implementation of the recommendation?)

Develop during the 2024-26 academic years

Ongoing and targeted implementation once developed

Responsibility for

a) leading initiative: Program Director and Associate Directors

b) approving recommendation, providing resources, and overall monitoring: FCS Dean's Office and the School, TMU Marketing and Central Communications

Priority Recommendation #4

Provide smaller class section sizes

Rationale: (short description of information from the self-study that supports the recommendation)

This recommendation is supported by UPO data on the very large student to faculty ratio and large class sizes in the SOPHe programs. It is also supported by the SWOT analysis. While some progress has been made on splitting several large courses into two sections starting in the 2023/2024 academic year, additional efforts are needed to continue finding ways to enhance the student learning experience and outcomes through smaller class sections and a lower student to faculty ratio. Addressing Recommendations 1 and 2 will also help in this regard, as more course elective options will ensure that not all students must take the same course.

Implementation Actions:

- Implement Recommendations #1 and 2 (above) to indirectly address this recommendation

- Discuss with the Dean's office different options and other approaches to reduce class sizes in the curriculum moving forward
- Monitor UPO data on class sizes and student experiences to continue to reflect and find ways to lower class sizes

Timeline: (What are the estimated timelines for acting on implementation of the recommendation?)

Reduce average class sizes with the next 2-4 academic years

Responsibility for

a) leading initiative: Program Director and Associate Directors

b) approving recommendation, providing resources, and overall monitoring: FCS Dean's Office and the School, University Planning Office

Priority Recommendation #5

Create minors in Public Health and Environmental Health.

Rationale: (short description of information from the self-study that supports the recommendation)

The introduction of a minor in Public Health and a minor in Environmental Health would offer significant advantages to the department and faculty. These minors would serve as academic magnets, attracting students from various other faculties and thereby enriching the interdisciplinary landscape of all the students' education. This cross-pollination of academic interests would, in turn, increase the rigor and diversity of perspectives in SOPHe's classrooms. Additionally, given that the requisite courses for both of these minors are already in place, the financial and administrative overhead associated with the rollout of these minors would be minimal. Lastly, these minors would enable students to broaden their knowledge base, rendering them more versatile and better equipped to address complex, real-world problems in public and environmental health. This could potentially improve employability and open new career paths for students, aligning with the department's commitment to practical, career-oriented education.

Implementation Actions:

- Develop minor proposals and course structure
- Integrate the proposed minors into a major modification proposal
- Clearly communicate the new minors to students across the university
- Monitor student interest and enrolments in the minors

Timeline: (What are the estimated timelines for acting on implementation of the recommendation?)

2024-26 academic years with submission of proposal to VPA by end of 25-26 academic year
To commence Fall 2026 at the earliest

Responsibility for

a) leading initiative: Program Director and Associate Directors

b) approving recommendation, providing resources, and overall monitoring: FCS Dean's Office and the School, Academic Standards Committee, Senate

Priority Recommendation #6

Hire additional faculty members

Rationale: (short description of information from the self-study that supports the recommendation)

The need for at least one additional faculty growth hire in the department is substantiated by multiple key indicators and strategic imperatives outlined in this document. Firstly, SOPHe faces one of the highest student-to-faculty ratios in the university, putting significant pressure on existing faculty and potentially compromising student's quality of education. The literature unequivocally shows that lower student-to-faculty ratios are associated with better educational outcomes, including more personalized attention and higher student satisfaction. Secondly, SOPHe stands as one of the leading contributors to research output and research funding at the university level. While this is a commendable achievement, it simultaneously stretches existing faculty thin, as they juggle research commitments alongside teaching responsibilities. Additional hires would help distribute this workload more equitably, thereby enhancing both research and teaching quality. Thirdly, as part of its strategic growth, SOPHe is planning to develop new courses, including liberal courses that cater to a broader student audience. The introduction of these new courses demands additional faculty resources for effective implementation and on-going teaching. Lastly, an increase in graduate research topics necessitates an increase in the number of supervisors available to mentor students adequately such that SOPHe can meet university targets. As research supervision is a time-intensive commitment requiring specialized expertise, additional faculty members would ameliorate this bottleneck, ensuring that students receive the mentorship they require for successful research endeavors while simultaneously making it easier to match students' research topics to appropriate faculty members.

Implementation Actions:

- Discuss with the Dean's office the need and rationale for at least additional faculty growth hire
- Once approved, develop and review position description and research areas of need
- Post and widely distributed the advertisement to ensure a strong and diverse pool of applicants
- Screen and interview candidates
- Make hiring recommendations
- Provide support and mentorship to new faculty hires

Timeline: (What are the estimated timelines for acting on implementation of the recommendation?)

Within 2-4 years

Responsibility for

a) leading initiative: Program Director and Departmental Hiring Committee

b) approving recommendation, providing resources, and overall monitoring: FCS Dean's Office and the School, University Planning Office

Priority Recommendation #7

New funding model between Chang School certificate program and Occupational Health and Safety day-school program

Rationale: (short description of information from the self-study that supports the recommendation)

In light of the significant student overlap between the Chang School certificate program and the Occupational Health and Safety day-school program, there is a pressing need to introduce a new internal funding model.

Many students enrolled in the Chang School certificate program simultaneously partake in the day-school program. This overlap suggests that a unified funding model could not only streamline the academic journey but also uphold consistent curricular standards. Currently, the financial disconnect between the programs manifests in substantial departmental and faculty revenue loss. Furthermore, the anticipated BCRSP accreditation, which encompasses an oversight of all program courses, including those at the Chang School, underscores the necessity for a cohesive funding approach. By integrating the two programs under a revised funding structure, SOPHe can ensure compliance with BCRSP's rigorous benchmarks while optimizing financial resources.

Implementation Actions:

- This recommendation is outside the direct scope of work and responsibility of the School
- Meet with the FCS Dean's office to discuss the issue and need for an equitable path forward
- Advocate for change in the current funding model with the Dean's office and upper-level administrators

Timeline: (What are the estimated timelines for acting on implementation of the recommendation?)

Within 2-5 years

Responsibility for

a) leading initiative: FCS Dean

b) approving recommendation, providing resources, and overall monitoring: FCS Dean's Office and the School, University Planning Office, Chang School

Priority Recommendation #8

Offer more liberal studies course options

Rationale: (short description of information from the self-study that supports the recommendation)

This recommendation is supported by the very high uptake and demand for SOPHe's only current liberal studies course, POH105. Additional liberal studies courses will help to promote the field and the school. Additionally, they will provide students from other majors across the university with specialized knowledge in topical areas of occupational and public health, and could assist in recruitment of prospective students to the SOPHe two-year programs for university graduates or its graduate program.

Implementation Actions:

- Solicit liberal studies course ideas and proposals from SOPHe faculty members
- Review proposals and recommend one or more new liberal studies courses to the Liberal Studies Curriculum Committee for review and approval
- Implement the new courses and monitor student interest and enrolments

Timeline: (What are the estimated timelines for acting on implementation of the recommendation?)

Develop new liberal studies courses within 2-5 years

Responsibility for

a) leading initiative: SOPHe Faculty and Curriculum Committee

b) approving recommendation, providing resources, and overall monitoring: FCS Dean's Office and the School, Liberal Studies Curriculum Committee, Academic Standards Committee, Senate