

# PERIODIC PROGRAM REVIEW SCHOOL OF CHILD AND YOUTH CARE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## ***Introduction - Purpose***

Ryerson University requires Academic programs to undertake a review every eight years to ensure they “achieve and maintain the highest possible standards of academic quality and continue to satisfy societal need.”

To comply with the Ryerson University’s Policy 126, the School of Child and Youth Care has undertaken its first program review since 2000.

The key stakeholders considered for the Program Review include current students, graduates, faculty, program staff, other Ryerson units and potential employers of graduates. The interests of these stakeholders were taken into account through the Review. Identifying and ensuring the inclusion of perspective from these important stakeholders is a key requirement for the Program Review.

## ***Methodology***

There are several methods of collecting information utilized for the Child and Youth Care Program Review. To gather perspectives on the self-analysis element of the Review, questionnaires were developed and delivered to students, graduates, employers and current faculty members in the School, during a 3 month period in 2010. To acquire input from the support staff team, a focus group was held with the staff in the spring of 2010. Surveys were created using the Ryerson University Opinio database. The identified members of the stakeholder groups were sent an email with the website address of the specific survey for them to connect to in order to provide their response.

As well, to acquire information regarding societal need for child and youth care programs, a search of the internet to identify employment opportunities for child and youth care practitioners in Canada was conducted in the spring of 2010. This was supported by an analysis of data from Statistics Canada on employment growth for this profession compared to other health and social assistance professions.

The School’s faculty also developed its first set of university undergraduate degree level expectations (UUDLEs) between summer 2010 and spring 2011 for inclusion into the Program Review. This included a detailed mapping of program courses with expected outcomes.

## ***Findings***

The Program Review has pointed out the need to stabilize and expand our cohort of RFA faculty members in order to ensure adequate quality oversight of our curriculum and to pave the way for development of the Master’s Program which stands as one of the 8 objectives in our School Academic Plan. As a result of the course by course analysis of our curriculum under the UUDLES framework, it has become apparent that there is a need to systematically and within a well prescribed timeframe to begin a more intensive and structured process of updating all required courses.

Also, in keeping with our School Academic Plan, there is a strong commitment to internationalizing the curriculum; promote a greater understanding of diversity in all its manifestations and better serve Aboriginal communities through research and community based projects. Through the internship program offered to students in years 2 and 3 of the 4 year program, it is expected that more emphasis will be placed on using these structured experiential learning opportunities to meet these key objectives.

The rapid growth of the School since the introduction of the 4 Year Program in 2006 has presented some rather unique challenges related to facilities, office space and ability to provide support services to an extremely diverse student body—full-time, part-time, campus based and distance. In order to help build a sense of community, the Dean continues to provide financial support for CYC Connections, our student engagement initiative. This initiative provides our students with a wide range of mentoring, social and learning support activities to augment the formal curriculum.

Since the introduction of the Direct Entry Program in 1989, the School has maintained a close relationship with the Ontario colleges of applied arts and technology that continue to serve as the principle feeders into our Direct Entry Programs, both full-time and part-time. As a select few colleges move to develop degree programs, it is incumbent on our School to move to the next level by developing a Master's program that would not only serve the expanding pool of our own graduates but also take into consideration future graduates from the new degree programs offered by the colleges.

It has been noted the School of Child and Youth Care enjoys a very strong connection to the employers of our graduates. In large part, this can be attributed to our Internship Program composed of a roster of over 100 organizations in the GTA that support our students in their placements. Ongoing feedback from our placement sponsors helps maintain the currency of our program and prepare graduates who are able to meet employer expectations. Because of the interdisciplinary nature of our core curriculum, the School has been well positioned to support the Faculty priority on inter-professional education and strengthen alignment with the other 8 schools in the Faculty of Community Services.

#### ***Development Plan – Recommendations***

Using the information collected, a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis was conducted to identify the opportunities and areas for improvement to be considered by the School of Child and Youth Care. The compiled information including these opportunities and potential improvements, along with the expected outcomes, were synthesized to create the School of Child and Youth Care's development plan for the coming phase.

The School of Child and Youth Care's Development Plan identifies a number of recommendations to move the School forward to "achieve and maintain the highest possible standards of academic quality and continue to satisfy societal need."