

## **RYERSON UNIVERSITY**

### **PERIODIC PROGRAM REVIEW SOCIOLOGY**

#### **Faculty of Arts**

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Ryerson Sociology program has developed a distinctive focus and expertise aligned with Ryerson University's unique mission. The Ryerson Sociology program is committed to teaching sociology as a practice of active inquiry, grounded in a solid foundation of research methods and theory. This active inquiry includes important dimensions of reflexivity, as students in courses ranging from popular culture to work to migration are invited to learn to locate themselves in a broader system of social relations. The emphasis on community engaged and experiential learning in the Sociology program flows from this emphasis on active inquiry, which fits with Ryerson University's specific mission.

The Ryerson Sociology has developed an approach to equity, diversity and inclusion that combines focussed courses (in Indigenous studies, race, gender and sexuality among others) with a commitment to ensuring that these issues are covered across the curriculum. The Sociology department houses the Caribbean Studies program as part of that commitment to shifting the centre of social inquiry and developing a rich conception of the equity lens. The Ryerson Sociology course offerings reflect two main areas of focus that define the department: contemporary social inequalities with a particular emphasis on intersectional analysis and the study of popular culture as a window on the social world.

This emphasis on sociology as active inquiry is reflected in students' assessments of the program. The surveys of current students and graduates conducted for this self-study indicate that students' experiences of learning reflect this commitment to application, reflection and critical thinking. Students' qualitative responses emphasized hands-on experience, enhancement of the sense of oneself in the world and an interactive environment in which they felt valued. The NSSE scores from the program indicated high levels of student engagement with application of concepts and experience in negotiating diversity and different perspectives grounded in histories of inequality.

The Ryerson Sociology department developed in a service teaching capacity and the focus on teaching Liberal Studies courses has been sustained. These Liberal Studies classes represent an important contribution to undergraduate education at Ryerson, with a particular emphasis on equity, diversity and inclusion. Sociology courses also figure very prominently in the Chang School's Faculty of Arts offerings.

#### **Challenges**

The Sociology program is facing challenges as it seeks to develop a sound basis for consolidating its strengths and building a program that continues to learn and improve in terms of pedagogy, curriculum, research and reputation. At the level of curriculum, the program faces a level of student frustration that some of the most enticing Sociology courses are available only as Liberal Studies electives not open to those in the undergraduate program. The emphasis on community engaged and experiential learning at this point largely relies on the commitment of specific faculty members, and has yet to be generalized as an overall department focus matched to necessary resources.

The commitment to teaching sociology as active inquiry, with a specific focus on community engaged and experiential learning, is undermined by growing class sizes in program courses and in Liberal Studies classes, which has been accentuated by a reduction in resources for teaching assistants and tutorial sections. The department also relies very heavily on contract faculty to meet its teaching load, which makes it difficult to ensure consistency in pedagogy and content focus. Enhancing the permanent faculty

cohort in a way that deepens the pool of expertise in teaching sociology as a practice of active inquiry deploying an equity lens is an important component of building on the department's strengths.

Finally, the Sociology program faces the challenge, shared generally by humanities and social sciences departments in the current era, of helping students, the university administration and the broader community understand the value of a liberal arts education. Enhancing the commitment to community engaged and experiential learning in a wide range of forms is one important way to address this challenge.

#### Goals

The Sociology Program is ready to deliberately build on its strengths in ways that address the challenges it faces. Through this self-study, the Department clarified six goals for the next seven years:

1. Expand the breadth of sociology courses available to program students
2. Embed experiential learning more fully in the Sociology curriculum
3. Increase the permanent faculty complement to address issues of pedagogical and content consistency
4. Strengthen the program profile in order to continue attracting high-calibre students.
5. Improve the dissemination and mobilization of research knowledge produced by Sociology faculty members
6. Develop a Sociology graduate program at the Master's level.

#### Implementation Plan

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| Recommendation # 1 | Community-based, experiential and career-oriented learning           |
| Recommendation # 2 | Deepen Equity Focus  |
| Recommendation # 3 | Sociology Liberal Studies Electives Availability to Program Students |
| Recommendation # 4 | Strengthen Sociology Focus of Fourth Year Winter Term                |
| Recommendation # 5 | Develop Graduate Program in Transformative Social Research           |

#### **FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT (FAR)**

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 program delivered by the Sociology program. This report identifies the significant strengths of the program, together with opportunities for program improvement and enhancement, and it sets out and prioritizes the recommendations that have been selected for implementation.

The report includes an Implementation Plan that identifies the recommendations; who will be responsible for leading the implementation of the recommendations; who will be responsible for providing any resources entailed by those recommendations; and timelines for acting on and monitoring the implementation of those recommendations.

#### **A) SUMMARY OF THE PERIODIC PROGRAM REVIEW OF THE SOCIOLOGY PROGRAM**

Sociology submitted a self study report to the Vice Provost Academic on February 27, 2018. The self study presented the program descriptions and learning outcomes, an analytical assessment of the program, and program data including the data collected from a student survey along with the standard University Planning data tables. Appended were the course outlines for all core required and elective courses in the program and the CVs for each full-time faculty member in the Department.

Two arm's-length external reviewers (Dr. Gillian Creese, Acting Associate Dean, Faculty and Equity, Faculty of Arts, University of British Columbia (also a Professor at both the Institute for Gender, Race, Sexuality and Social Justice and Department of Sociology at UBC); and Dr. Tom Langford, Professor at

the Department of Sociology, University of Calgary) were appointed by the Dean of the Faculty of Arts from a set of proposed reviewers. They reviewed the self study documentation and then conducted a site visit to Ryerson University on April 6 – 7, 2018.

The visit included meetings with the Interim Provost and Vice-President Academic; Interim Vice Provost Academic; Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Chair of Sociology; the Chief Librarian; and meetings with seven faculty members; two staff members; six faculty and staff involved in experiential learning in Sociology at Ryerson; eighteen students; seven program graduates (alumni); and three faculty concerned about equity and learning, all of whom worked on a recent research study, “Inhabiting Critical Spaces: Teaching and Learning From the Margins at Ryerson University”. The peer review team was taken on a brief walking tour from Jorgenson Hall through Kerr Hall to the Rogers Communications Centre in order to observe some of the typical classrooms used for Sociology courses.

In their report (April 2017), the Peer Review Team (PRT) provided feedback that describes how the Sociology program meets the IQAP evaluation criteria and is consistent with the University’s mission and academic priorities. The PRT noted that current students and alumni are strongly committed to the Department of Sociology, and even when they offered criticisms it was in the context of trying to help the department to better live up to its commitments to equity, diversity and inclusiveness as well as high quality education. Although somewhat worn out by the grind of the 3+2 teaching schedule (which will be replaced by a 2+2 teaching schedule in 2017-18), the faculty were genuinely happy to be part of their department and eager to find ways to strengthen sociology’s role at Ryerson University. Furthermore, the administrative staff was also extremely positive about working in the Department of Sociology. The site visit left the PRT with the strong impression that all segments of the department are committed to working together in the coming years to enhance the BA in Sociology program, and find new ways to strengthen Sociology’s contributions to Ryerson University’s mission and strategic priorities.

A core strength of the Sociology curriculum is the inclusion of experiential learning in core courses, such as statistics and the capstone course, and the recent addition of courses that address Indigenous issues as part of a commitment to work toward decolonizing the curriculum. Most distinctive about the university’s priorities are the emphases on enabling exceptional experiences for students and expanding community engagement and city building. In these important areas, the BA in Sociology program appears to be doing exemplary work and should be showcased by Ryerson University as epitomizing its distinctive academic profile in Toronto.

A weakness of the program, though by no means a result of decisions made by the Sociology Department, is the large class sizes throughout the full four years of the degree program, and the lack of Teaching Assistants or discussion groups in the vast majority of courses.

The Director of the Sociology program submitted a response to the Peer Reviewers’ Report on September 26, 2017 following review by the Departmental Council. The response to the Peer Review Team Report and the Program’s Response was submitted by the Dean of the Faculty of Arts on February 14, 2018.

The Dean’s Response stated that the self-study presents a very comprehensive description of the program, its strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for growth. The Sociology program clearly distinguishes itself from comparable programs through its consistent emphasis on social equity, community engagement and inclusion throughout the curriculum, its strengths in teaching classical and contemporary theories in sociology, its emphasis on experiential learning and the training it offers students in core skills in qualitative and quantitative research methods. The department was diligent in collecting and analyzing data received from their graduates, which is a challenge for such a new program, created in 2005. As the PRT pointed out, student surveys were ineffective due to a low response rate, which the department proposes to improve by better tracking of its graduates. The self-study is well-

aligned with the Ryerson University and the Faculty of Arts Academic plans (2014-2019), particularly in its emphasis on experiential learning and community-building. In all of its initiatives, whether the focus be curricular development, research, hiring of faculty and contract lecturers, the Department of Sociology maintains its emphasis on social equity, diversity and inclusion. The Department's response to the PRT gives careful consideration to the twenty recommendations in the report, noting that certain changes, particularly those with resource implications, are beyond the purview of the department and in some cases beyond that of the Faculty of Arts. However, the department makes a commitment to advocate for the recommended improvements in the areas of teaching and curricular development (including experiential learning), RFA and sessional hiring, space and research. Many of the recommendations from the PPR and the PRT report do have resource implications, which will have to be considered carefully by the Faculty of Arts, given the constraints of limited funding allocations from other levels of administration, collective agreement obligations and the university-wide tripartite curriculum.

## **B) SUMMARY OF THE REVIEWERS' RECOMMENDATIONS WITH THE PROGRAM'S RESPONSES**

1) The recent growth of the Sociology Department has not been matched with increased faculty resources. The growth of the majors program (513 in 2015-16), the number of additional students taught through Liberal Studies (7203 in 2015-16), a larger than average student to faculty ratio (36.9 in 2015-16), and heavy reliance on contract instructors (upwards of 60% of teaching), all point to a pressing need for additional full-time tenure stream faculty. We recommend hiring a minimum of 1 (and ideally 2) more tenure-stream faculty, in addition to the position already advertised for this year, and in addition to replacing future retirements.

### ***Program's response:***

*The Department will continue to advocate for tenure-track positions to meet the needs of the program, using the Report to support our arguments. We recognize that precarious academic employment is a serious problem and seek to attain the resources that will allow our department to meet our Program goals which align with those of the Faculty of Arts and the University.*

2) The precarity of contract faculty works against the department's overall commitment to equity, and we urge the department to consider ways to enhance the job security of long term contract faculty within the terms of the Collective Agreements, for example by bundling courses to facilitate qualifying for benefits, and providing longer term contracts.

### ***Program's response:***

*Sociology will advocate for these changes but they lie well beyond the purview of the department.*

3) Within the Faculty of Arts, the Sociology Department provides a disproportionate share of courses to the Liberal Studies stream. Although this is a strength of the department, at present it also limits their ability to offer elective courses to their own majors. The Faculty of Arts should find ways to more evenly distribute the Liberal Studies workload across departments in the faculty.

### ***Program's response:***

*Sociology will advocate for these changes but they lie well beyond the purview of the department. The department will assess our overall commitment (Recommendation 3) to teaching liberal studies courses as part of our 2018-19 planning cycle.*

4) We recommend that the department and the Faculty of Arts continue to support the development of Caribbean Studies as an integral part of its leadership in addressing equity and diversity.

### ***Program's response:***

*The department will press for additional resources for Caribbean Studies. It is committed to designing faculty postings for future positions that attract applicants with a Caribbean Studies focus. We are also*

*partnering with Caribbean Studies to raise the visibility of the program across campus and in the broader community.*

5) The Sociology Department is a leader in providing experiential learning opportunities to students. Although this is so, only a small number of Sociology courses currently provide experiential learning opportunities. We recommend that the Faculty provide additional supports needed to expand experiential learning opportunities in more Sociology courses.

***Program's response:***

*We are committed to extending experiential learning opportunities to all students, particularly given the direction of policies at the Ryerson and Provincial levels. To develop experiential, community engaged and career oriented opportunities for Sociology students, the department is exploring collaboration and partnership with the Ryerson Career Centre, Level Up and Student Affairs Storytelling along with our ongoing work with the Service Learning Coordinator (Community Engaged Learning) and the Career Counsellor from the Faculty of Arts Student Experience Centre.*

6) One result of the increasing popularity of Sociology courses is that all courses are large, including upper level courses that average between 50 and 80 students, and several third year core courses as large at 120 students. At the same time, very few courses in Sociology have Teaching Assistants so it is usually not possible to provide small discussion groups. We recommend that more Teaching Assistants be made available to run smaller discussion groups in large courses. Furthermore, until graduate student TAs in sufficient numbers can be recruited, we recommend employing senior Sociology majors as undergrad TAs in a wide variety of 1st and 2nd year courses, just as they are currently employed as peer mentors in methods and statistics courses.

***Program's response:***

*This is both a curricular and a resources issue. We are committed to advocating for these resources and exploring possible curricular design changes. The Department will encourage the Faculty of Arts to conduct a thorough review of TA resource allocation that might allow us to extend tutorial experiences to more of our students and ensure the highest pedagogical standards in courses that have tutorials by building in adequate time in contracts for meetings with faculty members, attending lectures and TA office hours to increase contact opportunities for undergraduates.*

7) The size of the courses means that most Sociology majors graduate without ever having a small seminar. We recommend that the department explore ways to ensure that a small handful of upper level courses can be delivered as small seminars. We further recommend that the capstone course be piloted as a seminar, with 4 sections of 30-35 students (rather than the current 2 sections of 60-65 students); and that some variety in the substantive content of the different sections be introduced so that students can choose a capstone seminar that best matches their sociological interests and strengths.

***Program's response:***

*The Department is embarking on a redesign of SOC 490 (Capstone) to offer a smaller class opportunity for students approaching graduation*

8) We recommend that Ryerson University build new classrooms so that all sections of required Sociology courses can be offered in the morning or afternoon, thus facilitating a reasonable working day for commuting students. We also recommend that Ryerson University consider building a few very large classrooms so that departments like Sociology can have the option of offering fewer sections of introductory courses (accompanied by more Teaching Assistants and tutorials) and shifting teaching resources into more senior courses.

***Program's response:***

*Sociology will advocate for these changes but they lie well beyond the purview of the department.*

9) The current configuration of space is not adequate for the proper functioning of the department. We recommend that additional space be allocated to Sociology, including a dedicated seminar space for meetings and four additional offices.

**Program's response:**

*Sociology will advocate for these changes but they lie well beyond the purview of the department.*

10) There is a shortage of computers on campus, especially computers with statistical software needed for Sociology methods courses. We recommend opening a new drop-in computer lab that is not reserved for class use. As a stopgap, we suggest that statistical software be loaded on mobile computers available for loan from the library. Furthermore, we recommend that computer repair and replacement be given greater priority by the Faculty of Arts, particularly when the demand for computers in labs is very strong.

**Program's response:**

*Sociology will advocate for these changes but they lie well beyond the purview of the department.*

11) We recommend that, in the future, Ryerson University increase the size of the sample of Sociology graduates it surveys so that relatively precise population estimates on the employment history of graduates can be obtained.

**Program's response:**

*The Department is committed to enhancing student experiences in our program. We will improve our tracking of program graduates that will permit more effective sampling for future surveys and provide enhanced networking opportunities for graduates and students nearing graduation.*

12) We recommend the initiation of a Department of Sociology mentorship program so that faculty members who need to 'jump start' their research programs can gain counsel from colleagues with greater research and publication successes. We also encourage senior administrators at Ryerson to increase the availability of internal research funding for faculty members.

**Program's response:**

*As part of the MA program development and the overall enhancement of the Sociology Department we are endeavoring to increase our research profile and faculty research opportunities. The Department Research Committee will consider the proposal for a mentorship system to support faculty research.*

13) It is a very positive change that Sociology students will soon be allowed to take two Sociology Liberal Studies courses as part of their Sociology degree. However we wonder if this change goes far enough, and consequently recommend that the department rethink whether the restriction on majors enrolling in Sociology Liberal Studies courses needs to be eliminated entirely.

**Program's response:**

*The department will assess further alterations to the liberal studies restrictions facing program students. However, we are conscious of balancing the creation of more options for students against redundancy in course offerings and the need for higher level sociology-specific opportunities for program students.*

14) We support the Department of Sociology's commitment to strengthening its expertise in Indigenous Studies and recommend that the entire curriculum be audited with the goal of decolonizing all facets of what is taught in sociology courses.

**Program's response:**

*We are hiring an additional faculty member in this area in 2017-18 after a failed search last year. We are in the process of establishing an Indigenous Sociology course requirement for all students in the Program. We are beginning work with Aboriginal Initiatives and Aboriginal Student Services to develop a comprehensive approach that will combine curricular changes with issues of access and support for Indigenous student in the program. The department is establishing an Equity Working Group that will continue the work on indigenizing and decolonizing the curriculum.*

15) Given the current departmental strengths in, and commitment to, the sociological study of equity, diversity and inclusiveness, we recommend that every new tenure-track hiring should contribute to this thrust of scholarship and teaching in one way or another.

***Program's response:***

*This crucial commitment is a central consideration in the constitution of our Departmental Hiring Committee and the design of faculty positions.*

16) As Sociology moves toward a Masters program, we recommend that Ryerson University increase its budget for the library, bringing it closer to the average for Ontario universities. We also recommend reopening negotiations with the University of Toronto to try to secure Ryerson graduate students complete access to the University of Toronto's book collection and digital resources.

***Program's response:***

*Sociology will advocate for these changes but they lie well beyond the purview of the department. The development of this MA is a high priority for the Department including an evaluation of library resources.*

17) Students raised concerns about the absence of a process for dealing with student complaints about courses and/or specific faculty. We recommend that the department create a joint faculty/student committee to develop a process to address complaints.

***Program's response:***

*We will work with the student representatives in Departmental Council to consider directions for consideration of student issues and complaints.*

18) We recommend that the Ryerson administration proceed quickly to develop protocols to protect faculty who experience on-line and other forms of racialized, gendered, and/or sexualized forms of harassment or violence.

***Program's response:***

*The department is establishing an Equity Working Group that will continue the work on co-operation with partners in the university to establish protocols concerning racialized, gendered and sexualized forms of harassment aimed at faculty teaching with an equity focus.*

19) We recommend that resources be made available so that faculty can continue the work, begun in "Inhabiting Critical Spaces", of addressing how relations of inequality shape teaching and learning at Ryerson.

***Program's response:***

*The department is establishing an Equity Working Group that will continue the work on advocacy for resources to continue the work begun in the "Inhabiting Critical Spaces" Project.*

20) We recommend that the Faculty of Arts and the Provost support Sociology to develop a Masters program in the very near future.

***Program's response:***

*The Sociology MA Program in Transformative Social Research is currently going forward to the next stage of internal development at Ryerson. The development of this MA is a high priority for the Department.*

## **C) DEAN'S RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Curricular Development**

The Faculty of Arts recognizes the strength of curricular innovation in the Department of Sociology and supports its goals in increasing electivity for its students, subject to the usual resource constraints.

### **Experiential Learning**

The Faculty of Arts is currently establishing a working group on diverse forms of experiential learning. Further development of such initiatives is a priority for the Faculty of Arts.

### **Liberal Studies**

The PRT wonders if the weight of Liberal Studies could be better distributed across the Faculty of Arts departments. The Dean of Arts office will consider this possibility, recognizing the tremendous contribution that the Department of Sociology makes to Liberal Studies and service teaching in general. We are certainly willing to consider increased resources for Liberal Studies teaching, and we have recently increased funding for the possible use of TA/GAs. While previously, Sociology program students could not take Sociology courses designated as Liberal Studies, this restriction has been lifted and they may now take up to 2 courses designated The PRT would like to see unlimited access for program students to upper-level Liberal Studies courses in Sociology. This will be a matter for the department to consider.

### **Curriculum Delivery and Resources**

The Dean of Arts office is willing to work with the department to review class sizes in senior courses, such as the capstone SOC 490, as well as the possibility of larger classes at other levels.

### **TA/GAs (Teaching Assistants/Graduate Assistants)**

Recently, we increased the funding for TA/GAs with the intent that departments would decide for themselves where these resources would be most effective. The PRT underlines the benefits of having senior undergraduate students work as teaching assistants, similar to the peer mentors who currently support students in classes in quantitative methods. This is an interesting idea but would have to be considered in relation to the current collective agreement governing TA/GAs and our responsibilities towards graduate students at Ryerson University.

### **RFA and Sessional Hires**

Equity hiring is critical as the department sees a need to increase the number of racialized males as well as Indigenous faculty. Fortunately, the current Provost has indicated that hiring more faculty members is a priority, university-wide. Like other departments, on an annual basis, the Department of Sociology has the opportunity to request new positions by demonstrating need in relation to curricular initiatives new and old as well as overall student enrolments in program courses, open electives and Liberal Studies. The Dean of Arts office highly values the contributions of our sessional instructors and is committed to social equity and to reducing the precariousness of these positions within the limits allowed by resource constraints and the collective agreements in place at the university.

### **Space**

The Faculty of Arts will review these space needs while noting that lack of space is a chronic problem at Ryerson University. The Dean of Arts office advocates continuously for new space; however, permanent solutions are in the purview of executive administration.

### **Scholarly, Research and Creative Work (SRC):**

In its response to the PRT report, the department indicates that development of the Sociology MA Program in Transformative Social Research is currently underway. Such a degree would stimulate SRC production and reinforce a culture of research that would be beneficial for the department at both the graduate and undergraduate level. Overall, the department is committed to seeking out research opportunities for faculty and raising its research profile, which should also have the effect of attracting many high-calibre students to the program. All of these endeavours have the support of the Office of the Dean of Arts which is fully engaged in enhancing the current culture of research in our faculty.

### **Equity and Governance**



Equity is an essential element of policy and practice in the Department of Sociology and the Faculty of Arts. The Department of Sociology has resolved to establish an Equity Working group that will focus on 'indigenization' and decolonization of the curriculum, support equity focused projects and deal with issues from discrimination and sexual harassment to student complaints. This is a responsive solution to student and faculty feedback and provides a useful model for other departments. It also acknowledges the harassment faced in the public forum by social scientists who promote social equity for women and other disadvantaged groups.

**Conclusion**

The program department's emphasis on academic excellence, curricular innovation, experiential learning and community engagement is consistent with the Faculty of Arts Academic Plan (2014-2019). The Dean of Arts office is willing to work with the department to address the recommendations set out in the PPR self-study and developmental plan as well as the PRT report, while taking into account the institutional constraints on resources, curricular structure and space faced by the Faculty of Arts.

**D) IMPLEMENTATION PLANS**

<b>Recommendation # 1</b> Community-based, experiential and career-oriented learning
<b>Rationale:</b> the external reviewers noted strengths of experiential learning in the Sociology Program and recommended expansion (Rec 5).The Self-Study raised the issue of embedding experiential and community-based learning into the curriculum, so it is not contingent simply on the interests and willingness of faculty members to engage in these kinds of initiatives (Self Study p. 32). At the same time, the Province of Ontario is requiring experiential learning as part of all post-secondary experiences and examining methods to best prepare students for life after graduation.
<b>Objective: (statement that further describes the recommendation)</b> Embed experiential learning further in curriculum and enhance student opportunities for professional development and career focus.
<b>Actions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider designating specific courses as experiential – so that any instructor taking on the course would know that it included experiential elements</li> <li>• Enhance resources for experiential and community-based learning (e.g. support for extra TA hours, RA support, funding for the invitation of Elders or other guest experts)</li> <li>• Pilot – Career focus program for Sociology students (Winter term 2018)</li> <li>• First running as a course in Winter term 2019 (SSH 500) with job shadow and career-oriented mentorship by fourth-year students to first-year students</li> </ul>
<b>Timeline: (What are the estimated timelines for acting on implementation of the recommendation?)</b> 2018-19 academic year with submission of proposal to VPA by June 30, 2019; commences Fall 2020
<b>Responsibility for leading initiative:</b> Curriculum Committee, Partnership with Career Centre and Service Learning Coordinator

<b>Recommendation # 2</b> Deepen Equity Focus
<b>Rationale:</b> The External reviewers noted the department's strong commitment to equity in our Department Plan 2014-19 and in the PPR self-study. Five recommendations revolved around opportunities and challenges for the program in the areas of equity, diversity and inclusion (Recommendations 4,14,15,18 and 19)
<b>Objective: (statement that further describes the recommendation)</b> Deepen the transformative equity focus in the department by Indigenizing and decolonizing the Sociology Curriculum, increasing the variety of equity-oriented courses and strengthening processes for raising equity-oriented concerns in the department
<b>Actions:</b>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Map steps to Indigenize and decolonize the curriculum. The department already approved and implemented SOC427 – Indigenous Perspectives on Canada as a required course in second year (start in Fall 2018).</li> <li>• Workshops for faculty on Indigenization, trans issues and other aspects of equity-oriented teaching</li> <li>• New courses (e.g., Blackness and Freedom)</li> <li>• Development and report from Equity Working Group</li> <li>• Support for Caribbean studies</li> <li>• Expansion of resources for equity-oriented curricular development, learning and teaching, and mentorship of racialized and Indigenous students</li> </ul>
<p><b>Timeline: (What are the estimated timelines for acting on implementation of the recommendation?)</b> beginning 2017-18 academic year, final proposals to VPA by June 30, 2020; commences Fall 2021</p>
<p><b>Responsibility for leading initiative:</b> Curriculum Committee; Equity Working Group</p>
<p><b>Responsibly for approving recommendation, providing any resources made necessary by the recommendation, and overall monitoring of the implementation of the recommendation:</b> Faculty Dean</p>

<p><b>Recommendation # 3</b> Sociology Liberal Studies Electives Availability to Program Students</p>
<p><b>Rationale:</b> the external reviewers noted lack of access to Sociology liberal studies courses for Sociology Program Students (Rec 13). The Liberal Studies courses offer students enticing substantively-oriented course options.</p>
<p><b>Objective: (statement that further describes the recommendation):</b> Provide program students with a wider variety of substantive courses covering exciting sociological topics</p>
<p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow program students to take two upper liberal sociology courses during their undergraduate career and assess the impact</li> <li>• Investigate other options to increase opportunities for students to take substantive courses (see Recommendation 4 below).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Timeline: (What are the estimated timelines for acting on implementation of the recommendation?)</b> 2017-18 academic year with submission of proposal to VPA by September, 30, 2017; commences Fall 2018</p>
<p><b>Responsibility for leading initiative:</b> Curriculum Committee</p>
<p><b>Responsibly for approving recommendation, providing any resources made necessary by the recommendation, and overall monitoring of the implementation of the recommendation:</b> Faculty Dean</p>

<p><b>Recommendation # 4</b> Strengthen Sociology Focus of Fourth Year Winter Term</p>
<p><b>Rationale:</b> the external reviewers noted lack of smaller upper level experiences (Rec 6 and 7), while the Self-Study noted that the “fourth year experience that may feel like a bit of an anti-climax” (Self Study p. 17). The improvement of the second term of fourth year is connected to discussion of the overall distribution of electives through the year</p>
<p><b>Objective: (statement that further describes the recommendation)</b> Smaller seminar courses offer the possibility of integrative learning in which students draw on their theoretical and methodological preparation to investigate pressing social issues through a sociological lens. We will explore possibilities for students to be exposed to more integrative learning through the exploration of substantive issues.</p>
<p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore possibility of upper year seminars in Winter term of 4<sup>th</sup> year</li> <li>• Examine distribution of substantive electives through the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year</li> </ul>

<b>Timeline: (What are the estimated timelines for acting on implementation of the recommendation?)</b> 2018-19 academic year with submission of proposal to VPA by June 30, 2019; commences Fall 2020
<b>Responsibility for leading initiative:</b> Curriculum Committee
<b>Responsibly for approving recommendation, providing any resources made necessary by the recommendation, and overall monitoring of the implementation of the recommendation:</b> Faculty Dean

<b>Recommendation # 5</b> Develop Graduate Program in Transformative Social Research
<b>Rationale:</b> The external reviewers supported the development of a graduate program (Rec 20) and enhancement of the research profile of the department (Rec 12). This will strengthen the undergraduate program through curricular design around possible hybrid fourth year/graduate seminar courses. It will also strengthen the department's reputation and the delivery of leading-edge expertise in undergraduate courses.
<b>Objective: (statement that further describes the recommendation)</b> The development of a graduate program in Transformative Social Research to enhance the research profile of the department and offer new forms of seminar-based learning for senior undergraduate students.
<b>Actions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete Letter of Intention for Graduate Program</li> <li>• Upon approval of Letter of Intention, complete full proposal</li> <li>• Consider possible hybrid 4<sup>th</sup> year/graduate seminars as part of the curricular development of the graduate program</li> <li>• Enhance the research profile of the department by highlighting work under the rubric of transformative social research.</li> </ul>
<b>Timeline: (What are the estimated timelines for acting on implementation of the recommendation?)</b> 2017-18 complete Letter of Intention; 2018-19 academic year complete proposal with submission by August 31, 2019; commences Fall 2020 or 2021
<b>Responsibility for leading initiative:</b> Graduate Committee
<b>Responsibly for approving recommendation, providing any resources made necessary by the recommendation, and overall monitoring of the implementation of the recommendation:</b> Faculty Dean

**Date of next Periodic Program Review**  
2025 - 2026