

***SUBMITTED TO OUCQA FOR INFORMATION – October 20, 2021***

***APPROVED BY TRENT UNIVERSITY’S SENATE COMMITTEE – October 19, 2021***

# Final Assessment Report & Implementation Plan

# BA International Development Studies

# Completed by the Cyclical Program Review Committee (CPRC)

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| **Degree Programs Being Reviewed** | **Bachelor of Arts in International Development Studies** |
| **External Reviewers** | **Dr. Rebecca Tiessen, University of Ottawa**  **Dr. Sally Humphries, University of Guelph** |
| **Internal Representative** | **Dr. Deborah White, Department of Sociology, Trent University** |
| **Year of Review** | **2020-2021** |
| **Date of Site Visit** | **February 8, 10, 11 & 12, 2021** |
| **Due Date for Implementation Report by the Program** | **March 1, 2022** |
| **Date Prepared by CPRC** | **October 6, 2021** |
| **Date Approved by Provost & VP Academic** | **October 7, 2021** |
| **Signature of Provost & VP Academic** | **Michael Khan Provost & VP Academic Trent** |

The Bachelor of Arts in International Development Studies (IDST) seeks to consider and understand issues facing developing countries. It is inherently an interdisciplinary field that examines societies and cultures undergoing rapid change, and the complex global relations shaping issues such as agriculture, the environment, the global economy, culture and identity, human rights, and social transformation. The program pays particular attention to the world’s poorest and most vulnerable populations, especially those of Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Latin America, regions increasingly known as the ‘Global South’, and their complex relations with the most powerful groups and international organizations.

As Canada’s first International Development Studies Program, it remains at the forefront of the field of study, offering specialisations in African Studies and Global Migration & Refugee Studies, and a unique experiential learning opportunity. Students in the Trent-in-Ghana program will be immersed in an international culture where they will deepen their understanding of international development by living, studying and working in Ghana.

**Summary of Process**

During the 2020-2021 academic year, the Bachelor of Arts in International Development Studies program underwent a review. Two arm’s-length external reviewers (Dr. Rebecca Tiessen, University of Ottawa and Dr. Sally Humphries, University of Guelph) and one internal representative (Dr. Deborah White, Department of Sociology, Trent University) were invited to review the self-study documentation. The virtual visit took place on February 8th, 10th, 11th & 12th, 2021.

This Final Assessment Report (FAR), in accordance with Trent University’s Institutional Quality Assurance Policy (IQAP), provides a synthesis of the cyclical review of the graduate degree programs. The report considers four evaluation documents: the Program’s Self-Study, the External Reviewers’ Report, the Program Response, and the Decanal Response.

A summary of the review process is as follows: the academic unit completed a self-study that addressed all components of the evaluation criteria as outlined in Trent’s IQAP. Appendices included: Curriculum Vitae, Course Syllabi, Data Tables, Student and Alumni Surveys and a Library Statement of Support. Qualified external reviewers were invited to conduct a review of the program that involved a review of all relevant documentation (self-study, appendices, IQAP) in advance of the virtual visit. During the virtual site visit reviewers met with senior administration, faculty, students and staff.

Once the External Reviewers’ Report was received, both the Program and Dean provided responses to the Report. The Cyclical Program Review Committee (CPRC) reviewed and assessed the quality of the degree program based on the four review documents and reported on significant program strengths, opportunities for improvement and enhancement, and the implementation of recommendations.

The Implementation Plan identifies those recommendations selected for implementation and specifies the proposed follow-up and the person(s) responsible for leading the follow-up. Academic units, in consultation with the respective Deans, will submit an Implementation Report in response to the recommendations identified for follow-up. The Report is due March 1, 2022.

**Significant Program Strengths**

The External Reviewers found that the ‘International Development Studies Program is intellectually rigorous and offers students an outstanding scholarly and academic education’. The emphasis on interdisciplinarity in experiential learning and global perspectives makes the International Development Studies program a hallmark program at Trent University. The Program offers a strong commitment to experiential learning through the nationally and internationally renowned Trent-in-Ghana study abroad program creating a unique experience for students. As an alternative to the year abroad program experience, students may enrol in IDST 3700Y, a Community Based Research Project to apply their knowledge and skills to gain practical experience.

**Opportunities for Program Improvement and Enhancement**

The continuous monitoring and quality improvement of our programs is essential to supporting student-centred education and the learning experience of our students. This section identifies ways in which the program can improve the student experience and stay current with the discipline.

**Enhance Experiential Learning Opportunities**. The Department may want to explore additional opportunities for experiential learning, e.g., shorter time period, domestic/local. Existing experiential learning opportunities could be better marketed to potential students for recruitment. In addition, strategies could be implemented to ensure that the existing experiential learning opportunities can be sustained over the long term.

**Increased Collaboration with other Academic Units** will provide opportunities to expand pathways and areas of specializations for students to pursue. Based on faculty complement, courses from other academic units and/or cross-listed courses will need to be considered.

**Curriculum Review**

* While the course offerings in IDST offer an outstanding educational experience in terms of foundations of learning, additional approaches could be employed to diversify, decolonize and internationalize the course offerings and curriculum.
* The Program is encouraged to review curriculum offerings on an annual basis to ensure that:
  + student learning outcomes are being achieved;
  + curriculum is current and diversified;
  + the department is incorporating feedback from students and graduates as part of the curriculum review process, and;
  + consideration of instructional needs and pending faculty retirements are being considered and planned for.

**Complete List of Recommendations**

**Recommendation 1**

**That a recruitment strategy be developed for the IDST degree with a focus on attracting high school students and the need to enhance experiential learning opportunities.**

**Program Response**

The Department welcomes this recommendation and looks forward to working with the Marketing and Communications Office to better promote the program and improve the Department's visibility. Members of the office will be invited to a future departmental meeting to discuss marketing strategies, with a view to enabling the IDST Department to be more involved with recruitment efforts, to assist in the development of promotion materials, and improve our online visibility.

**Decanal Response**

The Department is encouraged to meet with the Dean, Recruitment & Marketing, and Careerspace to develop a recruitment strategy and enhance experiential learning opportunities.

**Recommendation 2**

**That the program highlight areas of specialization through the development of pathways or bundling of existing courses to highlight areas of specialization and for marketing purposes.**

**Program Response**

The Department supports this recommendation and will consider it through the curriculum review process.

**Decanal Response**

The Department is encouraged to collaborate with other academic units to discuss possible opportunities for new pathways for students (e.g., specializations) including Trent International and School of Business.

**Recommendation 3**

**That the first year courses be used more strategically to recruit high school students by emphasizing the capacities developed through interdisciplinary learning and problem-solving.**

**Program Response**

The Department supports this recommendation and looks forward to exploring this initiative.

**Decanal Response**

The Department is encouraged to meet with the Dean and Recruitment & Marketing to discuss possible opportunities for high school student recruiting.

**Recommendation 4**

**That the first year courses IDST 1001H and 1002H be co-taught by full-time faculty members.**

**Program Response**

The Department strongly supports this recommendation, which has been implemented.

**Decanal Response**

Full-time faculty teaching the first-year courses will enhance the first-year student experience and should have a positive impact on recruitment.

**Recommendation 5**

**That a thorough curriculum review be conducted to address the need to diversify curriculum and course offerings and manage/plan for pending faculty retirements**

* **Consider internationalizing and decolonizing course curriculum to better reflect Black, Indigenous and Persons of Colour (BIPOC) scholars**
* **Consider integrating diverse resources such as podcasts, poetry, short stories for provide greater diversity in voices represented**
* **In the first year courses, provide a broader focus on Global Studies**
* **Review of elective course offerings to ensure courses reflect the specialization of faculty members and future hires**

**Program Response**

The Department plans to continue the ongoing curriculum review and will seriously consider how to address these issues. The curriculum review has already produced a number of curricular changes and as the curriculum review process moves forward, the department will:

* + Consider further broadening the focus of our first-year courses to appeal to more students.
  + Prioritize courses based on faculty expertise given recent and impending retirements, while at the same time trying to ensure that as many foundational courses are taught by core faculty as possible.
  + Continue to seek new ways to incorporate decolonizing perspectives and BIPOC scholars in the curriculum and continue to integrate resources such as poetry, podcasts and artwork into our courses.

**Decanal Response**

The Dean is supportive of this direction and looks forward to learning of the Department’s progress.

**Recommendation 6**

**That the sustainability of current experiential learning opportunities be reviewed (i.e., Trent-in-Ghana) and new opportunities be explored (i.e., co-op, shorter options)**

**Program Response**

The Department is confident about the sustainability of ongoing experiential learning opportunities and are willing to review the current offerings. Experiential learning has long been central to the curriculum, as reflected in the core components of the Trent-Ghana-Year Abroad Program, the Community-Based Research Project, and IDST 4220Y Assessment of Development Projects. Additionally, we are introducing a new shorter field course of 4-6 weeks (IDST 3850H) and several further options for community-based research (3701Y, 3711H, 3722H and 3802D) in connection with our Specialization in Global Migration and Refugee Studies. The Department does not currently have sufficient resources to develop and maintain a co-op program but would welcome the appointment of a co-op administrator to assist in the development of such a program.

**Decanal Response**

The Department should continue to explore experiential learning opportunities with the Dean, Careerspace, and Trent International.

**Recommendation 7**

**That any new hires, limited term or tenure-track, prioritize the hiring of a BIPOC woman or gender diverse individual to increase diversity in the faculty complement with consideration be given to hiring in the area of socio-cultural studies**

**Program Response**

The Department recognizes that the current gender balance in the Department is not sustainable, especially given that the student body is predominantly female. To meet the imperative to diversify the faculty complement, the Department’s priority is to hire ananthropologist or sociologist who is a female from the global South. The Department notes that attracting highly qualified candidates will benefit from a tenure-stream hire.

**Decanal Response**

The Dean agrees with this recommendation and is looking forward to having this discussion with the IDST program as part of the annual staffing plan process. The increase of a permanent (TUFA) faculty complement in IDST is related to resources and will be considered as part of the annual staffing plan discussions under the purview of the Dean.

**Recommendation 8**

**That increased investment in offering the Specialization in Global Migration and Refugees be reconsidered in order to focus on the staffing of core courses.**

**Program Response**

The Department is pleased that the reviewers see the promise and value of this new initiative. The Department is indeed stretched to capacity in offering the Specialization in Global Migration and Refugee Studies and have requested additional resources from the Dean.

**Decanal Response**

The Dean commends the Department on launching the new Specialization in Global Migration and Refugee Studies for the 2021-22 academic year. The Dean will work with the Department to monitor instructional resources to ensure that adequate resources are available to sustain the core courses for the degree program.

**Implementation Plan**

The Implementation Plan provides a summary of the recommendations that require action. The Academic Unit in consultation with their Dean will be responsible for moving forward with the recommendations to ensure that each is completed within the recommended timeframe. The Academic Unit will submit an Implementation Report to their Dean reporting on the completion and/or status of each recommendation. The Dean will review the Implementation Report prior to submitting the report to the Office of the Provost.

**DUE DATE FOR IMPLEMENTATION REPORT: MARCH 1, 2022**

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| **Recommendation** | **Proposed Follow-Up**  If no follow-up is recommended, indicate ‘No follow-up report is required’ and provide rationale | **Specific Timeline**  Indicate specific timeline for addressing or completing recommendation | **Position Responsible for Leading Follow-up** |
| **MARKETING & RECRUITMENT**  **Recommendation 1**  That a recruitment strategy be developed for the IDST degree with a focus on attracting high school students and the need to enhance experiential learning opportunities  **Recommendation 2**  That the program highlight areas of specialization through the development of pathways or bundling of existing courses to highlight areas of specialization and for marketing purposes  **Recommendation 3**  That the first year courses be used more strategically to recruit high school students by emphasizing the capacities developed through interdisciplinary learning and problem-solving | Department to develop recruitment strategies to increase student enrolment. | 4 months | Chair in discussion with Dean and Recruitment & Marketing |
| **Recommendation 4**  That the first year courses IDST 1001H and 1002H be co-taught by full-time faculty members | No follow-up is required. First year courses currently being taught by full-time faculty members. | Completed |  |
| **Recommendation 5**  That a thorough curriculum review be conducted to address the need to diversify curriculum and course offerings and manage/plan for pending faculty retirements (2)   * Consider internationalizing and decolonizing course curriculum to better reflect Black, Indigenous and Persons of Colour (BIPOC) scholars (2) * Consider integrating diverse resources such as podcasts, poetry, short stories for provide greater diversity in voices represented (2) * In the first year courses, provide a broader focus on Global Studies (8) * Review of elective course offerings to ensure courses reflect the specialization of faculty members and future hires (4) | Department has begun a curriculum review and should continue with review and revisions. | In progress |  |
| **Recommendation 6**  That the sustainability of current experiential learning opportunities be reviewed (i.e., Trent-in-Ghana) and new opportunities be explored (i.e., co-op, shorter options) | Department should explore opportunities to grow and expand experiential learning. | 4 months | Chair in discussion with Dean, Careerspace, and Trent International |
| **FACULTY RESOURCES**  **Recommendation 7**  That any new hires, limited term or tenure-track, prioritize the hiring of a BIPOC woman or gender diverse individual to increase diversity in the faculty complement with consideration be given to hiring in the area of socio-cultural studies  **Recommendation 8**  That increased investment in offering the Specialization in Global Migration and Refugees be reconsidered in order to focus on the staffing of core courses. | No follow-up required. A new hire is related to resources and is part of annual staffing plan discussions under the purview of the Deans.  No follow-up is required. The Specialization has been approved and is offered in the 2021-2022 academic year. |  |  |