

## Ongoing Improvement Progress Report

### Instructions and Report Template

As part of the protocols outlined in Western's Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), to facilitate the continuous improvement of academic programs between review cycles, in connection with the Final Assessment Report (FAR) and Implementation Plan, a monitoring process will include an Ongoing Improvement Progress Report. The outcomes of this report will be considered as part of the program's next cyclical review.

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the operationalization of the implementation plan following a Cyclical Program Review (or the review of a New Program). This should include a brief summary of actions taken by the Program and the Dean's Office since the completion of the review (usually about three years), as well as an update on the stage of implementation for all applicable items. These include:

- whether the action item(s) are in progress, complete or no longer applicable (with a brief explanation);
- the timelines of each item and how they are progressing or expected to progress, particularly if they are diverting from original timelines in the FAR and Implementation Plan, and;
- a short description of any other program developments and improvements that have taken place following the review.
- For new programs only, an evaluation of the initial administration and resourcing of the program.



The following report template has been created for the program to report on progress made regarding recommendations presented in the Implementation Plan, and any other relevant program developments and enhancements.

- The program will complete the template and submit it to the faculty Dean's Office for sign-off.
- The program will then submit the completed Ongoing Improvement and Progress Report to the Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement (OAQE). Reports are due by June 30.
  - The OAQE will present all Ongoing Improvement and Progress Reports to SUPR-U/G for approval. Approvals, or any follow-up questions/concerns, will be communicated to the program and Dean's Office by the OAQE.
  - It should be noted that as per the requirements of the province's Quality Council, progress reports will be posted on the [reports page](#) of the OAQE website.

## Ongoing Improvement Progress Report

### Earth Sciences, BSc / Faculty of Science

<b>Program</b>	Earth Sciences, BSc	<b>Faculty / Affiliated University College</b>	Faculty of Science
<b>Approval Dates of the Review</b>	SUPR-U: February 24, 2021 SCAPA: March 3, 2021 Senate: March 12, 2021	<b>Year of the Next Review</b>	2027-2028
<b>Link to the Programs Final Assessment Report (FAR)</b>	<a href="https://www.uwo.ca/pvp/vpacademic/iqap/academic_programs/iqap_reports/science_and_ergrad/2020%20Earth%20Sciences%20Program%20Review.pdf">https://www.uwo.ca/pvp/vpacademic/iqap/academic_programs/iqap_reports/science_and_ergrad/2020%20Earth%20Sciences%20Program%20Review.pdf</a>		
<b>If applicable, submission of follow-up report(s)</b>	<i>Not applicable</i>		

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Program Chair/Director</b>	Prof. Desmond Moser		30 JUN 2023
<b>Dean (or delegate)</b>	Ken Yeung, Associate Dean, Academic, Faculty of Science		2023-07-04

## Progress Update on the Implementation Plan

Recommendation #1	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline
That the Department of Earth Sciences develops a five to seven-year vision plan.	Development of DES strategic plan, in conjunction with the University Strategic plan	Chair with critical input from all faculty members	May 2021
<p><b>Recommendation Implemented</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes   <input type="checkbox"/> No   <input type="checkbox"/> Partially</p> <p>If no, or partially, is implementation on schedule with the timeline?   <input type="checkbox"/> Yes   <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>			
<p><b>Progress</b></p> <p><i>What specific actions have been taken?</i></p> <p>A 5-year strategic plan was developed between February and April 2021. The goals of the current plan fall under four categories; Discovery (Research), Learning (Education), Engagement (Outreach), and Department Climate (Work Environment).</p> <p>Discovery Research; three of the six areas of potential hire.</p>			

**Next Steps (if applicable)**

Because of COVID-19 limitations on normal group consultation in 2021, and considering the specialties of the recent hires (see below), this current DES strategic plan may merit reconsideration within the next few years (2024 or 2025).

**Additional Comments**

*If applicable*

Recommendation #2	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline
Continue and expand undergraduate recruitment opportunities through curriculum development, service teaching, and outreach.	Work with the Faculty of Science to continue to include Earth Science material in the Integrated Science 1001X, develop a recruitment strategy and to help coordinate the current recruitment efforts.	Undergraduate Chair, Chair, input from all faculty members	Ongoing

**Recommendation Implemented**

Yes  No  Partially

If no, or partially, is implementation on schedule with the timeline?  Yes  No

**Progress**

*What specific actions have been taken?*

Earth Science course content is a major component of the Integrated Science 1001X course, delivered in 2023 by Dr. Adrienne Larocque (L.D. sabbatical replacement), and in 2024 scheduled to be taught by new hire Dr. Jeremiah Shuster whose field, geomicrobiology, will introduce biology-oriented students to life science applications within Earth Science. Likewise, recent Sedimentology hire Dr. Alina Shchepetkina has revived the Earth Sciences Quaternary geology (glacier deposits) course such that it opens the door to new students interested in Environmental and climate science. The Department always has an attractive booth at the March Open House where faculty and student volunteers are on hand to answer questions from prospective students and their parents. Across Canada, Earth Science enrollment is at a low point. If the past is any guide, enrollment will again increase over the coming years. The reason for this cyclical rise and fall in Earth Science enrollment has never been pinned to any particular cause!

**Next Steps (if applicable)**

There is a need for the Department of Earth Sciences to integrate and participate, and, generally, be more present and invested, in the Environmental Sciences program.

**Additional Comments**

*If applicable*

Recommendation #3	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline
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<p>Examine applying for APF and Innovation funds for initiatives to expand the role of earth science instruction at the undergraduate level, especially for first year students.</p>	<p>Identify initiatives (see recommendation 1) and potential sources of funding through the Faculty of Science and Western.</p>	<p>Chair Undergraduate Chair</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p><b>Recommendation Implemented</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Partially</p> <p>If no, or partially, is implementation on schedule with the timeline? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>			
<p><b>Progress</b></p> <p><i>What specific actions have been taken?</i></p> <p>None at this point given that APF funding was not available in the last budget cycle.</p>			
<p><b>Next Steps (if applicable)</b></p> <p>The Chair will task the new DES Undergraduate Committee, led by award-winning instructor Dr. Cam Tsujita, with identifying and crafting APF proposals for the next budget cycle. Dr. Tsujita teaches many of our gateway courses.</p>			
<p><b>Additional Comments</b></p> <p><i>If applicable</i></p>			

**Note:** The total number of expandable text boxes will be dependent on the number of prioritized recommendations appearing in the program's most recent Final Assessment Report (FAR).

### **Continuous Program Enhancement**

*What additional initiatives or changes has the program been working on in relation to continuous program improvement?*

The department is fortunate to have been able to hire Dr. Alina Shchepetkina to cover the field of sedimentary geology pending Dr. Guy Plint's retirement in July 2023. Dr. Shchepetkina will bring a fresh perspective to the discipline, and will soon start to build her research group and facilities. The department had also recently hired Dr. Jeremiah Schuster, a geomicrobiologist who will fill the long-vacated position of Dr. Gordon Southam. Dr. Schuster will revitalize interest in geo-microbial processes, and will interact with the mining, environmental and geological fields. The newly-endowed Robert Hodder Chair in Mineral Deposits Geology is currently at the candidate search stage, with an offer soon to be made. We anticipate that that position will be filled by January 2024. The selected candidate will revitalize the field of mineral deposits geology left vacant by the retirement of Dr. Bob Linnen in 2022.