

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- whether the action item(s) are in progress, complete or no longer applicable (with a brief explanation);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

Interdisciplinary Medical Sciences, MSc / Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry

Program	Interdisciplinary Medical Sciences, MSc	Faculty / Affiliated University College	Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry
Approval Dates of the Review	SUPR-G: March 25, 2020 SCAPA: April 1, 2020 Senate: April 17, 2020	Year of the Next Review	2027-2028
Link to the Programs Final Assessment Report (FAR)	https://www.uwo.ca/pvp/vpacademic/iqap/academic_programs/iqap_reports/schulichgrad/2020%20Interdisciplinary%20Medical%20Sciences%20Program%20Review.pdf		
If applicable, submission of follow-up report(s)	<i>Not applicable</i>		

	Name	Signature	Date
Program Chair/Director	Nicole Campbell		June 22, 2023
Dean (or delegate)	Thomas Drysdale		June 28, 2023

Progress Update on the Implementation Plan

Recommendation #1	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline
<p>One possible way to eventually dissuade the premed cohort from applying to this program as a way to boost their GPAs for Med school applications would be to adopt a nonnumeric grading Scheme.</p>	<p>Members of the program committee are in favour of this approach and would like to discuss the possibility of a strictly pass/fail system with SGPS.</p>	<p>Director Program Committee</p>	<p>Sept 2020</p>
<p>Recommendation Implemented</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>Progress</p> <p><i>What specific actions have been taken?</i></p> <p>During the development of the MSc IMS Program, the design team was cognizant of the pressures and motivations associated with traditional grading schemes. In the first year the program was offered (2021–2022), the team implemented an ‘ungrading’ model whereby students received detailed feedback on their course tasks in combination with qualitative descriptors of how they were doing—below, approaching, meeting, above, and exceeding expectations. The program administration spent time educating students about how this model would be applied to their courses during the onboarding phases in May. For each course, students received their feedback on tasks (no specific weighting was given to them) and at the end of the course, they needed to complete a self-reflection progress report, which showcased their achievement in the course and documented their growth. At the bottom of the</p>			

progress report, the students proposed their grade and then the course coordinator reviewed all reports before signing off on the grade. For this first cohort, the final grade was entered as a percentage; for the most part, there were very few adjustments that were made to these final grades throughout the year. During our end of year retreat, many educators and administrators reflected on the way grades were distributed and wanted to know if we could move away from the percentage system. We discussed options with our institution and have now implemented alpha grading system (e.g., A or B, no +/-) for the current cohort. This system has been going well and it has allowed students to remain focused on the tasks they are completing, and their feedback as opposed to the number associated with it. It has also made the grading process a lot easier and faculty are now spending that time on providing detailed and actionable feedback instead.

One thing to note is that we do still have students with aspirations for medical school; however, we are pleased with how the program is shaping their broader knowledge of the medical sciences. Students are aware that medical schools will not put emphasis on the grades from a one-year course-based program and there does not seem to be any issues with that in terms of recruitment. We have also had students mention how they believe this program will make them better practitioners one day. There have also been some students who have come into the program wanting professional schools but have had their eyes opened with other career paths such as Clinical Coordinators and Health Policy. Overall, we do not have any concerns about the cohort that is still adamant about medicine or other professional programs.

Next Steps (if applicable)

What actions remain? Is there further follow-up?

We will continue to implement the alpha grading system for our students. We are currently evaluating aspects of the program in terms of educational research, and this is one of the fields that we are excited to pursue.

Additional Comments

If applicable

Recommendation #2	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline
<p>Student applicants should not be given false hopes that this MSc program will significantly change their likelihood of medical school admission.</p>	<p>The program will emphasize transferable skills training and experiential learning opportunities at recruitment efforts, ensuring to attract a diverse student population, especially for our first cohort, which we acknowledge will set a tone for future cohorts.</p>	<p>Director Program Committee</p>	<p>Sept 2020</p>
<p>Recommendation Implemented</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>Progress</p> <p><i>What specific actions have been taken?</i></p> <p>When designing the MSc IMS Program, a heavy emphasis was put on transferable skill development. The design and development team completed an environmental scan of transferable skills that are broadly applicable to various fields our students would want to pursue and they created a list titled 7 Core Interdisciplinary Skills. These skills are a focus in the program and students use them to articulate their progress in their courses and with their various experiences. When completing their ePortfolios, students also reference these skills and what they have achieved.</p> <p>Our team was fortunate enough to partner with members of the Faculty of Education and design a program evaluation study, which was approved before the start of the first cohort in May 2021. In this study, we incorporated a survey that students completed before</p>			

starting the program and then also added one in as an exit survey and interview after they completed the program. The results of the pre-program survey from both the first and second cohort have revealed that the emphasis on skill development is the main attractant for students coming into the program. The experiential learning opportunities that students get throughout the program and networking opportunities were also mentioned as motivation for enrolling. This data aligns very well with the rationale for developing the program in the first place.

Overall, we do not have concerns about the program providing false hope for students. Most (if not all) students wishing to pursue professional programs are very aware of what is needed to get into these programs and what will count towards their application. Students who have completed the program did reflect that they believed their applications and interview skills were stronger following the program, which was great to hear.

Next Steps (if applicable)

What actions remain? Is there further follow-up?

The program will continue to emphasize skill development. As more and more students complete the program, we hope to establish ways to communicate where our students went after graduation. We are already aware of many who landed full time jobs and we are excited to be able to use this information for future recruitment purposes. We have also created a LinkedIn group for our alumni to stay connected and share their accomplishments on the platform.

Additional Comments

If applicable

Recommendation #3	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline
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<p>One pool of ideal applicants that should not be underestimated are international students interested in integrating into the Canadian workforce and who may already hold PhDs or medical degrees.</p>	<p>It us currently anticipated that a mix of one third each of local, Canadian from elsewhere, and international students will be admitted to the program.</p>	<p>Director Program Admissions Committee</p>	<p>Sept 2020</p>
<p>Recommendation Implemented</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially</p> <p>If no, or partially, is implementation on schedule with the timeline? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>			
<p>Progress</p> <p><i>What specific actions have been taken?</i></p> <p>Our team agrees with this recommendation and are taking various steps to increase our international student population. The first year the program was offered (May 2021–April 2022), we were unable to recruit international students due to COVID-19 restrictions and VISA delays. However, the following year (May 2022–April 2023), we recruited 3 international students into our cohort of 16 students. Currently, one of these students is interested in pursuing a PhD and they are talking to supervisors at the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry. Another one of the students is interested in working in a laboratory environment after they graduate. The third student is upgrading their professional training in Canada to become a midwife. The team will continue to work with our Faculty to recruit international students to the program. We are in the process of creating an alumni page on our website and showcasing students on our LinkedIn page to assist with recruitment.</p>			
<p>Next Steps (if applicable)</p> <p><i>What actions remain? Is there further follow-up?</i></p>			

To continue to increase our international student numbers, we will need assistance from the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry for recruitment purposes. We have already spoken with them about potential opportunities such as ads on Linked In. The program has also completed their own internal recruitment process based on the international undergraduate student population at Western University. We have recently focused our efforts onto building alumni pages on our website for prospective students to see where students are going after they graduate.

Additional Comments

If applicable

Recommendation #4	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline
If possible, some scholarships should be made available to allow Economically disadvantaged students or international students from underdeveloped countries to participate.	Scholarships for students in the program will be considered based on need and/or merit. We also hope to develop funding initiatives that align with the goals of the program, such as equity, diversity, and inclusion.	Director Program Committee Dean Faculty Development Coordinator	Jan 2021
<p>Recommendation Implemented</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially</p> <p>If no, or partially, is implementation on schedule with the timeline? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>			

Progress

What specific actions have been taken?

This recommendation aligns with the mission and values of the program and the program advocated over the past couple years to senior leadership about implementing it. Currently, the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry budget has approval for one scholarship for an international student, which we hope to award in the 2024–2025 academic year.

Another thing to note is that during the first year of the program, when the tuition was not officially approved by the province (and therefore not OSAP eligible yet), both Schulich and Western University supported graduate students who would have qualified for provincial funding. When the province finally approved the tuition, it was at a slightly lower value than we anticipated; however, this also makes it a more affordable option for students. Overall, we know that our Faculty and institution are committed to this initiative and we know it will have a significant impact on future students who might otherwise not be able to join the program for financial reasons.

Next Steps (if applicable)

What actions remain? Is there further follow-up?

We have followed up with the Vice Dean to discuss the status of a scholarship like this, which would be available to students in course-based programs, where stipends are not offered. We believe that this funding will be extremely important for our international applicants.

Additional Comments

If applicable

Recommendation #5	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline
<p>It may also be beneficial for enhancing diversity and interdisciplinarity in the pool of students to expand the criteria for admission beyond those holding health and life science degrees, to include individuals in the humanities in areas such as philosophy, economics, engineering, etc.</p>	<p>We plan to involve other faculties in the design and delivery of the curriculum, and we will therefore consult with members of these faculties about their students being candidates for our program. However, we would like to determine what students would need in terms of background from their undergraduate studies to be successful in our program. Therefore, at least initially, we will recruit students who hold a health or life science degree, as outlined in the brief, but will continue to explore other disciplines for future cohorts</p>	<p>Director Program Admissions Committee</p>	<p>Jan 2021</p>
<p>Recommendation Implemented</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>Progress</p> <p><i>What specific actions have been taken?</i></p> <p>The program team considered this recommendation before starting recruitment for the first cohort. Based on some of the courses offered and the research experiences, we decided to keep the requirement for a life science, health science, biomedical, or equivalent undergraduate degree program. Since offering this program, we have noticed that even students from these backgrounds struggle a bit with some courses and/or concepts based on their previous studies. We will continue to monitor how science students are</p>			

performing in the program, but at this time, we are hesitant to open it up broadly. Although we have kept this requirement, we have successfully collaborated with other departments and faculty to give our students a breadth of knowledge and experiences.

Next Steps (if applicable)

What actions remain? Is there further follow-up?

We will continue to monitor students in the program and determine what aspects of their undergraduate degrees were most helpful (or missing) to support their success in the program. We are satisfied with the breadth of students applying to the program from various science programs at universities across Canada and within the world.

Additional Comments

If applicable

Recommendation #6	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline
The consultants recommend that there be a sole Director, an Associate Director, and a Program Administrator.	The program committee agrees with this structure and is in the process of identifying candidates. The plan is to have the Director and Associate Director roles filled by the end of this calendar year.	Dean	Jan 2021

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?*

In the fall of 2020, a Program Director (Dr. Nicole Campbell) was assigned. Dr. Campbell was involved with the design and development of this program since its conception, and she continues to be an active member. In 2021, an additional faculty member was hired to support the Interdisciplinary Medical Sciences (undergraduate and graduate) programs; this person was assigned to help with the basic and clinical rotations. The following year, this person moved onto another role, but the program was able to recruit two new faculty members—one was assigned as the Rotation Coordinator and another as the Capstone Coordinator. These two roles work closely with the Director and this organizational structure has been successful for the program.

Next Steps (if applicable)*What actions remain? Is there further follow-up?*

No remaining action currently. We will continue to use this structure because it has supported the program quite well this past year.

Additional Comments*If applicable*

Recommendation #7	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline
Regular meetings should be held by an oversight board. We recommend that this board include, in addition to university administrators and faculty members, some members of the community who may have	The program committee agrees with these recommendations.	Dean Director	Jan 2021

<p>participated in community engaged learning rotations such as local non-for-profits or funding agencies.</p>			
<p>Recommendation Implemented</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>Progress</p> <p><i>What specific actions have been taken?</i></p> <p>Various program groups have been established to ensure the quality of the program. The program has a team of core staff and faculty members who regularly met to design and develop the program. This team continues to meet twice a year to provide updates and discuss upcoming changes to the program. In addition to this group, the Associate Dean Graduate Studies, Program Director, Program Coordinator, Rotation Coordinator, Capstone Coordinator, and Experiential Learning Coordinator meet every two weeks to discuss important issues. Examples include any student issues or concerns, minor changes or updates to program processes, and planning for upcoming events.</p> <p>Beyond the core staff and faculty, all research and community partners are solicited for feedback. Because these members are distributed across the various Western campuses and within the London community, we communicate with these parties separately and predominantly online.</p>			
<p>Next Steps (if applicable)</p> <p><i>What actions remain? Is there further follow-up?</i></p>			

We will continue to meet with our team members to solicit feedback and determine how we can improve the experience for both partners and students in the program. We will also ensure that our community partners continue to have a voice to provide feedback about our students and the program.

Additional Comments

If applicable

Recommendation #8	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline
<p>Because of the importance of the community engagement component, and the likelihood of a heavy reliance on services from the Community Engaged Learning Centre, it is strongly recommended that the university create a new position of Graduate Liaison for Community Engaged Learning, probably to be located at the Community Engaged Learning Centre itself.</p>	<p>The program had not considered this role but agrees that it would be beneficial for the success of the program and the community rotation.</p>	<p>Dean Director, CEL</p>	<p>Jan 2021</p>

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?

In the summer of 2021, the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry created a new position, titled Experiential Learning Coordinator. One of the responsibilities of this role, is to support the graduate interdisciplinary medical sciences program. This role is involved will recruiting community partners, corresponding with them during the rotation, and supporting students throughout their experience. The role is also involved with the Rotation Coordinator and Program Director with respect to recruitment of basic and clinical science rotation partners. This role has been extremely valuable for the program. The Experiential Learning Coordinator also meets monthly with the campus-wide community engaged learning community.

Next Steps (if applicable)

What actions remain? Is there further follow-up?

Currently, there is no follow that is required. We continue to work closely with this role in the program and have seen the value added for our students and community partners.

Additional Comments

If applicable

Recommendation #9	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline
In general the 8 weeks allocated for the rotation will permit only superficial hands-on research experience and is not enough time to learn more than a few	We will work closely with our lab rotation partners and recruit them early so that we are aware of the general lab needs for the rotations.	Director, Program Committee	May 2021

<p>new techniques. We therefore recommend that the rotations be designed to give the students more of a consultant type role (e.g., creating a website based on interviews with lab members and the PI that highlights the research program for the lab).</p>			
<p>Recommendation Implemented</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>Progress</p> <p><i>What specific actions have been taken?</i></p> <p>When designing the research rotations, the team was extremely aware of what could (and could not) be completed in a short timeframe. Therefore, instead of expecting students to complete a traditional lab research project, we designed experiences where they would gain an appreciation of the lab and what they do while also being able to create knowledge. Students work closely with our Rotation Coordinator where they are provided with in depth onboarding, support during the rotation, and offboard at the end. This role has allowed the students to make the most of their time with their rotation.</p> <p>For the rotations, we have developed in depth expectations and examples for supervisors and students to understand the scope of the experience. Instead of completing a traditional lab project, students focus on completing a ‘deliverable’, which is best explained as a task or project that helps advance the supervisor’s research. Some examples include creating standard operating procedures for the</p>			

lab, analyzing data, completing a research ethics proposal, and building a lab website for student recruitment. To date, the students have been successful in their rotations and have been able to complete significant tasks in a short period of time.

Next Steps (if applicable)

What actions remain? Is there further follow-up?

We will continue to keep track of our research partners and the deliverables students complete so that we can share with prospective supervisors the breadth of tasks that can be completed.

Additional Comments

If applicable

Recommendation #10	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline
It will be important that the specific goals and plan for implementation of each rotation be formally agreed to by student and host upon the start of each of the 3 rotations to avoid wasted time and miscommunication.	The program committee agrees strongly with this statement and will ensure that onboarding and offboarding training be completed by both the mentee and mentor. While maintaining different options in terms of how rotation students get immersed in the lab work, a clear framework of expectations, time commitment, deliverables and responsibilities will be established that all parties need to agree to.	Director Program Committee	May 2021

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?

As mentioned, onboarding and offboarding are critical for the success of the research rotations. When recruiting supervisors, we have them fill out an intake proposal form that gives our team a better idea of what needs to be completed by the students. When the students start their rotation, this document is shared with them and they engage in conversation with the supervisor to agree to the details of the deliverable. The students also meet regularly with the Rotation Coordinator to ensure they stay on track and meet the supervisor's goals and the overall outcomes of the rotation. Students are also guided on how to communicate with their supervisors throughout the rotation so that they are efficient and effective.

Next Steps (if applicable)

What actions remain? Is there further follow-up?

Additional Comments

If applicable

Recommendation #11	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline
We urge the organizers to provide some sample ePortfolios to the students at the beginning of the	We will ensure that we provide a template for	Director Program Committee Course instructor	May 2021

<p>year so that they will have a clear idea what they can include in their own portfolios.</p>	<p>students as well as examples of ePortfolios. Every year, we will also ask students for their permission to share their ePortfolios with future cohorts.</p>		
<p>Recommendation Implemented</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>Progress</p> <p><i>What specific actions have been taken?</i></p> <p>This recommendation was a bit tricky for the first offering of the program; however, we were able to find examples from other courses and programs to share. The curriculum design team also provided a structured framework of the ePortfolio—it is broken down into semesters and lists what students should include by the end of each term. After updating their ePortfolios, the students book a one-on-one meeting with the Program Director to share their website and discuss their progress. For the second cohort, we were able to share some examples of ePortfolios (with permission), which has helped students have a better idea of what to expect. We have also incorporated instructional sessions on the purpose of ePortfolios and how to structure them into the curriculum.</p>			
<p>Next Steps (if applicable)</p> <p><i>What actions remain? Is there further follow-up?</i></p> <p>We will continue to ask each cohort for their permission to share their ePortfolios with subsequent cohorts.</p>			
<p>Additional Comments</p> <p><i>If applicable</i></p>			

Recommendation #12	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline
<p>In some cases, the ePortfolios may contain privileged information about IP or patient details which should not be placed in the public domain. It would be wise for any ePortfolios to be restricted initially to local consumption by students and instructors in the program.</p>	<p>We do not plan to have the ePortfolios be open to the public. Instead, we will work with platforms that can be made private and only shared with members within the program. We will also make sure we discuss public versus private domains in the communication block and work through case study examples.</p>	<p>Director Program Committee Course instructor</p>	<p>May 2021</p>
<p>Recommendation Implemented</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>Progress</p> <p><i>What specific actions have been taken?</i></p> <p>When introducing the ePortfolios to students in the cohorts, we explicitly discussed platforms they could use and how to make sure they were not open. In addition to this, students were aware of what they were putting on their ePortfolio websites and they refrained from sharing any information that should have been private. This was especially important when working with their clinical partners and sharing information on their sites. Students were guided to have conversations with their partners to ensure that they could share their work on their sites.</p>			

Next Steps (if applicable)

What actions remain? Is there further follow-up?

We will continue to articulate this information to future cohorts.

Additional Comments

If applicable

Recommendation #13	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline
<p>The reviewers were slightly concerned about the large amount of independent work time incorporated into the block course curriculum. Effectively, classroom interactions will take place on Mondays and Fridays with Tuesday through Thursday involving small group work and self-study. The value of the flipped classroom has been brought into question in recent studies. However, it seems to be a useful component of this program and several of the instructors and administrators have extensive experience with</p>	<p>We agree with the reviewers and together with the curriculum developer have recently revised the weekly schedule. We will solicit regular feedback from students and hope to incorporate scholarly research by members of the Faculty for Education and/or CERI for quality assurance and improvement.</p>	<p>Director Program Committee course instructors</p>	<p>Dec 2021</p>

<p>this format for active learning. At least in the initial years, it will be critical to solicit regular feedback from the students about whether they agree that this format is serving their needs adequately.</p>			
<p>Recommendation Implemented</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>Progress</p> <p><i>What specific actions have been taken?</i></p> <p>We took this feedback into consideration when we were designing the program for the first cohort. The structure that we decided on was that most courses would run on Mondays and Thursdays with sessions that were each 3 hours in length. Due to the condensed nature of the block courses (one month long), this would provide students with time to work on their course tasks and assignments throughout the week. In the summer months, students also completed a skill development course, which had sessions every Friday morning and incorporated lab refresher sessions on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. In the fall and winter, students also had to juggle their rotations, and so the days that were not instructional allowed groups to work with their partners either in their research environment or on their deliverable. Additionally, the fall/winter seminar course ran most Friday mornings throughout the year and students were also expected to meet with their Rotation and Capstone Coordinators frequently. Based on all this information, the program does not have concerns about the amount of independent work. Many courses also require a lot of groupwork, and we have noticed that many students take advantage of the classroom space even when sessions are not running.</p>			
<p>Next Steps (if applicable)</p>			

What actions remain? Is there further follow-up?

Our team continues to monitor the workload of our cohorts and ensure that it is manageable to meet all the demands of the program. We have heard from students that the fall and winter months can get busy, but that the program has prepared them to manage the complexity.

Additional Comments

If applicable

Recommendation #14	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline
Guest lecturers from outside this discipline (e.g., philosophers, law school faculty, Ivey Business School lecturers, etc.) could be invited to participate occasionally with greater involvement perhaps evolving over time in a bottom up manner.	The program committee completely agrees and is working diligently on building relationships and expand the network.	Director Program Committee Course instructors	May 2021

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?*

The curriculum team appreciated this recommendation and have been successful involving staff and faculty across the university and even outside. Specifically, they identified that the Interdisciplinary Skills course in the summer would be a great opportunity to collaborate with others. To date, they have had members from Ivey, Career Education, Medicine, etc. come in to discuss skills in various disciplinary contexts. There have also been members across the campus invited to speak to students in the block courses. This includes the Research Ethics and Diversity courses. Students have commented on how much they appreciate all these diverse perspectives and that it has allowed them to expand their networks. Since initially proposing the program, we submitted a major modification to add a course on Science Policy, which is instructed by someone at Health Canada.

Next Steps (if applicable)*What actions remain? Is there further follow-up?*

We will continue to build relationships and expand our networks. We are happy to report that many people are excited to return to our programming each year.

Additional Comments*If applicable*

Recommendation #15	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline
If independent self- and small team-study will be a core aspect of the teaching model it would be	We agree that a physical space would benefit students in the program. This is something that will be discussed by senior leadership and with the CFO	Dean Director	March 2021

valuable for a physical cohort space to be set aside for these students to facilitate safe and unfettered interactions with their classmates outside of fixed hours	of Schulich. We will ensure that at minimum, students have rooms booked to work with their teams and independently on their coursework.		
<p>Recommendation Implemented</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>Progress</p> <p><i>What specific actions have been taken?</i></p> <p>This was an extremely important point for the curriculum team, and we were successful securing spaces for our program. For the first offering, we had a space slightly off campus at Research Park, and we have since moved onto main campus. Not only did we secure dedicated space that is exclusively for our students, but we were also able to get furniture and technology that supported our active learning design. Our classroom is a large open space with moveable tables and chairs and large tv screens. We have a tracking camera and various microphones so that we can offer hybrid learning when needed. We are extremely grateful for this space and equipment because it has allowed us to stay true to our 21st century learning approaches. Having a dedicated space with lockers and a small kitchenette has also encouraged students to use it outside of class time and foster strong social connections.</p>			
<p>Next Steps (if applicable)</p> <p><i>What actions remain? Is there further follow-up?</i></p>			
<p>Additional Comments</p>			

If applicable

Recommendation #16	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline
The so-called Phase 2 online version of this program, as described in the brief, does not seem to adequately benefit from the many interactive and interdisciplinary strengths of the program. We recommend it be abandoned, at least until the degree program has been successfully running for several years.	In what form and to what extent an online version of this program, or of parts of the program, will be developed in the future, will be determined once this program is established.	Associate Dean Director Program Committee	March 2021

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?

The program has not been able to dedicate sufficient time to conceptualize an online version for the foreseeable future. In our first year, we were managing online and in person learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic and now we are concentrating our efforts on

increased enrolment—our cohort doubled from year two to year three. We have seen value in the in-person activities and interactions and therefore, we are not focused on an online offering at this time.

Next Steps (if applicable)

What actions remain? Is there further follow-up?

We will continue to discuss whether we believe this is a viable option for our program; however, right now, our efforts are focused on providing an excellent in-person program and increasing our international numbers.

Additional Comments

If applicable

Recommendation #17	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline
It would be nice to have an occasion for the students to all present their Capstone projects to the entire group. Clear examples of what constitutes a good Capstone project should be provided at the beginning of the year.	We are very fortunate to be working with a curriculum designer that has expertise in this area. Therefore, the capstone projects are being defined so that clear expectations will be provided to students. We have also included a Capstone Showcase for the end of the year, where students will have opportunities to present their work to the Schulich community and beyond.	Director Course instructors	March 2021

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?

When designing the curriculum for the first year, we took this advice into our planning. We have incorporated several mini showcases and one final showcase into the program. These showcases not only focus on the Capstone Project, but also allow students to present to their community and research partners. As mentioned previously, we have hired additional faculty to support our program and one of them was appointed as the Capstone Coordinator. This role directly supports the students and their projects throughout the program. At the end of the program, students have an opportunity to present their capstone projects to their cohort. We have also established a mechanism for these projects to be showcased on Scholarship @ Western.

Next Steps (if applicable)

What actions remain? Is there further follow-up?

Additional Comments

If applicable

Recommendation #18	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline
There might be some merit in students engaging with community partners to identify an interest or need and then to consult with basic scientists and	The program committee agrees with this statement and will consider this comment during design and implementation stages of the program over the next year.	Director Program Committee Course Instructor	March 2021

<p>clinicians working in the area to come up with a policy paper, a strategic plan, a grant proposal, etc. as the Capstone Project.</p>			
<p>Recommendation Implemented</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially </p> <p>If no, or partially, is implementation on schedule with the timeline? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No </p>			
<p>Progress</p> <p><i>What specific actions have been taken?</i></p> <p>One of the major challenges with the program relates to the experiential learning rotations. Based on the program brief, our goal is to ensure that all three rotations (basic, clinical, and community) are contextualized under a common theme or framework. For example, cancer could be one of those themes and we then would seek basic, clinical, and community partners who all do work in this field/area. Our current flow of recruiting partnerships is to send out a request for proposals to the basic and clinical scientists, match them to a field/area, and then go to our community partner database to find an additional match. We have been successful with this model for a few years, but continue to monitor the sustainability, especially as the program grows.</p> <p>In terms of the Capstone Project, students also complete it under their rotation field/area, but they do so on a slightly unrelated topic that is of interest to the group. We have students start working on their Capstone Project just prior to finding out their research partners so that they are driven based on their interests. That being said, it has been quite common for students to collaborate with other people when working with their community partners and complete some of the deliverables mentioned in this recommendation.</p>			
<p>Next Steps (if applicable)</p>			

What actions remain? Is there further follow-up?

Additional Comments

If applicable

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?

In addition to all the recommendations mentioned above, the program has been collecting and analyzing data related to programmatic evaluation. This has been done with the approval of the non-medical research ethics board and this information has been extremely helpful to monitor the success of the program and know where to make appropriate changes.

The program is extremely motivated to ensure it is a success and that our students go on to achieve their future goals. We are extremely proud of what we have developed, and we will continue to monitor and respond to the needs of the program and our students.

For New Programs Only:

Update on Initial Administration of the Program	
Report on the following items:	
<i>Appropriateness of Program Leadership</i>	Current leadership is in place to ensure the success delivery of the new program.
<i>Adequacy of Administrative Support</i>	The program has adequate administration support to operate and continue to grow in numbers.
<i>Adequacy of Resource Allocation (e.g., staffing, financial)</i>	The program has appropriate resources to offer innovative curriculum.
<i>Achievement of Program Objectives</i>	The program has not had any issues ensuring that all graduates achieve the program outcomes.
<i>Achievement of Enrolment Targets</i>	The program had a smaller enrolment than targeted in the first two years because of the pandemic; however, we have been growing at a great rate and will monitor our capacity to offer exceptional programming.
<i>Other</i>	