

April 26, 2017

Senate Standing Committee on Program Review

Institutional Response: Environmental Protection Technology (EPT) Diploma

I would like to extend congratulations to Dr. Paul Richard (EPT Department Chair) for singlehandedly compiling a comprehensive and honest review of a long-standing, successful program which has not been previously internally reviewed. I would like to point out that this review was the first in KPU to coincide with the submission of an extensive report to the external accreditation body, Technology Accreditation Canada (TAC) and I commend Dr. Richard on being the guinea-pig in participating in this internal/external joint review. The external review culminated in the EPT program being the first program in British Columbia to receive TAC Accreditation.

Dr. Richard outlines five (5) Quality Assurance Goals, based on recommendations outlined in the Self-Study and found in the TAC Accreditation Audit Report. In consultation with Dr. Salvador Ferreras, Provost and Vice-President Academic, I approved of the goals and steps outlined to achieve said goals. This program epitomizes both Vision 2018 and the Academic Plan 2018 and the successful achievement of these goals will ensure that the program evolves to continue to fit the needs of students and the industry.

Goal 1: Incorporate project management topics into the curriculum. This is a very important goal and one that also has been suggested by the members of the EPT Advisory Council. The plan to develop and launch a new course in September 2018 is very doable and is already underway. I support this goal and will seek funds from the Provost to hire an external industry expert to teach this course (NR1), not unlike what is presently being done with a few of the other highly industry-specific ENVI courses.

Goal 2: Modify curriculum in Ecology and Physics service courses. Again, this recommendation also came from the EPT Advisory Council. This recommendation reflects what is desirable in job-ready EPT graduates and will be required to maintain future TAC accreditation. Dr. Richard and I have already met with the key instructors of the two courses and come to an amiable agreement to pilot substantive changes in primarily the laboratory component of both courses to reflect the learning outcomes needs. This was a very positive experience with the instructors in each case excited to incorporate more relevant content in their existing courses. These changes will be implemented for September 2017 and will run as pilot for two years, then reassessed and a decision will be made as to whether or not new stand-alone courses should be developed or to retain the current EPT-focussed courses.

Goal 3: Block registration for incoming students. This goal seeks to identify a process whereby a true cohort nature of the program be introduced. Presently, students have several options for service courses and more often than not do not register in courses in a lock-step fashion. This results in some students falling out of sync with classmates and having to wait an

extra year to get key courses. We would like to work with the Registrar Office to find a mechanism that once a student is admitted into the EPT program they are automatically registered in all the courses in Year 1 and then Year 2. Although not identified as a major goal it is one that I support and hope to see implemented in the near future.

Goal 4: Improve internal communication and liaisons. A good proportion of courses making up the EPT Diploma are taught by instructors from other FSH Departments (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics) and Faculties (Arts, Business) thus removing any control EPT has over who is chosen to teach EPT students. This can, and periodically has, resulted in non-ideal selections of instructors. Regardless, this goal highlights the need for the EPT Chair to, on a yearly basis, facilitate the interactions of all instructors teaching EPT courses by meeting to share curricular ideas, pedagogies, research interests and expertise. We suggest that this also extends to inviting faculty from related disciplines such as Horticulture, Brewing, Design, and Sustainable Agriculture to join in what could be an annual forum. I strongly support any and all forms of collaboration and encourage Dr. Richard to initiate the planning for an inaugural gathering to take place no later than Spring 2018. As Dean, I would be happy to dedicate funds for refreshments for a yearly event.

Goal 5: Improve external communications and liaisons. This goal is multifaceted and covers recruitment, community awareness and experiential learning opportunities. Although the EPT Program is well respected both internally and externally there is always room for improvement. Dr. Richard has already met with FSH Communications and Events Specialist Triona King to devise a marketing and recruitment strategy. Dr. Richard plans to involve more guest speakers in key courses and seek out more industry partners for student research projects and co-op placements. Inviting instructors to meet with the EPT Advisory Council is a quick win and will be actioned for the Fall 2017 Advisory Council meeting. Until the proposed B.Sc. in Environmental Geography degree is launched we need to ensure EPT graduates can bridge into advanced programs offered by other institutions. To enable this Dr. Richard will systematically update all relevant ENVI courses and submit to BCCAT for transfer credit evaluation. I support all of these initiatives and will provide resources on an 'as-needed' basis.

In summary, in consultation with Provost Dr. Sal Ferreras, I am fully supportive of the goals and timelines outlined by Dr. Richard and pleased to see that many are already well on their way to fruition. In addition, I congratulate Dr. Richard for an exemplary program review and look forward to seeing the above goals implemented.

Respectfully yours,



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Dean, Faculty of Science and Horticulture