



Final Assessment Report for the 2020-2021 Cyclical Program Review of Martin Luther University College

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with Laurier's Institutional Quality Assurance Procedures ([Policy 2.1](#)), this Final Assessment Report provides a summary of the review process for the Martin Luther University College (Luther) academic programs prepared by the Quality Assurance Office, along with an identification of strengths of the programs under review authored by the Principal-Dean of Martin Luther University College and Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. All recommendations made by the external review committee are listed in order, followed by a summary of Luther's response, and the relevant decanal responses. Recommendations not approved for implementation have been identified, and those that have been prioritized are listed in the Implementation Plan.

The Final Assessment Report is reviewed and approved by the Vice-Provost: Teaching and Learning and the Provost and Vice-President: Academic. Following completion of the Final Assessment Report, it is approved by the Program Review Sub-Committee and Senate Academic Planning Committee. Approval dates are listed at the end of this report. Final Assessment Reports are submitted to Senate as part of an annual report on cyclical reviews, and to the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance for information. Final Assessment Reports and Implementation Reports are posted on the public-facing page of the [Quality Assurance Office](#) website.

The Implementation Plan for the recommendations prioritized in the Final Assessment Report can be found at the end of this report. Units will submit their first Implementation Report two years following approval of the Final Assessment Report at Senate. The Implementation Report will include comments from the unit on actions taken toward the completion of recommendations, comments from the relevant Dean(s) related to the progress made, and comments from the Program Review Sub-Committee, which is responsible for approving the Implementation Report and deciding if further reports are required. The Senate Academic Planning Committee will also approve the Implementation Report.

SUMMARY OF REVIEW PROCESS

Martin Luther University College offers programs at the undergraduate, graduate diploma, master's and doctoral levels. The graduate programs were last reviewed in 2013-2014, and this was the first cyclical review of the BA in Christian Studies and Global Citizenship.

The Self-Study was authored by Dr. Allen Jorgenson, Assistant Dean of Martin Luther University College, in collaboration with program leads. In addition to the Self-Study (Volume I), Luther also submitted a copy of faculty curricula vita (Volume II), a volume of course syllabi, and a list of proposed external reviewers (Volume III). A draft of the Self-Study was reviewed by the Quality Assurance Office, the Principal-Dean of Martin Luther University College, and the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies prior to submission of the final version.



As per Laurier's IQAP, the external review committee for the review consisted of two external reviewers from outside the university, and one internal reviewer from Laurier but outside of the department. The review committee was selected by the Program Review Sub-Committee on November 13, 2020, and a virtual external review was scheduled by the Quality Assurance Office between February 1-8, 2021.

The review committee consisted of Dr. Susan Neylan from the Department of History at Wilfrid Laurier, Rabbi Dr. Laura Duhan Kaplan from the Vancouver School of Theology, and Dr. Frederick Tappenden from St. Stephen's College at the University of Alberta. During the virtual external review, the review committee met with the following individuals and groups:

- Dr. Mary Wilson, Vice-Provost: Teaching and Learning
- Luther Leadership Team: Dr. Kristine Lund, Principal-Dean of Martin Luther University College, Dr. Allen Jorgenson, Assistant Dean, and Dr. Mary (Joy) Philip, Master of Divinity Program Director
- Dr. Douglas Deutschman, Associate Vice-President and Dean, Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
- Full-time Faculty from Martin Luther University College
- Contract Teaching Faculty from Martin Luther University College
- Undergraduate students from the BA in Christian Studies and Global Citizenship program
- Graduate student representatives from each program
- Martin Luther University College program alumni
- Martin Luther University College Administrative Staff
- Martin Luther University College Placement and Internship Supervisors
- Mr. Matt Thomas, Head of Collections and Acquisitions and Mr. Greg Sennema, Martin Luther University College Liaison Librarian

The review committee submitted their completed report on May 12, 2021. The executive summary from the report is provided below.

External Reviewers' Report Executive Summary

Martin Luther University College (originally Waterloo College) is the seminary out of which Laurier grew. Currently it is a small specialized school within Laurier. Approximately 170 students (150 of them graduate students) are enrolled, and another 300 take Luther courses. The faculty is composed of 12 fulltime faculty members along with adjunct faculty in special fields. The college is supported by 7 full-time staff members.

To prepare this report, we read Luther's carefully written self-study report, and met with Laurier administrators and library representatives, as well as Luther's leadership, faculty, program directors, graduate students, undergraduate students, alumni, and field placement supervisors.



We commend Luther on the following points:

- It is clear that Laurier values Luther's presence.
- Luther's programming is very well aligned with the Mission and Strategic Academic Plan of Laurier. This is especially true of Pillar 2, Expanding Experiential Learning and Pillar 3, Enhancing Diversity.
- Admission requirements for each of Luther's programs seem reasonable and for the most part consistent with comparable programs, especially at the graduate (master's) level.
- Luther's curriculum at all levels expresses its commitment to inter-religious and contextual learning. To this end, it offers one doctoral program (PhD), three master's programs (2 MAs and an MDiv), three graduate diplomas, and one undergraduate program (BA).
- Appropriate assessment methods are clearly documented in the self-study report.
- Luther makes efficient use of its own and Laurier's resources.
- The Luther full-time faculty is a small, diverse, hard-working group of eleven people, who put much time into teaching, participate in both theoretical and applied scholarship, and are deeply engaged in community service.
- The BA in Christian Studies and Global Citizenship is well-designed, and proactively meets several contemporary needs. The four new minors are greatly appreciated by the first few students to enroll in them.
- The MA and PhD programs are the core of Luther. They offer a unique integration of spirituality and psychotherapy, classroom and contextual learning.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESPONSES

The External Reviewers' Report included 15 recommendations, which have been listed verbatim below, followed by a summary of Luther's response, and the relevant decanal responses.

Recommendation #1: Review and consider revisions to either the title and/or the learning outcomes for the MA in Theology: Public Faith and Spirituality in light of the Vision, Mission, and Values of Luther.

Unit Response: Luther agrees with this recommendation. The field of Public Faith and Spirituality last underwent a comprehensive evaluation in 2015/16. At the next evaluation of this program, in 2022/23 following the completion of the MDiv review, these outcomes will be updated to reflect better the vision, mission and values of Luther.

Luther Decanal Response: A review of the MA in Theology: Public Faith and Spirituality is timely given the low level of enrollment in this field of the MA in Theology degree. As noted by the reviewers, elements of the earlier focus on Christian Studies remain and while the change in name intended to open the opportunities for study, it is clear that a review of the current learning objectives and revision of these learning outcomes will be important



in order to meet this goal. The schedule of this review to occur in the 2022-2023 academic year will provide opportunities to address these concerns.

FGPS Decanal Response: Given the low enrolment, this should also be considered in the review of this field, although perhaps that was the rationale behind the recommendation. Environmental scans of other similar programs in Ontario may be helpful in the review and modifications to the field to make it more attractive to graduate students.

Recommendation #2: Luther is encouraged to develop a rubric that defines what kinds of scholarly output it deems acceptable, and the grounds on which that output is deemed meritorious. Laurier is encouraged to receive this rubric and locate it in relation to the university's research strategic plan. (Note: this relates to Recommendation 11.)

Unit Response: Luther agrees with this recommendation. The Boyer model, as noted in Recommendation #11 below may be especially helpful in this regard. Beyond the scholarship of discovery, integration, application and teaching there is a scholarship of creation evident in the fine arts that applies in certain instances of the life of Luther (e.g. Liturgical Theology). Luther may be well served concerning this by the recent appointment of Dr. Ara Parker who brings expertise in the area of expressive therapies and by being in conversation with the Faculty of Music, for instance.

Luther Decanal Response: Luther has been attending to the scholarly activities of both faculty and students and this recommendation supports the ongoing development of its understanding of research and scholarship. Developing a rubric will be helpful to support the ongoing research activities at Luther both as a way to quantify the research occurring at Luther and also to support Luther to more successfully communicate the research activities to the academic community and beyond.

FGPS Decanal Response: Perhaps it would be helpful to form a committee with broad representation and approach addressing this recommendation using a consultative process to ensure inclusivity. I also encourage the unit to reach out to the Office of Research Services for expertise and support in addressing this recommendation.

Recommendation #3: Laurier needs to review its admissions process for Luther's BA program and work together with Luther to improve this process to effectively secure students as early as possible as to remain competitive with other comparable programs/institutions.

Unit Response: Luther agrees with this recommendation. Historically, Luther took care of its own admissions when it was a graduate only program. This was handed over to Laurier to ensure consistency across programs, and so it seems that this might not be a useful move for Luther. However, it might be worthwhile for Luther to explore the admissions process at other church colleges in preparation for a conversation with Laurier's Recruitment and Admissions Team.

Luther Decanal Response: The admission process for applicants to the BA degree at Luther has been challenging. Work has been done to try and streamline the process for applicants, but further work needs to be done with the admissions office at Laurier to support more timely communication of offers to potential students.



Recommendation #4: Luther may wish to review the learning demands that these programs place on students. They may also wish to explore the extent to which targeted admission requirements may help ease those demands. For example, might a BA in one of either psychology, sociology, religious studies, theology, or global citizenship better equip students to navigate their program of studies? We make this recommendation knowing that, given the fact these programs are approved by both CRPO (for the MA) and ATS (for the MA and the MDiv), there may be little room to change the curricular content of the programs themselves.

Unit Response: Luther agrees with the recommendation of reviewing the demands of programs. Regarding the commendation to consider targeting admissions, however, it is also the case that many students who struggle in the program have relevant honours degrees. For some students this reflects a combination of complications beyond the purview of Luther – especially life situations. The demands of both CRPO and ATS are exacting, and so curricular change remains circumscribed by these bodies. However, we might explore how to support students in terms of advising around the pacing of students' programs. This has implications for time-to-completion rates.

Luther Decanal Response: Professors and Program advisors have experienced an increase in students experiencing difficulties successfully completing course requirements in a timely fashion. There has been an increase in requests for extensions on course assignments. Professors and program coordinators have conversations regarding the appropriate number of courses a student should be registering in to successfully complete in a timely fashion. However, often students feel the financial pressure to complete their degree program and are reticent to lower their course load. Unless a student fails a course and ends up on academic probation the faculty and program coordinator's ability to require a student to lessen their load is very limited. As noted, in Luther's response to the report, our ability to lessen the rigor in the program is limited because of external accrediting bodies. Ongoing efforts to support students for successful completion will be important for faculty and program coordinators.

FGPS Decanal Response: This is a challenging recommendation to address given the need to maintain rigor, juxtaposed against a segment of the student population that appears to be struggling to meet expectations. However, given the increase in requests for course extensions, perhaps the demands of individual courses might be worthwhile to review and modify, but in such a way to not compromise learning outcomes. The unit identifies advising as an important priority and I would further encourage this to be regularly scheduled, if it is not already (e.g., beginning of fall and winter terms). During these meetings, if there are skills deemed to be lacking (e.g., writing, library search skills), encouraging students to participate in ASPIRE programming would be helpful. The Student Wellness Centre, which also offers programming through ASPIRE, may be recommended to students coping with difficult life situations. Colleagues and I would be pleased to provide an overview of the ASPIRE program if the Unit is interested.

See: <https://students.wlu.ca/academics/graduate-and-postdoctoral-studies/aspire/index.html>

Recommendation #5: Luther's programs should be reviewed with an eye toward reducing course load. In particular, Luther should critically review the program demands of the joint MA/MDiv program. If program demands cannot be decreased, we recommend investigating whether (a) there might be better ways to sequence the curriculum to better accommodate students' success, experience, and wellness; or (b) the curricular demands of the joint program could be spread out over four years rather than three.



Unit Response: Luther agrees with this recommendation in principle. Luther is currently reviewing the outcomes and curriculum of the MDiv program, which will result in a new program beginning in the 2022/23 academic year. This will have implications for the dual degree and the MA. It should be noted, as well, that the contextual option of the MDiv takes place over three years (six semesters/two years of residency plus one year of internship) so that the dual degree is a four-year degree. The non-contextual option of the MDiv involves seven semesters although students sometimes opt to take an overload in order to finish in two years rather than two and half-years. Some students opt to not take courses in the summer and so find the degree less taxing. This, however, has implications for time to completion rates.

MLUC Decanal Response: The MDiv and MA/MDiv programs have been recently evaluated and program revisions are in the process of being finalized. It is anticipated that there will be two less courses in the degrees. It is hoped that with this course reduction that students will find the degree a little less demanding and student success will be supported. The program revisions will be coming to Luther's faculty council in the fall in order to meet the deadline for calendar revisions for the 2022-2023 academic year.

FGPS Decanal Response: As indicated in the MLUC response, the Unit has responded to this recommendation by reducing the course load of its degrees. An environmental scan of similar programs elsewhere in Ontario could provide context for whether further adjustments to course loads should be considered.

Recommendation #6: Luther should do some foundational visioning work, perhaps in partnership with the Eastern Synod, regarding the vision of what a pastor ought to be in today's world, and thus what training requirements are needed in the MDiv (working within the ATS guidelines, of course). (Note: Recommendations 6 and 7 work toward different though related ends. Luther should work with the Synod to find the best path forward.)

Unit Response: Luther agrees with this recommendation. As noted above, in response to Recommendation #5, Luther is currently reviewing the MDiv. This is being done in concert with the Eastern Synod, which has representatives on the MDiv Review Committee. Beyond this, Luther collaborates with the Eastern Synod in a number of events, including the annual Dubrick Lecture. The Management Team meets bimonthly with the Bishop and Assistants to plan this and other events in support of the ministry of the Eastern Synod of the ELCIC. Further, Luther has secured a Lilly Foundation grant to discern the requisite skills for those engaging in ministry in the midst of, and after, COVID-19. We are in the midst of this study, which is supporting the MDiv review as we determine what sort of leaders are needed in these changing times. This exploration is being informed by conversations with alumni, students, community leaders, and interfaith and ecumenical partners. This project will be completed by the end of summer 2021.

Luther Decanal Response: As noted in our response, we are living in uncertain times, which is presenting both challenges and opportunities. Luther works closely with the Eastern Synod of the ELCIC to be monitoring the changing needs of both the professional leaders in the church and congregational members. We have an ongoing commitment to the collaborative relationship and will be communicating with them the results of the Lilly project and determining ongoing program changes and continuing education opportunities. We have recently created three new Centres (Spirituality and Media, Earth Consciousness and Gender Justice and the Luther Centre for Spirituality, Disability and Care) which we anticipate will also support our work with the church to support the development of professional leaders in the church.



Recommendation #7: Currently, the Eastern Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCiC) requires schools preparing its ministers with the MDiv degree to be accredited through the Association of Theological Schools (ATS). We recommend that Luther explore with ELCiC whether there are alternative paths to ordination, beyond the MDiv, that Luther could participate in. (Note: Recommendations 6 and 7 work toward different though related ends. Luther should work with the Synod to find the best path forward.)

Unit Response: Luther agrees with this recommendation in principle. The concern is not necessarily the MDiv per se but the machinations of ATS, which can slow down changes and developments in curricula. ATS has, however, received significant expressions of concern as of late. Things may change. Regarding the ELCiC the Principal Dean of Luther, along with the President of our sister school in Saskatoon and other stake-holders, constitute the Program Committee for Leadership and Ministry of the ELCiC, which makes recommendations regarding paths to ordination that are voted upon by the ELCiC in convention. Both a decision to allow a degree other than the MDiv as a path to ordination, and the decision to disaffiliate with ATS face a bar that has been set high.

Luther Decanal Response: As noted, work is being done to address the concern both about the MDiv degree being the standard for ordination and the requirement for Luther to be accredited through ATS. These discussions are ongoing with the Program Committee for Leadership and Ministry of the ELCiC and it is hoped that the best decision possible can be made to both support candidates for ministry and for Luther as the educational institution that provides the educational preparation.

Recommendation #8: Review and implement clear structure regarding how faculty time is quantified and allocated, with realistic time allotments being given to teaching, research, and service.

Unit Response: Luther agrees with this recommendation. This needs to be an ongoing discussion among faculty and management. Further to this, there is need to develop a means whereby service can be quantified. Faculty should be given a percentage breakdown regarding expected investment of time, and perhaps some quantifiable measure of expectation such as an article and/or presentation per year. This should be done in consultation with the faculty in that our varying disciplines demand different means whereby knowledge generation is disseminated.

Luther Decanal Response: This recommendation is very helpful considering earlier recommendations. It is important to develop clearer expectations for faculty taking into consideration the standards of each discipline. This will also support the ongoing collegial environment at Luther.

Recommendation #9: As Luther expands its faculty complement, senior leadership should also assess the staffing needs and grow the staff complement as appropriate.

Unit Response: Luther agrees with this recommendation. As Luther grows, it will need to do so in a scalable manner. Luther has tried, with limited success, to limit faculty-led extra-curricular activities, which often have unexpected (by faculty) demands on staff. Plans are currently in place to hire two .5 staff positions. These two additional staff positions will ensure adequate support for student advising, communications and events, and for the finance manager.



Luther Decanal Response: Currently, a job description has been written for two, .5 staff positions to respond to the increase in workload for the administrative staff. These positions will be advertised soon with the expectation that these staff will be hired by the end of September. Ongoing review of staffing levels will be important as Luther's programs continue to grow.

Recommendation #10: Review research and funding expectations, with an eye toward (a) evaluating what barriers currently impede research/funding success, and (b) setting clear research/funding goals for the institution over the next seven years.

Unit Response: Luther agrees with this recommendation. Individuals at Luther have been in conversation with the Research Office, which has also made presentations at our Faculty Council. A few professors have attempted, unsuccessfully, to secure SSHRC grants. Luther faculty have secured three US based grants (Wabash, Lilly, and the Louisville Institute) over the last three years that are each worth USD 25, 000 and over. Although these are negligible amounts compared to other university departments, they represent a significant growth for us as over against the period under review. Further, much of the research work performed by Luther's faculty does not demand the kind of research money needed for the hard sciences or even social sciences with extensive travel etc. It is noted, as well, that Luther has made concerted effort in the last year to expand our conversation around research, with some dedicated meetings to sharing research developments and setting aside time at faculty council meetings for faculty to report of projects, publications, etc. Further, we are posting presentations of the doctoral students' dissertation research and the capstone projects of the BA students on Luther's YouTube channel. We've also added a research page on Luther's website to share faculty research.

Luther Decanal Response: It would be my hope that with the increased attention to research activities at Luther that this will also lead to potential research collaborations which might also open other possibilities for research funding. As has been noted, it has been challenging over the years for faculty to qualify for research grants. While faculty have been more successful in the past few years, it will remain important to explore other possibilities. However, as noted, many faculty member's research activities do not require significant research grants.

FGPS Decanal Response: I congratulate the faculty on the success of their grant applications. Connecting with the Office of Research Services to identify new opportunities and allocating time at council meetings to discuss research developments and collaborative opportunities, are all very good initiatives. Although faculty research activities may not require significant grants, I encourage the faculty to continue to regularly apply for grants because securing external research funding can be used for graduate studentships and to attract strong graduate students.

Recommendation #11: We recommend that the Luther faculty and Laurier administration work together to clarify and broaden the faculty evaluation process, so that the university can better understand and appreciate the scholarship of the MLUC faculty. One possibility is to honour the Boyer model of scholarship, which includes discovery, integration, application, in addition to teaching. Other models might be those used by Laurier's school of Social Work, or other seminary schools across Canada. (*Note: this relates to Recommendation 2.*)

Unit Response: Luther agrees with this recommendation as per our response to Recommendation #2 above.



Luther Decanal Response: I agree with this recommendation and the management team will take the responsibility to explore the Boyer model of scholarship and other potential models that could be appropriate for use at Luther.

Recommendation #12: It is evident that there are outstanding and gifted teachers at MLUC. We recommend that MLUC consider how it can better highlight its faculty excellence by actively encouraging the nomination or self-nomination of its faculty for external teaching awards. One possible model of nomination is an internal teaching award committee. One possible model of self-nomination is application for the 3M National Teaching Fellowships. Luther's faculty and administration may choose to work with Laurier's Educational Development Team on this.

Unit Response: Luther agrees with this recommendation and will explore some of these options.

Luther Decanal Response: I support this recommendation as there are many gifted teachers at Luther. One of the challenges of being a federated college at Laurier is that we qualify for some services at Laurier and are excluded from others based on being a federated college. Luther's faculty members cannot be nominated for Laurier's Annual Teaching Excellence awards. It is important for us to pursue other possibilities given Luther's long commitment to excellence in teaching.

Recommendation #13: We recommend that Laurier administrators who oversee recruitment, admissions, and on-line student information pro-actively reach out to Luther to design new strategies that integrate the college into these Laurier systems in a lasting way. Agenda items might include highlighting Luther in recruitment, adjusting dates for notifying undergraduate applicants, clearly integrating Luther undergraduate minors into on-line advising systems.

Unit Response: Luther agrees with this recommendation and will consult with Recruitment and Admissions, as well as Academic Advising to discuss how they could be implemented.

Luther Decanal Response: This is a very important recommendation and will be followed up in order to facilitate a greater number of applicants to Luther's programs.

Recommendation #14: Luther and Laurier together should consider a strategy for promoting Luther's minor concentrations as excellent companions to some of Laurier's major programs, e.g. Psychology, Religion and Culture.

Unit Response: Luther agrees with this recommendation and consider it integral to Recommendation #13 above with respect to internal recruitment. We will reach out to Recruitment and Admissions, and Academic Advising to discuss how awareness of Luther's minors and their value could be promoted better and understood by students.

Luther Decanal Response: I agree with this recommendation and will explore with Luther's Recruitment committee and the appropriate persons at Laurier ways to support greater promotion of Luther's minor concentrations.



Recommendation #15. We recommend that Luther examine factors internal to the graduate program critical to student success and retention, such as advising checkpoints, pre-requisites for courses, and, in some cases, assumptions of background knowledge within individual courses.

Unit Response: Luther agrees with this recommendation in principle, mindful that expectations around times to completion might not be realistic for programs that attract mature students, who often have multiple demands on their time including family at home, extended family, work, communal responsibilities etc. Luther has a fairly robust mechanism for student advising, although an expanded faculty complement might assist in improving this.

Luther Decanal Response: It is true that Luther has robust mechanisms for student advising and addressing challenges faced by students. However, the pandemic created more stress for students and so ongoing monitoring of our student advising and mechanisms for supporting students is important.

FGPS Decanal Response: Similar to the response to Recommendation #4, increasing regularity and/or frequency of advising may be something to consider while cognizant of the demand on faculty time. Again, encouraging graduate student participation in ASPIRE programming may also help to enhance skills.

STRENGTHS OF THE PROGRAMS

Principal-Dean of Martin Luther University College:

There are several strengths noted in the report from the evaluators. These include:

1. Luther's programming is very well aligned with the Mission and Strategic Academic Plan of Laurier.
2. Luther's programming is rooted in experiential and service-based learning.
3. Luther engages and is committed to pluralism and in particular religious diversity.
4. Luther's mission is oriented towards whole person formation, professional training, and communal and public engagement.
5. Luther's programs have clearly defined assessment tools, which supports the institutions' ability to oversee a variety of programs.
6. Luther's learning objectives are oriented towards applied learning, personal and social formation and integration of personal commitments with public life.
7. Luther has generous admission standards for the BA in Christian Studies and Global Citizenship.
8. Luther has very committed faculty and staff that support the institution's vision and mission.

Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies: I commend the faculty on the impressive list compiled by the Principal-Dean of Martin Luther University College.



OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT AND ENHANCEMENT

Principal-Dean of Martin Luther University College:

There were several areas identified for improvement and enhancement. These include:

1. Review the title and learning outcomes for the MA in Theology: Public Faith and Spirituality.
2. Review admission process for the BA degree in order to improve the timeliness of accepting students into the program.
3. Review the learning demands on students enrolled in the graduate degrees and whether a more targeted admission requirement might support student success in the program.
4. Review the number of courses in Luther's graduate degrees and determine whether there would be better ways to sequence the curriculum and if possible, decrease the number of courses.
5. Review the process of student advising and determine whether more or different supports need to be put in place to support students in successfully completing their program.
6. Continue the work being done with the Eastern Synod of the ELCiC in supporting the education and ongoing development of professional leaders in the church.
7. Ongoing assessment of the appropriate number of staff to support the activities of the institution.
8. Revise the faculty manual which would include a clear structure regarding how faculty time is quantified and allocated. It will be important to develop a rubric to evaluate faculty performance. This will also define scholarly output and would have a rubric for evaluating this work. 98. Explore ways to acknowledge excellent teaching by faculty and find ways to highlight Luther's teaching within Laurier and in the broader community.
9. Continue to explore possibilities for research funding for faculty and to set some research funding goals.
10. Work with Laurier staff to develop a method to promote Luther's minor concentrations as an excellent supplement to many of the Laurier undergraduate programs.

Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies: Several of these opportunities for improvement listed above have been addressed below or are in the stages of being addressed. Specific comments related to graduate programs are provided below.



SIGNATURES

Dr. Mary Wilson

December 22, 2021



Dr. Anthony Vannelli

January 4, 2022



Approved by Program Review Sub-Committee:

January 13, 2022

Approved by Senate Academic Planning
Committee:

March 22, 2022

Submitted to Senate (for information):

April 11, 2022

Implementation Report Due Date:

April 11, 2024



RECOMMENDATIONS PRIORITIZED FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND ACTION PLAN

The following Implementation Plan was created by the Principal-Dean of Martin Luther University College and Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies as part of the Decanal Response.

Recommendation to be Implemented	Responsibility for Implementation	Responsibility for Resourcing (if applicable)	Anticipated Completion Date	Additional Notes
Recommendation #1: Review and consider revisions to either the title and/or the learning outcomes for the MA in Theology: Public Faith and Spirituality in light of the Vision, Mission, and Values of Luther.	Mona Tokarek Lafosse Allen Jorgenson		2023	
Recommendation #2: Luther is encouraged to develop a rubric that defines what kinds of scholarly output it deems acceptable, and the grounds on which that output is deemed meritorious. Laurier is encouraged to receive this rubric and locate it in relation to the university's research strategic plan. (Note: this relates to Recommendation 11.)	Allen Jorgenson Mary (Joy) Philip Kristine Lund		2022	This will be connected to the needed revisions to the faculty manual.
Recommendation #3: Laurier needs to review its admissions process for Luther's BA program, and work together with Luther to improve this process to effectively secure students as early as possible as to remain competitive with other comparable programs/institutions.	Gyeong Kim Kristine Lund Allen Jorgenson		2021	



<p>Recommendation #4: Luther may wish to review the learning demands that these programs place on students. They may also wish to explore the extent to which targeted admission requirements may help ease those demands. For example, might a BA in one of either psychology, sociology, religious studies, theology, or global citizenship better equip students to navigate their program of studies? We make this recommendation knowing that, given the fact these programs are approved by both CRPO (for the MA) and ATS (for the MA and the MDiv), there may be little room to change the curricular content of the programs themselves.</p>	<p>Kristine Lund Mary (Joy) Philip MDiv Committee</p>		<p>2021</p>	
<p>Recommendation #5: Luther's programs should be reviewed with an eye toward reducing course load. In particular, Luther should critically review the program demands of the joint MA/MDiv program. If program demands cannot be decreased, we recommend investigating whether (a) there might be better ways to sequence the curriculum to better accommodate students' success, experience, and wellness; or (b) the curricular demands of the joint program could be spread out over four years rather than three.</p>	<p>Mary (Joy) Philip Allen Jorgenson Kristine Lund</p>		<p>2021</p>	



<p>Recommendation #6: Luther should do some foundational visioning work, perhaps in partnership with the Eastern Synod, regarding the vision of what a pastor ought to be in today's world, and thus what training requirements are needed in the MDiv (working within the ATS guidelines, of course). (Note: Recommendations 6 and 7 work toward different though related ends. Luther should work with the Synod to find the best path forward.)</p>	<p>Kristine Lund Allen Jorgenson Mary (Joy) Phillip</p>		<p>2022</p>	
<p>Recommendation #8: Review and implement clear structure regarding how faculty time is quantified and allocated, with realistic time allotments being given to teaching, research, and service.</p>	<p>Kristine Lund Mary (Joy) Philip Allen Jorgenson</p>		<p>2022</p>	<p>This will be connected to the needed revisions to the faculty manual.</p>
<p>Recommendation #9: As Luther expands its faculty complement, senior leadership should also assess the staffing needs and grow the staff complement as appropriate.</p>	<p>Kristine Lund Allen Jorgenson Mary (Joy) Philip</p>	<p>Principal -Dean</p>	<p>2021</p>	
<p>Recommendation #10: Review research and funding expectations, with an eye toward (a) evaluating what barriers currently impede research/funding success, and (b) setting clear research/funding goals for the institution over the next seven years.</p>	<p>Allen Jorgenson Faculty</p>		<p>2022</p>	



<p>Recommendation #11: We recommend that the Luther faculty and Laurier administration work together to clarify and broaden the faculty evaluation process, so that the university can better understand and appreciate the scholarship of the MLUC faculty. One possibility is to honour the Boyer model of scholarship, which includes discovery, integration, application, in addition to teaching. Other models might be those used by Laurier’s school of Social Work, or other seminary schools across Canada. (Note: this relates to Recommendation 2.)</p>	<p>Kristine Lund Mary (Joy) Philip Allen Jorgenson Faculty</p>		<p>2022</p>	<p>This will be connected to the needed revisions to the faculty manual.</p>
<p>Recommendation #12: It is evident that there are outstanding and gifted teachers at MLUC. We recommend that MLUC consider how it can better highlight its faculty excellence by actively encouraging the nomination or self-nomination of its faculty for external teaching awards. One possible model of nomination is an internal teaching award committee. One possible model of self-nomination is application for the 3M National Teaching Fellowships. Luther’s faculty and administration may choose to work with Laurier’s Educational Development Team on this.</p>	<p>Kristine Lund Allen Jorgenson Mary Joy Philip</p>		<p>2022</p>	



<p>Recommendation #13: We recommend that Laurier administrators who oversee recruitment, admissions, and on-line student information pro-actively reach out to MLUC to design new strategies that integrate the college into these Laurier systems in a lasting way. Agenda items might include highlighting MLUC in recruitment, adjusting dates for notifying undergraduate applicants, clearly integrating MLUC undergraduate minors into on-line advising systems.</p>	<p>Kristine Lund Gyeong Kim BA Committee</p>		<p>2021</p>	
<p>Recommendation #15: We recommend that Luther examine factors internal to the graduate program critical to student success and retention, such as advising checkpoints, pre-requisites for courses, and, in some cases, assumptions of background knowledge within individual courses.</p>	<p>Allen Jorgenson Mary (Joy) Philip Kate Harper Mona Tokarek Lafosse</p>		<p>2021</p>	