Executive Summary

Graduate Program in Geography
Cyclical Review Year 2015-2016

Approved by the Graduate Program Evaluation Committee
Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
December 16, 2015 Meeting

<table>
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<th>Name of Program Reviewed</th>
<th>Geography</th>
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| Degrees                  | • Master of Arts (MA) in Geography  
• Master of Science (MSc) in Geography  
• Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Geography |
| Responsible Academic Units | Department of Geography, Environment and Geomatics — Faculty of Arts |
| Fields                   | N/A       |
| Final Evaluation         | Good quality |

**Significant strengths of the program**

The Department of Geography offers very strong research programs at both the Master’s (MA in Human Geography and MSc in Physical Geography) and PhD levels. The external evaluators were favourably impressed by the high quality of the program, state-of-the-art research laboratory facilities and collegial nature of the department.

This program has long been recognized for the excellence of its research, particularly in Arctic studies, and it is uniquely positioned, with projects being jointly undertaken by physical and social geographers. Recent hires have also expanded other areas of research strength, such as geomatics, urban/health geography, Indigenous geographies and environmental studies. Graduate students are appreciative of the quality of their supervision, Indigenous geographies and training, which includes excellent opportunities for field work within Canada and abroad. Students also benefit from expertise at the Geological Survey of Canada and through participation in the Collaborative Program in Environmental Sustainability, the Collaborative Program in Science, Society and Policy or the Collaborative Program in Canadian Studies.

**Areas for improvement and enhancement**

Given its size, the Department of Geography faces special challenges in offering an ample selection of courses in two distinct disciplines (physical/biological geography and social/human geography), as well as in two languages. One way it is addressing this is through the introduction of a new course called Academic and Professional Development in Geography / Développement académique et professionnel en géographie, which will be mandatory for all incoming students. It aims to provide both academic and career skills and should also foster a greater sense of community among students.

Graduate students are also required to attend at least 80% of invited talks in the Geography Seminar Series. Regarding further professional development, senior PhD students will now have the opportunity
to gain teaching experience as the department will reserve one or two undergraduate courses (which were previously taught by sessional instructors) for them. Certain graduate office/work space for students in human geography was regarded as sub-optimal and efforts are being made to rectify this. Although enrolment in the MA and MSc programs is rather evenly balanced with respect to language-use, the PhD program has few francophone students.

**Recommendations**

1. Explore additional ways to provide greater diversity in graduate course offerings and professional development resources.
2. Extend efforts to recruit high quality graduate students, both from within the University as well as nationally and internationally, with particular focus on attracting more francophone students.
3. Continue striving for uniformly high quality graduate student work spaces.

**Implementation Plan**

**Calendar and Deadlines**
All noted recommendations should be addressed at the time of the next cyclical review, scheduled for 2023–2024.

**Authorities**
The authorities responsible for implementing and monitoring the recommendations include the Dean and Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Arts, the Director of the Graduate Program in Geography and the Chair of the Department of Geography.