

The Site Visit of the Unit Review Team for Continuing Education took place from February 23-24, 2017. The Unit Review Team consisted of:

Andrew Cochrane, Dalhousie

Heather Mcae, MacEwan University

Judith Potter, McGill University

Hugh Evans, University of Calgary

Following the Site Visit, the Unit Review Team prepared a written report containing comments and recommendations. Continuing Education subsequently provided responses to the recommendations. General comments and the recommendations and responses follow.

General Comments of the Unit Review Team

Although the report will delve more fully into each of the relevant topics for analysis, the Review Team offers several general observations that may help to frame the report and the subsequent recommendations.

, it is clear that UCCE staff are working very hard and have a strong commitment to creating the organizational structure, processes, programs, delivery mechanisms and services needed to be a successful and collaborative University Continuing Education (UCE) operation. They also appear to be fatigued and are very much looking forward to a more stable environment.

, the ship continues to float, even while there is a course correction underway and, indeed, while the engine is under renewal. Courses continue to be offered and learners served. Some

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, while the UCCE Self Study and the onsite interviews were enormously helpful to the understanding of UCCE and its realities, the Review Team was somewhat concerned by the internal focus of both the documentation and the onsite meeting agenda. In the original schedule, there were no sessions arranged with groups that would typically be included, for example, U of C Faculties, UCCE instructors, UCCE students (beyond ESL), community members and partners. We very much appreciated the last-minute efforts to address some of these lapses, but observe that UCCE may need to expand its focus while still dealing with the internal necessities. We, therefore, include recommendations that would encourage external participation, communication and awareness-building to the benefit of UCCE and the University.

Reviewer Recommendations and Unit Response Follow-up

Reviewers Recommendation 1:

Continuing Education Response:

We agree that there is no perfect organizational structure and that organizational stability is desirable. However, due to economic conditions, the context for Continuing Education at the University of Calgary has shifted dramatically during the last few years. In response to significant shifts in the external market and a related 21% reduction in enrolment, Continuing Education has gone through significant change, both in operational processes and organizational structure. The review team came mid-stream, in the midst of these organizational changes.

In alignment with our vision of Continuing Education, a new organizational structure, clustering all operational activities under an Associate Director Operations and bringing together all Programming teams serving domestic markets under an Associate Director Domestic Programs took place in early 2017. Further, additional scalability has been built into the new structure by maintaining a core group of operational staff and adding a small complement of part-time and casual staff during high demand periods, such as peak registration time. The intent of these structural changes was not only to maintain financial viability, but to streamline our program development and delivery processes while increasing the consistency and quality of program delivery through the reduction of silos.

As a responsive educational unit, within the University of Calgary, it is believed that this design will create core unit stability while maintaining the flexibility needed to effectively respond to seasonality and market demand.

Continuing Education Response:

Continuing Education agrees with this recommendation. As outlined in Continuing Education's self-study this gap had been identified and an action plan is in place to establish Advisory Committees for key certificate programs by the end of 2017-18.

Reviewers Recommendation 2:

Continuing Education Response:

We are unaware of any internal policies governing non-credit versus credit work. This is an internal practice, more than a policy, which in part has been dictated by the Provincial Ministry and our mandate statement, which does include Continuing Education.

Continuing Education has identified numerous opportunities to expand our service to both the institution and our broader communities within our non-credit teaching and community engagement mandate.

If it is deemed of value to the academic community, UCCE is open to working collaboratively on professional continuing studies programs that serve the lifelong learning needs of our institutions' graduates and to supporting online education where appropriate.

Reviewers Recommendation 1:

Continuing Education Response:

Agreed! Two key positions have been filled in last three months, with strong candidates that have these skills. As indicated in the self-study, significant professional development has been and still is being undertaken to ensure existing staff are appropriately trained for their roles.

Reviewers Recommendation 2:

Continuing Education Response:

As noted above, UCCE would benefit from academic staff knowledge in both the development of curriculum and within program advisory committees. As outlined in response to recommendation #1, we are in the process of establishing other advisory committees and we hope to name academic colleagues to these committees.

Reviewers Recommendation 1:

Continuing Education Response:

Agreed. Continuing Education has identified two broad areas to expand our program offerings. First, in light of anticipated changes to the Alberta Designation Requirements, new opportunities to bring international students to the University of Calgary for non-credit professional certificate training are now possible. Further, as identified above, UCCE believes there may be value in partnering with other academic units to provide pathway and bridging programs for marginalized groups.

Reviewers Recommendation 2:

Continuing Education Response:

This is a broader university conversation, to ensure that we are meeting the needs of

Continuing Education Response:

Similar to the consultation and work done on the credit credentials framework, the need for a non-credit credentials framework and the market demand for “stackable” certificates has been identified by both Continuing Education and Provosts office.

As agreed with the Provost, the Director of Continuing Education will pull together a working group with representation from academic units providing non-credit credentials to consult with the academic community regarding “non-credit programming at UCalgary”.

The purpose of the working group is to propose a non-credit credential framework and a process oriented white paper providing recommendations based on the community consultation.

Reviewers Recommendation 2:

To assure quality, consistency and, where needed, alignment to professional association requirements, the goal is to template all "core" non-credit certificate courses and have the IP owned by Continuing Education. Guided by input from an Advisory Committee, these courses will be authored by a subject matter expert(s) working with an Instructional Designer to ensure both course and program outcomes are met in the design.

We are aware that the University of Calgary IP policy will be reviewed in the upcoming year and we will ensure Continuing Education is consistent with this policy.

Reviewers Recommendation 5:

Continuing Education Response:

Continuing Education's mandate and role within the University of Calgary is very tied to our institutional commitment to community engagement and in particular the learning needs of Calgl

Continuing Education Response:

Continuing Education has worked collaboratively with both Werklund School of Education and the Provosts office to recommend changes intended to create clear options for English language learners at the University of Calgary. Proposals for aligned changes to both Continuing Education and Werklund School of Education programming were submitted to APPC on June 13th.

Reviewers Recommendation 2:

Continuing Education Response:

UCCE's overall ratio of 8-10% is in line with best practices published by UPCEA (University Professional and Continuing Education Association) and LERN (Learning Resources Network) – the two largest professional associations tied to the practice of Continuing Education in the United States.

It's believed the reference of 5-7% is based on the CAUCE (Canadian Association of University Continuing Education) self-report benchmarks. The CAUCE reported benchmarks typically do not include Marketing and Communication staff salaries, as these functions are often provided centrally or reported separately. UCCE's ratio does include a small dedicated Marketing team.

As noted in the self-study, UCCE has been transitioning from paper based to digital communication channels. Additional moves towards yet lighter guides that push learners to the website are underway. UCCE also launched a new website in 2016-17, enhancing the "shopping cart" experience for UCCE learners.

UCCE believes both our marketing cost ratios and current targets of 50-60% of enrolments being completed online, via our website, are appropriate.

