Summary Report for the Cyclical Program Review

of the Bachelor of Commerce Program

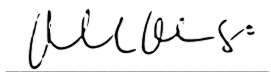# at University Canada West

April 27, 2023

Office of the Vice President Academic

Territorial Acknowledgement

*We acknowledge that the territories on which UCW and its campuses are situated are the traditional, ancestral and unceded territories of the **xʷməθkʷəy̓əm** (Musqueam), **Sḵwx̱wú7mesh** (Squamish) and **Selíl̓witulh** (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. We thank them for having cared for this land since time immemorial, honour their graciousness to the students who seek knowledge here, and iterate our dedication to valuing the ongoing contributions of Indigenous peoples and communities.*

Introduction

This public summary report for the Cyclical Program Review of the Bachelor of Commerce (BCom) program at University Canada West provides a summary of the cyclical review process, the executive summary from the Report of the External Program Review Panel, and a list of the recommendations made by the panel. A summary of the program's response to each recommendation made by the External Program Review Panel has also been included, which provides details on how the program intends to implement the recommendations made. The Summary Report was prepared by the Office of the VPA and approved by UCW's Senate.

_____

Dr. Maureen Mancuso

Vice President Academic

Summary of the Cyclical Review Process

The cyclical program review of the Bachelor of Commerce program took place between April 2022 and March 2023. The review process was initiated with a Cyclical Program Review Orientation session for all Program Chairs; following that, the BCom program struck a Self-Study committee, comprised of five continuing faculty members appointed to the program. Over the course of several months, the Self-Study Committee met to plan their approach to the cyclical program review, collect relevant data, consult with, and collect information from relevant program and institutional stakeholders, and complete the Self-Study document.

The External Program Review Panel was selected by the Office of the Vice-President: Academic and was comprised of two external reviewers with disciplinary expertise, program administration experience, and an understanding of the provincial context in which University Canada West operates. The review committee membership included:

- Mr. Mark Breedveld, Associate Professor, University of the Fraser Valley
- Dr. William Gillett, Dean, School of Business, Okanagan College

The site visit of the External Program Review Panel took place in person at the University Canada West campus in Vancouver on March 14-15, 2023. During the two-day site visit, the External Program Review Panel met with relevant university and program stakeholders, including the VP: Academic, the Director of Institutional Accountability, the BCom Program Chair and Vice-Chair, members of the BCom Self-Study Committee, program faculty, BCom students across different levels of the program, and representatives from UCW's Academic Leadership Team and Academic Support Services.

The External Program Review Panel used the information presented in the program's Self-Study and accompanying materials (e.g. course syllabi, faculty CVs), and the perspectives obtained from the site visit, to prepare the Report of the External Program Review Panel, which includes their assessment of the program's operations across all required categories for the cyclical program review, along with related recommendations to improve the quality of the program and the student experience. The Executive Summary of the External Program Review Panel has been provided below, along with the list of recommendations made in the report, and the BCom program's response to each.

Executive Summary of the External Program Review Panel

The external review process included the review of a detailed self-study report and appendices (prepared by a panel of five UCW faculty) followed by a day-and--a-half of interviews with UCW faculty, administrators, staff and students connected with the BCom program or, in some cases, the broader operations of the institution.

The external reviewers determined that the BCom program offered at UCW is a solid academic program providing a general business degree and a concentration in accounting for students interested in pursuing the CPA designation. The faculty has strong academic credentials and students seem to be generally satisfied with the education they are receiving although the small size of the program until the very recent surge in enrolment does not allow for sufficient trending data with respect to student or alumni satisfaction analysis. The recent growth of the BCom program, its relatively small proportion of the overall University enrolment, and the significance of the MBA program, has not yet allowed the BCom program to have developed its own identity and position within the University. This development is necessary to create a strong and sustainable program that will meet the educational, career and social needs of undergraduate students.

The University is developing additional concentrations, notably in International Trade and in Technology Management, and the range of options for students in both concentrations and individual classes is being expanded. This is necessary if the program is to meet the demands of a student population that has grown to approximately 500 in just over two years. Additionally, the University continues to expand academic and career support areas and student support services in appropriate response to rapid enrolment growth. This expansion needs to continue as advising staff and support services need sufficient resources to meet increasing student requirements in a timely manner.

Faculty structure in terms of administration, workload requirements and research and service expectations will continue to develop with policies and procedures appropriate to the significantly expanded program. The growth has also required substantial hiring of both continuing and sessional faculty; this has resulted in the BCom faculty being composed of only about 20% continuing faculty with the rest being sessional faculty. Increasing the number of continuing faculty will add stability to the BCom program and increase student and faculty engagement.

Although the review did not include a visit to the Pender Street campus, where most of all of the BCom courses are delivered, a number of interviewees expressed the view that the facility is worn and needs to be replaced.

There appears to a be a general consensus that the BCom program would benefit from more space for students to study, research and pursue extracurricular activities on campus and for faculty to work and meet with students.

List of Recommendations and Program Responses

The following section provides a list of the recommendations made by the External Program Review Panel, the responses and suggested actions provided by the Bachelor of Commerce program, and a proposed timeline for implementation of the recommendations.

Recommendation #1: The program will be significantly better able to meet student career preparation and interests with continued development of new concentrations or majors. The development of specialties in International Trade and Technology Management should be completed, and additional specialties should be considered.

Response and Suggested Actions: We agree with this recommendation and are currently working to develop these two specializations. We are discussing the International Trade specialization with Forum for International Trade Training (FITT), which issues the professional designation in international trade (CITP|FIBP). Our goal is to incorporate six of their required courses into our BCom program. Therefore, after completing the BCom program specializing in International Trade, students will meet the education requirement for obtaining the CITP|FIBP designation. These six courses are:

1. Feasibility of International Trade (Adopt from FITT)
2. International Market Entry Strategies (Adopt from FITT)
3. Global Value Chain (Adopt from FITT)
4. Products & Services for a Global Market (Adopt from FITT)
5. International Trade Finance (Adopt from FITT)
6. International Sales & Marketing (Adopt from FITT)

The Technology Management specialization intends to develop future business managers with strong skills and knowledge of new emerging technologies. As a result, they can apply these modern technologies to help improve the productivity and efficiency of their businesses. Several related courses have been revised or developed in the last two years. The following is the list of upper-level courses that are relevant to this new specialization:

1. BUSI 323 – E-business
2. BUSI 302—Digital Transformation
3. MGMT 307 —Managing Innovation
4. CPSC 301 - Cybersecurity Awareness
5. CPSC 311 - Data visualization and Storytelling
6. BUSI 402 - FinTech; Blockchain and Cryptocurrency
7. RSCH 404—Research and Development
8. CPSC 311 —Data Visualization & Storytelling
9. BUSI 4XX – E-commerce (developed - Need approval)
10. BUSI 4XX- Information Technology consulting (need to develop)

To complete this specialization, students must complete five courses or 15 credits of the 300 or 400-level courses listed above.

Implementation Timeline: Since most of the courses are ready, we would expect to finalize the development of a few more courses for the two specializations by the Spring term of 2023. Then, we will submit an application to DQAB for approval and aim to start implement the new specializations in the Winter/Spring 2024.

Recommendation #2: The physical location and limited space of the campuses makes social and extra-curricular activities for students somewhat challenging and limits the time students spend on campus. Further development of these activities should be pursued to bring a richer university experience to undergraduate students, particularly since most BCom students do not have any connection to the Vancouver community outside of the University.

Response and Suggested Actions: While we agree with this recommendation, it is beyond the program's authority to make decisions regarding the physical spaces available to the BCom program and its students. We have forwarded this suggestion to the VP Academics. For extra-curricular activities, we will support the formation of several student-led clubs such as the Entrepreneur club, green club (environmental, sustainable focus), cultural club, etc., to help connect students and the community together.

Implementation Timeline: For the student-led club, initial conversations with Student Affairs and Service will start as early as Winter 2024 to explore the mechanisms for establishing these communities. The Office of the VP Academic will consider the feasibility and appropriateness of making new space available to the program and its students.

Recommendation #3: The substantial and rapid growth of enrolment has resulted in significant faculty hiring and the necessity for more established and communicated policies and procedures in terms of faculty evaluations, academic integrity issues, and, noticeably, faculty workloads. In particular, the scope of the role of the Subject Leads should be more clearly defined and consideration given to whether the workload is appropriate for the position.

Response and Suggested Actions: The BCom program recognizes the value of this recommendation, but it is one that is outside the authority of the program. The university already has policies in place pertaining to academic integrity and course evaluations and are currently implementing them (Policy 5006 – Academic Integrity has been recently revised, along with its associated procedure). As we recently implemented a new rank structure, a faculty-supported Committee is currently working on defining the service component for continuing faculty members, including the further clarification of the subject lead role.

Implementation Timeline: The Office of the VP Academic and Faculty Relations will be responsible for providing a clear definition of the service component for full-time faculty.

Recommendation #4: Consider adding or modifying a program learning outcome to specifically mention the use of new technologies.

Response and Suggested Actions: The program agrees with this recommendation as a mechanism for ensuring that the BCom learning outcomes address the importance of students' familiarity with new business technologies. A new PLO will be added to ensure our graduates are able to utilize modern technologies to enhance business operations. Once created, the new program learning outcome will be mapped to the program's curriculum to ensure that students have adequate opportunities to develop and demonstrate achievement it.

Implementation Timeline: Consultations with faculty to add the new PLO will be started in mid 2024.

Recommendation #5: Business simulations are common components of capstone courses in undergraduate business programs. Consider replacing BUS 497 with a simulation – perhaps one that involves a competition with students in other university business programs.

Response and Suggested Actions: As stated in our Self-Study report, we are in the process of replacing BUSI 497 Business Capstone I 498 Business Capstone II with WORK 498 Capstone Project. The goal of this development is to better prepare our graduates for the workforce. Thus, we will consider adding business simulations to the new capstone course WORK 498. Moreover, we will embed more business simulations into other business courses such as Marketing, Entrepreneurship, Operation Management, strategy, and other courses as appropriate. In addition, we can organize or join undergraduate case competitions with other institutions as another mechanism to support the achievement of this recommendation.

Implementation Timeline: Add business simulation activities to relevant courses by Spring 2024.

Recommendation #6: Continue to develop and incorporate experiential learning opportunities for students. The activities described could be significantly expanded to include, for example, internships, co-ops, and projects with local businesses.

Response and Suggested Actions: The BCom program agrees with the importance of providing students with experiential learning opportunities to support their transition into the workforce. As one mechanism for implementing this recommendation, we will use Riipen platform[1] to help connect our students to the industry. Students will be given opportunities to solve real-world business problems. Furthermore, we will continue to use practical case studies in our business courses.

Implementation Timeline: We will embed Riipen projects into relevant business courses by mid 2024.

Recommendation #7: Consider adding majors or concentrations in core areas such as human resource management, marketing, and finance; this will also add more upper-level courses to give students more options to pursue topics that they are seeking for career preparation and other interest.

Response and Suggested Actions: These three suggested specializations were also raised during our previous faculty retreat and Program Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting. However, we decided to give priority to the

---

[1] https://www.riipen.com/

development of a specialization in International Trade and Technology Management. In the following year, we will continue with the development of Digital Marketing, Financial Planning (linked to the CFP designation) and Human Resource Management (prepare students for the CHRP designation).

Digital Marketing Specialization

Most of the courses for this specialization already exist; however, a couple new courses will need to be developed.

1. MRKT 201 —Marketing Management
2. MRKT 221 —Service Marketing
3. MRKT 223 —Digital Marketing Strategy
4. MRKT 225 —Marketing Research
5. MRKT 302 —Integrated Marketing Communications
6. PUBR 300 —Public Relations in Practice & Theory
7. COMM 304 — Social Media (might need revision to focus more on marketing)
8. MRKT 3XX – Consumer Behaviour (need to develop)
9. MRKT 3XX- International Marketing (shared course with International Trade)
10. BUSI 4XX – E-commerce (developed - Need approval, shared course with Technology Management)
11. MRKT 4XX – Marketing Internship (need to develop)

Besides MRKT 201, which is a required course, students will need to choose an additional five courses or 15 credits from the list above.

Financial Planning Specialization

As stated in the BCom Self-Study report, we are planning to develop a Financial Planning specialization that aligns with the CFP requirement[2]. The following courses will need to be developed and certified by CFP Canada:

1. FNCE 3XX - Introduction to Financial Planning (need to develop)
2. FNCE 3XX - Credit/Debit Management (need to develop)
3. FNCE 4XX - Retirement Planning (Basic & Advanced) (need to develop)
4. FNCE 3XX - Investment Planning (need to develop)
5. FNCE 4XX -Tax Planning (Basic & Advanced) (need to develop)
6. FNCE 4XX - Insurance and Risk management (Basic & Advanced) (need to develop)
7. FNCE 4XX - Estate Planning (Basic & Advanced) (need to develop)

Students will be required to complete all seven courses to satisfy both BCom in Financial Planning and the CFP requirement.

Human Resources Management Specialization

The following are HR-related courses would be required for the CHRP designation[3]

1. ORGB 201—Organizational Behaviour
2. HRMT 301 —Human Resource Management

---

[2] https://www.fpcanada.ca/students-and-candidates/paths-to-certification/direct-path-to-cfp-certification
[3] https://www.hrpa.ca/designations/coursework-requirement/

7

3. HRMT 3XX – Labour Law (Labour Relations/Industrial Relations) (need to develop)
4. HRMT 3XX – Compensation (need to develop)
5. HRMT 3XX – HR Planning (need to develop)
6. HRMT 3XX – Recruitment & Selection (need to develop)
7. HRMT 3XX – Training & Development (need to develop)

ORGB 201 and HRMT 301 are required courses for the BCom program. Students who wish to specialize in HRM must take an additional five courses to meet the requirements of the specialization.

Implementation Timeline: Since most of the Marketing courses have been developed, the marketing specialization is expected to be completed by early 2024. For the Financial Planning and Human Resources Management specializations, there are many new courses that will need to be developed, and we are planning to have these new courses completed in early 2025.

Recommendation #8: Consider enhanced faculty training in online delivery methodologies, particularly for faculty with less teaching experience or limited experience teaching online, to ensure that the Guided Study method is being utilized to maximum effect.

Response and Suggested Actions: This recommendation was discussed with the Centre for Teaching Excellence (CTE). In response to it, the BCom program leadership and the Centre for Teaching Excellence will develop a mandatory training module (under the CTE) that our faculty will be required to complete. The training module will be a self-paced online module that cover the following topics:

- How to design online/blended courses
- How to deliver online/blended courses

Faculty members can be exempted from completing this module if they hold equivalent certifications related to designing and teaching blended or online courses.

Implementation Timeline: The request for this new training module will be forwarded to the CTE for development.

Recommendation #9: Increase the number of continuing faculty to improve the ratio of continuing to sessional faculty in the program. Full-time faculty are generally more engaged with and available to students as they often teach more classes and have fewer competing career demands. They also provide more program stability through longevity and developed program knowledge.

Response and Suggested Actions: We recognize the importance of this recommendation, which is aimed at ensuring that the BCom faculty complement is resourced sufficiently in step with program enrolment. The university is aware of the need to hire more full-time continuing faculty, and we are currently in the process of hiring additional continuing faculty to provide teaching capacity and additional support to the program.

Implementation Timeline: This is an ongoing process; we will continue to show progress on improving the % of continuing faculty teaching courses in BCom.

Recommendation #10: Move the teaching of BCom courses to a campus location where more amenities and services are available to students.

Response and Suggested Actions: This recommendation is outside of the scope of the program's authority, but will be forwarded to the VP Academic to inform future institutional space planning efforts.

Implementation Timeline: The timeline will be determined by the VP Academic.

Recommendation #11: Collect retention/graduation rates from other BC universities; based on this research, set appropriate benchmarks for the BCom program.

Response and Suggested Actions: We recognize the importance of monitoring student progression and attrition, particularly as the BCom program has experienced rapid growth. We will conduct research and set appropriate benchmarks for cohort retention and graduation for the BCom program, and measure and document our students' performance against these metrics.

Implementation Timeline: This project will be completed by early 2024 and integrated in the program's and university's analysis of student performance metrics.

Recommendation #12: Conduct an annual survey and focus groups to measure student satisfaction with the BCom program; consider the development of a BCom student advisory council.

Response and Suggested Actions: Although we regularly collect feedback from our students, it is a good idea to formalize the process by creating a BCom student advisory council. This council can meet every term, and suggestions that are put forward by the group will be directed to the appropriate department for implementation.

Implementation Timeline: The Student advisory council will be created by Fall 2023.

Recommendation #13: The addition of domestic students to the UCW BCom student body is desirable. Domestic students bring Canadian cultural traditions and connections to the business community, which will benefit international students.

Response and Suggested Actions: We agree with this recommendation and recognize the need to diversify our student body. This will help to connect international students to Canadian society and the community. We will offer a degree completion program to attract more domestic students. In other words, domestic students who have some post-secondary credits can be given an opportunity to receive advanced standing in the BCom program, making degree completion more efficient. Moreover, special grants or scholarships could be used to attract more domestic students.

Implementation Timeline: We will work with the university leadership and marketing/recruitment department to obtain further feedback from agents that will provide opportunities to increase the attractiveness of the program to domestic students.

Next Steps

The Report of the External Review Panel noted that the BCom "self-study consultation and preparation process was thorough" and that "the self-study report itself was complete and well-written" (Report of the External Program Review Panel, p.3). The External Program Review Panel provided the BCom program with 13 relevant recommendations to consider, all aimed at improving the program, ensuring that the curriculum provides students with a relevant and contemporary learning experience, and ensuring that its growth is appropriately resourced. In the Program Response, the BCom program has positively embraced the recommendations made by the External Program Review Panel, outlining how and when the recommendations within the program's control or authority will be implemented.

Over the course of the next 12-18 months, the BCom program will work to implement those recommendations identified as priorities and submit a Progress Report in 2024 that provides an update on the actions taken to implement these recommendations. A Renewal of Consent for the BCom program will be submitted to the Degree Quality Assessment Board (DQAB) in June 2023 and the program's next cyclical program review will take place as scheduled in accordance with Ministry guidelines.

Both the BCom program and the university have benefited from this comprehensive and future-oriented cyclical program review process. The process of consulting with, and collecting data from, program and university stakeholders, and the internal discussions that took place during the cyclical program review, will undoubtedly result in positive, student-centred changes to the program and its operations.