Summary Report for the Cyclical Program Review of the Master of Business Administration at University Canada West
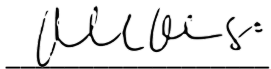
June 23, 2023

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 Master of Business Administration (MBA) 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.

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Dr. Maureen Mancuso

Vice President Academic

Summary of the Cyclical Review Process

The cyclical program review of the Master of Business Administration 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 MBA program struck a Self-Study committee, comprised of six continuing faculty members appointed to the program. Over the course of several months, MBA Program Chairs met on a weekly basis to discuss the cyclical program review and Self-Study, 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 three 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:

- Dr. Hasnat Dewan, Professor, Bob Gaglardi School of Business and Economics, Thompson Rivers University
- Dr. Mike Ivanof, Associate Professor, School of Business, University of the Fraser Valley,
- Mr. Bryan Webber, Organizational Development Advisor, Human Resources, Vancouver Island University (formerly Interim Dean, Faculty of Management)

The site visit of the External Program Review Panel took place in person at the University Canada West campus in Vancouver on March 6-7, 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 MBA Program Chairs and Vice-Chairs, members of the MBA Self-Study Committee, program

faculty, current MBA students as well as program alumni, 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 MBA program's response to each.

Executive Summary of the External Program Review Panel

University Canada West (UCW) is a private post-secondary institution that has undertaken a cyclical program review of their Master of Business Administration (MBA) program, with completion of a substantial Self-Study and the establishment of an External Program Review Panel (or External Review Team – "ERT") to provide an informed outside perspective and assessment of the review. The ERT consists of Professors/Administrators from three public BC institutions, having experience with both MBA programs and program reviews.

The UCW MBA is a flagship program for the institution with considerable recent growth and a positive reputation. It is a destination for international students seeking a work-ready graduate business credential and the potential for meaningful and relevant employment, either here in Canada or abroad.

Through a commitment to continuous improvement, UCW employs a quality assurance approach that integrates BC Ministry of Post Secondary Education and Future Skills requirements through the Degree Assessment Quality Assessment Board and that required by the Accreditation Council of Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP), the independent accreditation body by which the UCW MBA program is accredited.

The result is a rigorous, comprehensive, and impressive review process, borne out by substance and structure of the Self-Study report, which included data collected from critical stakeholders, and the use of many internal and external sources.

The External Review follows the components of the Self-Study, with an opportunity to assess and comment on each section; it also included on-site interviews by the ERT with groups of students, faculty, staff, and senior leadership to balance with the information in the Self-Study. The resulting report includes several recommendations offered for UCW to consider, arising from the ERT's understanding of the program's purpose, characteristics, and objectives, and what emerged from data collected during their review.

This External Review report highlights the quality of the organization, its faculty, staff, and students, and the achievements made to date in providing a well-regarded graduate business program that is in high demand. It encourages further work on standardization and consistency where appropriate; building on the applied and experiential elements that are already features of the program to enhance the learning and relevance; and attention to key areas such as EDI, student well-being, and Indigenous commitments. Many of the recommendations are to develop or expand program and supporting infrastructure, through roles,

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responsibilities, structure, and strategic direction; the intention is to enable sustainable program operation that can scale with growth. Overall, the review attempts to reflect a high-level view of how the UCW MBA can best achieve its goals and potential.

The ERT acknowledges the sincere and considerable effort to carry out the cyclical program review of the UCW MBA, and that it itself manifests desirable characteristics that support the success of the program and its potential for the future. We appreciate the opportunity to contribute to these efforts and thank UCW for their guidance in conducting this review.

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 MBA program, and a proposed timeline for implementation of the recommendations.

Recommendation #1: Appoint a single point of accountability for the UCW program.

Response and Suggested Actions: UCW is seeking a suitable candidate for the MBA Associate Chair position. The job advertisement was revised in February 2023 to attract more suitable candidates. The MBA Associate Chair will report to the MBA Program Chairs, and will be responsible for providing strategic direction, planning, and management. This includes ensuring the coherence of the MBA degree program, curriculum design and development, including the assessment of program learning outcomes, establishment, and oversight of program delivery in all available modes (e.g., F2F, formal online), support of full-time and sessional faculty, instituting curricular pathways within UCW and program specializations, negotiating partnerships and articulation agreements, and building relevant industry contacts and networks.

Implementation Timeline: This position is expected to be filled by Fall 2023.

Recommendation #2: EDI, cross-cultural understanding, and indigenous knowledge could be one of the Program Learning Outcomes.

Response and Suggested Actions: The MBA agrees with the importance of this recommendation, and the faculty committee has recently implemented this recommendation by revising one of its program learning outcomes (#5) as follows: "*Evaluate, integrate and apply skills, tools and strategies to overcome barriers and promote equity, diversity, and inclusion.*" This revised PLO better communicates the program's values around EDI and satisfies the intent of this recommendation.

Implementation Timeline: After DQAB approval for revisions to the MBA program in 2025, the new PLO will be placed into the revised program curriculum.

Recommendation #3: Create an ongoing program individual or group role to focus on extra-curricular/co-curricular elements of the UCW MBA to set direction, prioritize, organize and optimize these opportunities.

Response and Suggested Actions: UCW will strike a committee to determine the best approach toward implementation of this recommendation. MBA students are already offered opportunities to complete micro-credentials, such as CSR, Blockchain, sales skills, and more, alongside their degree through the Next Generation Hub. UCW is committed to adding more micro-credentials to prepare students for the job market. However, as of yet, we have not organized and systematized the various opportunities into a one comprehensive site. UCW has several student clubs, such as the American Marketing Association, the cultural club and more. In addition, we provide the opportunity for our students to participate in the MBA Games, which allows students to hone important analytical and communication skills.

Student Affairs and Services offers additional co-curricular development opportunities focusing on creating a learning experience that is contemporary and relevant to the student community. This includes community-based learning and service-based learning during student's first year experience in the student life programming, as well as career readiness micro-credential through the Career Development Centre. MBA students are also invited to participate in the MBA Games in an official and unofficial capacity representing UCW in provincial and national championships. Students can self-advocate through recognized clubs and groups opportunities to co-create their student experience with UCW in student life as part of their leadership development.

Implementation Timeline: This is an ongoing recommendation, but the committee referenced to implement this recommendation will be struck in Fall 2023.

Recommendation #4: Consider further external accreditations to enhance program quality, brand, and value to students.

Response and Suggested Actions: The MBA program agrees with the intent of this recommendation and recognizes the value of external accreditations for students and the program's reputation. UCW currently has an agreement with the Digital Marketing Institute (DMI) for marketing courses, an agreement with CPHR for HR courses and the UX Design Institute for e-commerce courses. Students in these courses can work towards designations in DMI, CPHR or UX. UCW also has an agreement with Microsoft Azure for cloud consulting and data analytics courses. Students can obtain their certification in Microsoft Azure in data analytics courses. Several free certifications are embedded in courses such as Google Analytics, Hootsuite, Shopify and IBM design thinking.

The program will continue to collect feedback from students and industry partners about desirable certifications to embed within the program curriculum or offer to students as co-curricular opportunities to enhance graduates' skillset and marketability.

Implementation Timeline: Ongoing process.

Recommendation #5: The UCW MBA should have its own strategy for EDI and Indigenous matters, aligned with any institutional strategy. Coordination of EDI and indigenization efforts is important, so direction and an EDI committee well-represented by different equity-seeking groups are necessary.

Response and Suggested Actions: UCW agrees that it is important for the MBA program to have its own strategy for EDI and Indigenous matters that aligns with the overall institutional strategy. UCW's dedicated EDI committee includes members from diverse equity-seeking groups such as women, people of colour, LGBTQ+ individuals, people with disabilities, and Indigenous people. The committee is representative of the student body, faculty, and staff. The EDI committee is responsible for creating, implementing, and evaluating EDI initiatives and policies within UCW.

The university committee is developing a strategic plan for EDI, including measurable goals and objectives. This plan will be regularly reviewed and updated to remain relevant and effective. In addition, the EDI committee should work closely with other stakeholders in the MBA program and its EDI committee, such as the administration, faculty, and students, to ensure that EDI initiatives are integrated into all aspects of the MBA program. This includes curriculum development, recruiting and retaining diverse students, faculty and staff, and creating a safe and inclusive learning environment. UCW has established an indigenous advisory committee with Elder Rose, indigenous faculty and other stakeholders. Before Senate approval, this committee will assess and provide input and perspective on any curriculum, courses, and programs related to indigenization.

Currently, EDI committees have been formed in each individual MBA department to look in the curriculum and review it through the lens of equity, diversity, and inclusivity. These committees will be expanded to encompass the MBA program as a whole to meet the actions noted above.

Implementation Timeline: By the end of 2024.

Recommendation #6: More exposure for students to sustainability issues and EDI through guest speakers, seminars, webinars, or workshops can be considered.

Response and Suggested Actions: There are several initiatives, such as the Innovation Fuel podcast, which relate to this recommendation for MBA students. The podcast focuses on a range of topics including more than six episodes regarding EDI, three episodes on Indigenous entrepreneurship challenges, and several sustainable/green entrepreneur episodes. The podcast is embedded in two courses: BUSI 601 Ethics, CSR and Business Environment Analysis (first term core course) and MGMT 661 Strategic Management (last term core course).

Another mechanism through which this recommendation can be implemented is Innovation Fuel Ignite, a live event on campus; in this event, UCW invites industry experts and faculty to discuss a specific topic, such as women in leadership.

Dr. Stephanie Chu, the Associate Vice President, Teaching, Learning & Scholarship, also schedules several seminars and workshops for faculty on different topics such as EDI and indigenization. These initiatives aim to help faculty bring current topics to classrooms.

Students are exposed to BC/Canada business owners through Riipen and faculty networks on different topics such as sustainability and EDI.

Many faculty bring in guest speakers, which are being broadcast to students across sections of courses and can be enhanced by adding requests for EDI as part of their presentations Many sources of guest speakers are available through our faculty networks and the innovation fuel podcast.

Student Affairs & Services partners with Vancouver Pride, Greater Vancouver Food Bank, EcoVillage, Peko, Women's Shelter, LivingWorks, Sports BC, Canadian Council of Rehabilitation and Work, INNoVA, MOSAIC, ISEmpower, local indigenous elders and BC Crisis Centre to provide diverse support to students through comprehensive EDI training, speakers series, and webinars and workshops.

Implementation Timeline: This recommendation represents an ongoing effort on the part of the MBA program to ensure that students have access to information, resources, and conversations related to the topics of sustainability and EDI in both curricular and co-curricular activities.

Recommendation #7: Explore the opportunity for learners to earn more designations through their program; that may help attract domestic interest and provide further value-add of the program to students.

Response and Suggested Actions: The MBA program recognizes the importance of this recommendation and the value of additional designations to students and program graduates. Below is the list of current UCW MBA designations:

Table 1-UCW MBA List of Designations

Designations	Partner	Courses	Core/Elective
DMI association	Digital Marketing Institute	MRKT 621 Marketing Management	Core
DMI Pro	Digital Marketing Institute	MRKT 623 Digital Marketing	Elective
Microsoft Azure	Microsoft	BUSI 651 Machine Learning BUSI 652 Predictive Data Analytics BUSI 653 Cloud Computing	Electives
CMC	Consulting Management Canada	BUSI 640 Consulting Practice CAPS 602 Consulting Capstone Projects	Elective Capstone
UX Design	UX Design Institute	BUSI 645 E-commerce	Elective
CPHR	CPHR BC and Yokan	HRMT 623 HRMT 624 HRMT 625	Electives
Free certifications	Shopify, Hootsuite, Google Analytics	BUSI 645 E-commerce	Electives
Design Thinking	IBM	BUSI 641 Entrepreneurship	

However, it is essential to note that introducing additional designations to the MBA program requires careful consideration of resources and curriculum. The program must ensure that the additional designations are aligned with the program's overall objectives and are supported by the necessary faculty, courses, and resources. The MBA program will continue to explore and collect feedback on designations that may be attractive and valuable to its students.

Implementation Timeline: Ongoing process.

Recommendation #8: Seek to use more Canadian-based business cases. Use of live cases is commendable and having relevant and familiar materials is also important. A balanced approach is desirable. UCW may wish to initiate more support for faculty in writing their own cases.

Response and Suggested Actions: There are several resources at UCW to help faculty and students to connect with Canadian business owners. Faculty can access the bi-weekly Innovation Fuel podcast (UCW-owned BC/Canadian business cases) in all business disciplines. Further, through Riipen and the faculty network, students can access BC/Canada-owned businesses as their client-based team projects. UCW has worked on over 800 business challenges through Riipen in the past two years. The ACCT 621 faculty create new case studies every term for their students and other faculty are encouraged to rewrite and revise cases used to prevent academic integrity issues and to keep the content relevant to students.

UCW is seeking more contributions from BC/Canada businesses for client-based courses such as MRKT 621 Marketing Management, MGMT 661 Strategic Management, BUSI 660 Small Business Management, BUSI 645 E-commerce, MRKT 623 Digital Marketing, MRKT 625 Promotion, MRKT 627 International Marketing and BUSI 650 Business Analytics to help students obtain additional BC market-relevant knowledge.

Implementation Timeline: Ongoing process.

Recommendation #9: Create a shell-course such as "Selected Topics in the MBA". Topics can be changed based on needs and faculty expertise and can incorporate changes in the dynamic world. For example, sustainable business, carbon accounting, businesses in the age of artificial intelligence (AI), business/real estate/commercial law, managerial/global economics, etc. can be taught through such a course. This may also provide an opportunity to invite renowned guest lecturers from other universities or from the business community to teach a topic of their choice under this shell course. It can even be a shared course taught by several experts, each teaching for a week or two.

Response and Suggested Actions: UCW will create a Special Topics course to attend to emergent topics and leverage the expertise of guest lecturers and business community members. A course outline will be developed and submitted through the university's curriculum approval process. After Senate approval, the course will be made available two terms after that to ensure compliance with university procedures (e.g., Academic Calendar updates, course shell creation, and teaching assignments/contracts).
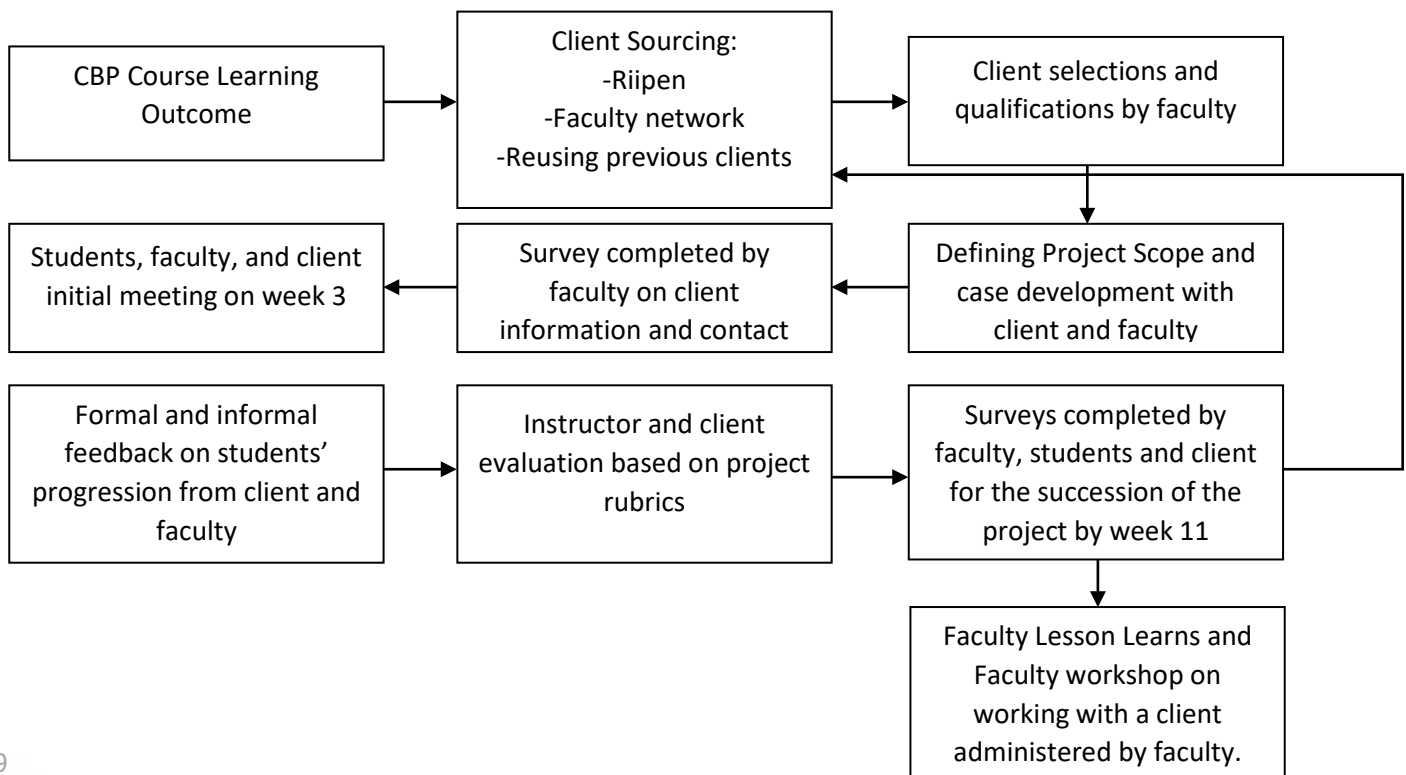
Implementation Timeline: Winter 2024.

Recommendation #10: Include quality assurance processes for external engagements of students, with the Riipen projects and with internship placements. UCW has a very effective approach to QA, but is vulnerable with the external applied elements, which are such an important aspect of the program.

Response and Suggested Actions: At UCW, we are dedicated to experiential learning and the quality of our student's academic experiences, and thus, already have robust mechanisms in place for the quality assurance of these program elements. Experiential learning is an effective way to enhance the quality of students' academic experiences. Client-based projects (CBPs) were implemented in Fall 2020 and increased exponentially. All marketing courses (MRKT 621, 623,625, 627) and MGMT 661 Strategic Management, BUSI 640 Consulting Practice have a course-level learning outcome related to CBPs. We send a survey at the beginning of each term to faculty to fill in client information. 60% of clients are from Riipen, 33% from the faculty network and 7% were previous clients. At the end of each term, we send students self-evaluations on working with clients to assess their learning and hear their concerns. We also send another survey to clients to evaluate their experience with students and faculty. 95% of clients are happy with their experience with the UCW community. Twice a year, we have faculty Riipen CBP lesson learns sessions to help faculty to learn from each other. UCW has a faculty Riipen administrative representative responsible for communication between the UCW community and Riipen. Twice a year we have a workshop run jointly by Riipen and Faculty Riipen admin to help faculty to define their projects on Riipen. In the summer of 2022, Dr. Earnhart, the Chair of the Department of Quantitative Studies, formed a committee to create faculty guidelines for working with clients.

UCW commits to expanding experiential learning opportunities throughout the MBA program to prepare students for their capstone experiences and will continue to monitor the quality of these experiences through the above-mentioned mechanisms. The figure below illustrates the current processes used to ensure the quality of the MBA client-based projects.

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Figure 1-Client-Based Projects Process

Implementation Timeline: Ongoing Process.

Recommendation #11: Increase the formal role of the departments in job placement and expand the career centre work. There could be more industry leaders and professional bodies invited onto the campus, to build and improve the MBA Brand image. This will assist in securing respectable jobs for their graduates and in turn, enable leveraging more alumni to be ambassadors for the brand.

Response and Suggested Actions: The MBA program and the university have already been working to implement the intent of this recommendation in the following ways. 1. Since August 2022, UCW has organized monthly Career Panel Discussions by inviting industry professionals to share their insights, career journeys, career paths, and hiring procedures at their workplaces. UCW has invited the Lead Talent Acquisition Specialist from Seaspan, the Manager of Sales Enablement from Hootsuite, E-Commerce Development manager from STEMCELL, Manager of ICT Operations from North Vancouver School District, Chief Operation Officer from a multinational company, a hiring manager from a finance company, and so on. CDC supports industry specific development and networking to increase student exposure to high profile employers so students can gain insights into current labour markets trends and demands through direct interactions with industry leaders. The CDC invites several industry experts to a monthly panel to help to increase the UCW industry network.

2. On March 15, 2023, Career Development Centre (CDC) organized a Career Night-Networking with finance and banking professionals. Deloitte, Royal Bank, Raymond James, and BCCPA participated and provided networking opportunities to our students to explore Canadian workplaces. This is just the first of a 6-part series of career networking night. CDC supports industry specific development and networking to increase student exposure to high profile employers so students can gain insights into current labour markets trends and demands through direct interactions with industry leaders.

3. The CDC had built some long-term relationships through alumni and business development to recruit employers to take our practicum students and hire them in permanent roles upon completion of the practicum.

4. The CDC has supported students in securing employment in reputable companies such as Telus, Translink, Banks, A&W, hospitality companies, etc. Those alumni have been acting as ambassadors to promote CDC services to faculties, students, and their employers. Our alumni are the seeds of UCW in the community and society and represent the MBA program and UCW brand.

Implementation Timeline:
1. Facilitate Career Panel discussions monthly with diverse themes to connect students' learning with insights from real workplaces and industries.

2. By the end of 2023, organize a job fair to connect students with employers.

3. By the end of 2023, recruit 50 long-term employers to be UCW partners in supporting students' practicum placements and securing students' employment after graduation.

4. By the end of 2023, form a committee with alumni, current students, faculty, staff, and employers to identify issues and opportunities and develop guidance for WIL projects.

5. By the end of 2024, form a partnership with non-profit organizations to explore opportunities such as funding opportunities for work-integrated learning projects.

6. By the end of 2024, organize a campus recruitment event with three to five reputable employers to cover all MBA elective areas.

Recommendation #12: Surveys of current and post-graduate surveys should ask about access and usage of available resources. UCW brought in external mentors for students, but a very few students took advantage of that. Average pay rate and job placement should also be measured with the increasing number of MBA graduates.

Response and Suggested Actions: The current instrument for the Student Services Survey (a biannual survey of active students) includes questions regarding the availability and usage of various programs, services and resources. The MBA program will collaborate with our colleagues in Institutional Accountability and Career Development Services to further explore which services and resources our students make use of and to better understand why they do not access some of the opportunities available to them, such as the external mentors.

The Alumni Survey (1 year past graduation) that the Academica Group is running for the UCW MBA program already includes questions regarding the graduates' pay and their job placement. These results have been included and addressed in the Self-Study in Section 10 (Student Satisfaction), Section 12 (specifically *Section 12.B.4 – Concerns About Student Salaries & Careers*) and in the Appendices (*Appendix 6 - Academica Group – 2022 UCW Alumni Employment Outcomes Study*).

Implementation Timeline: In 2024, we will engage our colleagues in Institutional Accountability/Career Development Centre to evaluate the mentorship opportunities provided to the students.

Recommendation #13: A pedagogical approach for program changes will need more active faculty involvement. Service recognition could encourage faculty to be more engaged.

Response and Suggested Actions: Faculty members play a critical role in designing and delivering courses and programs, and their engagement is essential to ensuring the success of any program changes.

UCW currently has a mechanism in place to involve faculty in course development/review. Based on the ACBSP accreditation requirements, every 2 years all courses need to be reviewed by the Course Lead, two course faculty members and the department chair. All reviewed and redeveloped or new courses are then reviewed by the University Curriculum Community (UCC) working group with faculty, chairs, and administration representatives. After the working committee approval, it will go to UCC for approval for major changes and kept on file for minor ones. UCC voting members are elected senate faculty members. Once the UCC approves major changes, the document goes to the UCW Senate for final approval.

Under the new Distribution of Effort model, faculty contributions in the three areas of endeavour: teaching, scholarship, and service, will be assessed and recognized, and there will be the opportunity for merit pay associated with excellence.

Implementation Timeline: Ongoing process. The Biennial Performance Assessment process will begin in January 2025.

Recommendation #14: Assess how the impact of the compression to 10-week terms impacts typical course content and assignments. Assignments and content volume may need adjustment to reflect less non-instructional time available for schoolwork.

Response and Suggested Actions: The MBA coursework is demanding and UCW has had the 10-week term structure since it was founded in 2004. Assignments and content are reviewed on a regular basis. At least every two years, for each course, a committee is formed of the course leads, two course faculty and the dept. chair to evaluate each course, looking at the following:

1. Currency of the course description and course learning outcomes.
2. Revision of course material to remove out-of-date material and ensure that the course is kept current.
3. Revision of assignments to ensure students achieve the course learning outcomes.

Furthermore, the university has added several free academic supports to students over the past two years, including peer tutors, writing coaches, workshops, learning strategists and peer leaders to help students manage their workload by providing additional assistance and resources to help them complete their assignments.

As an example of a modification to meet student needs, the ACCT 621 – Accounting for Managers course was redeveloped to remove Financial Accounting and provide it as a voluntary workshop/micro-credential course. This gives students instruction in Financial Accounting to provide the background information necessary to succeed in Management Accounting. Most students take this four-week pass/fail course and find it worthwhile.

Implementation Timeline: Winter 2024 term.

Recommendation #15: Consider taking advantage of the high application numbers for the UCW MBA program to increase rigour of admission requirements, including raising the IELTS. This would likely result in higher quality and better prepared students, which would improve recruitment, retention, and the UCW and program brand. Discretionary admission has the potential to lower the admission requirements and compromise student quality.

Response and Suggested Actions: The University reviews and ranks applicants on the basis of grades, language scores and relevant experience. As evidenced by our increasing retention rate, the quality of our entering students continues to go up, as has our graduation and employment rates. Our admission standards are reviewed regularly by the VPA and the Registrar and the Strategic Enrolment Management Committee.

Implementation Timeline: Ongoing.

Recommendation #16: At least "some" work experience (ideally a minimum of 2 years) should become a standard requirement for admission in the program. The requirement could be waived if an applicant demonstrates other substantive and meaningful academic qualifications or achievements, as determined by UCW admissions; nevertheless, such cases shall become the exceptions rather than the norm.

Response and Suggested Actions: The MBA program is attractive for students in the early stage of their careers or professionals seeking to change their career to another field, such as finance, marketing, business analytics, leadership or starting their own business. With this approach, UCW aims to attract students with entry-level experience or who are changing careers to help them gain advanced knowledge and skills that will enable promotion or career changes. We do currently recommend one year work experience, but it is not a requirement. As indicated in Recommendation # 15 we do regularly review our admissions requirements.

Implementation Timeline: Ongoing assessment of the suitability of MBA program admission requirements.

Recommendation #17: Continue the attention to the structure and responsibilities of the faculty as a whole, and faculty positions, particularly with the future in mind. Introduction of ongoing ranks is a positive step toward that. The increase in the percentage of continuing faculty in the UCW MBA is going to stretch current processes and practices and to maintain the desirable level of faculty commitment, ongoing work in understanding roles and responsibilities is necessary.

Response and Suggested Actions: Based on the UCW annual plan, we plan to hire 20 continuing faculty per term. By increasing the continuing faculty, faculty can share more responsibilities. The VPA is working with a group of faculty to create the criteria for the assessment of faculty performance and contributions in the three areas of endeavour—teaching, scholarship, and service. The criteria will be used as the basis for consideration for the promotion and biennial performance evaluation.

The VPA continues to work with Faculty Relations to ensure that our policies and processes are kept up to date to reflect the changing size of the UCW continuing faculty complement.

Implementation Timeline: The faculty criteria committee will come with a framework and procedures in Fall 2023 and we expect the procedure will be in place by Spring 2024.

Recommendation #18: Encourage, recognize, and reward high quality academic and applied research work. Publication in reputed journals should be rewarded. Availability of research funding and student research assistantships are very important resources to help increase faculty research output.

Response and Suggested Actions: UCW has established six research and scholarly activity grants (up to $5,000/project) to encourage and support faculty in pursuing quality academic and applied research work and to engage students in these projects. An Office of Research & Scholarship (ORS) is being established in 2023 to support faculty in administrating their grant-funded scholarly activity and research projects and recognize and communicate about faculty accomplishments through reports and liaising with Marketing & Communications. Our recent implementation of our Distribution of Effort (DOE) model includes biennial performance assessment

for the purposes of merit which is intended to help recognize and reward scholarship. Please see Recommendation #19 for further detail on this process.

Implementation Timeline: Spring 2024 for the implementation of the criteria and Fall 2023 to fill the position of Director of the Office of Research and Scholarship.

Recommendation #19: Collaborative research between faculty and students needs to be encouraged. Help in writing research proposals to new faculty and students can pay-off in the future. UCW can encourage faculty exchange and become host for sabbatical leave faculty or post-docs from other universities that are interested in joint research with UCW faculty. That will improve faculty research profile and create opportunities for external grants.

Response and Suggested Actions: One of the capstone experiences in the MBA program is MBAR 661 Academic Research project. There are two ways to enroll in this course:

1. Faculty lead research: the research proposal comes from the faculty, and the opportunity will be promoted by the academic department to students. Faculty will select 1-2 students who will work with the faculty for 3-6 months on the research project. The result should be published or presented in an academic venue.
2. Students lead research: the research proposal comes from a student who has been approved by the MBAR 661 course lead. Students can recommend a supervisor, or the chair will assign one. The result should be published or presented in an academic venue.

We have recently redesigned MBAR 661, and in the past three terms, the number of sections increased from 1 section per term to 12 sections per term, demonstrating an interest from students in completing a research project as part of their degree program.

As indicated in the response to the previous recommendation, faculty research activity is an area of increasing importance at UCW. As support for research activities at the institution grows, there will be further opportunities for collaborative research between faculty and MBA students.

Implementation Timeline: Ongoing process.

Recommendation #20: UCW can increase leverage of its location to enhance recruitment of experienced industry personnel as part-time or guest lecturers. It can also expand faculty collaboration with the business community. Industry-university relationship is important for business programs to enrich the program as well as to find internships and employment opportunities for graduates.

Response and Suggested Actions: UCW has a mechanism in place to address industry feedback through the Program Advisory Committee (PAC), outlined in Policy 5000. Twice a year, UCW meets with PAC members to present the MBA program curriculum and ask for feedback as well as ideas and commentary on future courses and directions for the program.

UCW already engages in hiring industry experts as sessional practitioner faculty for capstone experiences to support students in their professional careers in Canada, as well as supporting entrepreneur students in starting their own businesses in BC. The client-based project also allows faculty to expand their industry network which helps them create materials for their courses, including case studies or designing MBAR 661 research projects.

The NextGen Hub is working on creating a speaker series with industry partners to help students gain understanding of new industry trends across the province of BC. Many faculty use their industry connections to bring in guest speakers to classes. Where possible the talks are arranged to be available to other sections of the same class.

Implementation Timeline: Ongoing.

Recommendation #21: As most faculty do not spend a lot of time on campus, there are not many opportunities for faculty interactions. Creation of an MBA faculty group, such as a Community of Practice, on a social media platform could be a useful forum for exchanging ideas. Organizing annual Teaching Practices Colloquium could be an option to share different teaching practices, particularly when there are many part-time faculty who teach in the program. Also, faculty socials, which are sometimes organized by the departments, can increase the faculty sense of belonging.

Response and Suggested Actions: There are already several initiatives within the MBA program in place that address this recommendation. Each MBA department has its own Teams channel, and each course has a Teams channel with all faculty that are teaching it, to provide all faculty access to meetings whether in-person or online. There are department groups and faculty meetings that are open to both sessional and continuing faculty. The program has had a faculty retreat for continuing faculty and a faculty forum open to all faculty to discuss proposed changes to the curriculum.

There is also a faculty research Teams channel available for all faculty to meet and discuss their research ideas, to initiate collaborations and for newer faculty to learn how to conduct research and network.

Each department has a social gathering budget and they have at least two social events per year, along with department awards programs. In some departments, there is an annual continuing faculty two-day retreat to help faculty to build relationships and plan new initiatives.

The Centre for Teaching Excellence offers numerous opportunities for faculty to participate in communities of practice and there are other activities that are under consideration such as the suggested annual Teaching Practices Colloquium.

Implementation Timeline: Ongoing.

Recommendation #22: Consider creating a more formal process or structure to support faculty engagement with curriculum development. The large number of faculty members involved with the UCW MBA, and the diversity of expertise and experience can be leveraged to contribute to the development of new courses and specializations.

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Response and Suggested Actions: UCW has a mechanism to involve faculty in course development/review, which is outlined in our response to Recommendation #13.

Implementation Timeline: Ongoing process.

Recommendation #23: All service areas should have objectives with metrics. For example, what is the percentage of the faculty that access resources from the Centre for Teaching Excellence?

Response and Suggested Actions: The MBA program appreciates this recommendation but acknowledges that implementing it is outside of its scope or authority. This recommendation will be shared with UCW's service units to inform their continuous improvement, but we do know that many of them already have and track a range of metrics.

Implementation Timeline: Ongoing.

Recommendation #24: Standardize basic service types across departments (e.g., Course Leads).

Response and Suggested Actions: The MBA program as already standardized a number of service roles, including Program Chair, Vice-Chair, and Course Lead. Each of these roles have position descriptions which outline roles and responsibilities. Each role has a standardized stipend as well as a standardized service allocation under the Distribution of Effort Model.

Implementation Timeline: Ongoing as appropriate.

Recommendation #25: Information about available service and resources needs to be more frequently communicated to students, from orientation on. Many students are not aware of the available resources; a small sample of the alumni indicated that they either did not know about or did not seek help from the Career Centre.

Response and Suggested Actions: We recognize the importance of ensuring that all MBA students are aware of the resources and support available to them. The university's Career Development Centre was only established in 2022; therefore, most alumni who offered feedback during the review process would not have had access to this unit.

In Fall 2023, UCW is changing its learning management system (LMS) from Moodle to Brightspace, and through this new LMS, students will have better access to all information. We will also discuss additional ways to ensure that students are aware of the services and resources available to support their academic and post-graduate success.

The University webpage and the student portal are being redesigned to optimize information navigation and support access. Student ambassador and student peer assistance programs were established in March 2022 to ensure increased service awareness, including career ambassadors, wellness ambassadors, consent ambassadors, and student life assistants.

Implementation Timeline: Brightspace will be launched by Fall 2023.

Recommendation #26: All service areas should have objectives with metrics.

Response and Suggested Actions: We have addressed this recommendation in our response to Recommendation #23, noting that this recommendation will be shared with the relevant units, but that it is not within the scope of the program's decision-making to implement this.

Implementation Timeline: Not applicable.

Recommendation #27: Consider culturally appropriate promotion of the available resources to the students with different cultural backgrounds, including gaining expert advice to make the counselling service more effective.

Response and Suggested Actions: As a predominantly international institution, UCW is aware of the importance of ensuring students from different national and cultural backgrounds feel comfortable and welcome at the university and in their program. International student advisors are available in a variety of languages, such as Farsi, Panjabi, Spanish. Protégées are available to help international students to settle in Vancouver. This recommendation will also be shared with other resource units responsible for support students' academic success and holistic well-being. International student advising and student life supports the inbound student experience, ensuring a smooth cultural transition and student orientation. KeepMeSafe provides online counselling and crisis counselling support in 5 core languages (English, French, Mandarin, Cantonese, and Spanish) with additional support provided in over 50 different languages available over the phone or online for students in need of counselling services. This has been in place since September 2021.

The university has an International Student Advising group that provides support in at least six languages other than English. Since there are more than 100 languages spoken by the students this provides a significant challenge. However, due to the international nature of the university, there is high awareness of this issue. Students themselves organize events and festivals around various national holidays. Student Affairs, the Academics Department, the Library, the Registrar's Office, the Finance Department, and the Office of Community Engagement all work to ensure that available resources are promoted to the students in culturally appropriate ways.

The VPA and Registrar are working to create a religion accommodation policy and cultural calendar to recognize different cultural and religious rituals.

Implementation Timeline: The policy and cultural calendar will be implemented by Winter 2024.

Recommendation #28: Consider outfitting one classroom as a demonstration room with advanced technology, to enable piloting and faculty development for new modes of delivery.

Response and Suggested Actions: The MBA program recognizes the value of pedagogical experimentation, and will advocate for the implementation of this recommendation, acknowledging that direct implementation of it is not within the program's immediate authority.

Implementation Timeline: This recommendation will be shared with senior administration for implementation.

Recommendation #29: Find innovative ways to make the program more attractive for domestic students. Perhaps they can collaborate with local businesses to train their employees with the needed skills through the MBA program. As UCW MBA program has the resources to offer many elective courses, it can work very well. It could be beneficial for both UCW and the involved businesses.

Response and Suggested Actions: The MBA program is working actively with the VPA and the Registrar to consider ways in which to increase our domestic students.

Implementation Timeline: Ongoing.

Recommendation #30: UCW can provide domestic students with more financial support and scholarships.

Response and Suggested Actions: Currently, UCW does not have special scholarships or awards for domestic students, however, UCW leadership is considering appropriate supports in the context of our overall scholarship and awards framework.

Implementation Timeline: Winter 2024.

Recommendation #31: The Career Centre can play an active role with job-matching and placement.

Response and Suggested Actions: Students are responsible for securing their work placements (this is the common practice in any given higher education institution) and are encouraged and supported in their efforts to connect with employers and to network and initiate conversation on potential career opportunities.

The UCW Career Development Centre offers a wide array of comprehensive career development programs to all UCW students:

1. Engaging one to one in virtual and in person career advising, coaching and facilitating career development learning.
2. Delivering series of career readiness and job search related workshops to facilitate group career learning.
3. Offering work-integrated learning opportunities to MBA graduate students.
4. Connecting UCW students with industry leaders and employers across BC and Canada by planning and regularly organizing career Panel, Job Fair and Employer Networking events to:
   a. Provide career guidance
   b. Share updates and evolving trends in various of industries in UCW academic elective areas such as Human Resource Management, Digital Marketing, Finance/Accounting, etc.
   c. Connect with UCW graduates for potential hiring pools

d. Recruit talent from the UCW students

Suggested Further Actions:

1. We recognize that students' career readiness and employability are not developed solely by Career Development Centre. It is achievable through the faculty's collaboration on:

    a. Career-focused curriculum development

    b. Work-integrated learning programming

    c. Classroom career coaching

2. Continue offering a joint Career Event with industries and employer hosted CDC staff, for faculty to establish connections to help their students and to gain relevant appreciation and understanding of industry trends.

A joint department – Career Development Centre committee will be formed to act on the suggested items and to develop additional initiatives and strategies.

Implementation Timeline: Winter 2024.

Recommendation #32: Strategies for developing new programming should be correlated with broader market data to determine if the labour markets will be seeking UCW graduates with the new credentials. Student demand should not be used in isolation.

Response and Suggested Actions: We agree with this recommendation that new programming at the institution should be informed by industry demand. At UCW, we collect information and obtain feedback from the following stakeholders to inform the creation of any new programs:

1. Student consultations through surveys and focus groups

2. Industry experts by survey or focus group

3. Faculty input by survey and discussions

4. Recruiters by survey

The University and the MBA program will examine how it might enhance our methods of labour market analysis for new programming in the coming year.

Implementation Timeline: 2024.

Recommendation #33: Given that the UCW MBA is branded around work-readiness there should be an aspiration for greater success for students gaining employment. The Career Centre should play a bigger role as a key part of the program.

Response and Suggested Actions: It is a priority for both the MBA program and the university that our graduates are work ready and can transition easily into employment. We therefore agree with the importance of involving the Career Development Centre in preparing MBA students for this transition. HRTM 622 Talent Management covers personality assessment and career planning, two major deliverables in Career Development. In the HRMT 622, in the first term, students take the Indigo competencies test, and all students receive their test results. The Career Development Centre can ask students to share their results for better career consultations.

The Career Development Centre's plan is to blend education and career development by having staff from the CDC as guest speakers in some sections of HRTM 622, so students can be aware of the importance of career development and have more realistic career planning. By doing this, CDC staff can build in-depth relationships with students and support them with more understanding and focus that can align with their professional goals and have more time for implementation while students take more courses and develop themselves through academic learning and career development.

Implementation Timeline: Winter 2024.

Recommendation #34: Reviewing data, such as those from Riipen clients, should be in combination with student data about those experiences. It's important to use the different data points about what is essentially the same activity to obtain a more complete picture.

Response and Suggested Actions: This recommendation is already representative of existing practice within the MBA program. Every term, all students that engage in CBPs receive a survey not only focusing on self-assessments, but their suggestions and feedback on services that they need. Over 1300 students have responded to this survey, which is analyzed in conjunction with client feedback. Based on the feedback collected and the program's analysis of it, changes are made to the CBP to improve the experience for both clients and students. For further detail please see our response to Recommendation #10.

Implementation Timeline: Ongoing process.

Recommendation #35: Without breaching academic freedom, some steps need to be taken to bring more uniformity in assessment to ensure course learning outcomes are met and program learning outcomes supported, across sections. Monitoring student performance across courses and sections would assist in measuring and achieving desired quality and workload uniformity.

Response and Suggested Actions: This recommendation is well-received and represents an area that the university has already been working on. Recently, a process of using unified syllabi across multi-section courses has been introduced to ensure that all students will have the same experiences and types of assignments across sections of a single course. A more unified approach to the achievement of course and program level learning outcomes across multi-section courses will also be facilitated by the university's upcoming move to the Brightspace learning management system.

Implementation Timeline: Fall 2023.

Recommendation #36: As the UCW MBA becomes more known, there will be more opportunities to engage with other institutions to share information and/or develop relationships. A strategy should be set for this, and it could be an expansion of responsibilities in the VPA area.

Response and Suggested Actions: The MBA program agrees that it could benefit from stronger relationships with other BC institutions. Some recent steps that have already been taken are:

1. Engaging in the Private Degree-Granting Institutions Association (PDGIA) conferences

2. Partnership with SFU through Mitacs project

The VPA is actively working on appropriate ways to establish more relationships with other institutions and will continue to look for ways to develop these partnerships.

Implementation Timeline: Ongoing process.

Recommendation #37: Create an individual or group role (potentially in HR or reporting to the President) specifically related to strategically supporting operations and growth. There needs to be a coordination function to guide, analyze, monitor, measure and report what essentially appears to be an institutional change program.

Response and Suggested Actions: The MBA program appreciates and understands the intent behind this recommendation in the context of the rapid growth that the university has experienced. This recommendation, however, is beyond the program's authority to implement; however, it has been shared with the Office of the VP Academic for their consideration.

Implementation Timeline: Not applicable.

Recommendation #38: A fulsome analysis of domestic market needs should be done to provide guidance for any intentions to expand service to a domestic audience.

Response and Suggested Actions: We agree that both the university and the program should factor in the needs of the domestic student market when developing new programs. At present, this research is currently done by recruitments and GUS agents. UCW believes domestic students can bring more value in terms of diversity and local knowledge to our MBA classrooms.

Implementation Timeline: Winter 2025.

Recommendation #39: The institutional strategic plan should be completed and used to assess all current and proposed initiatives before proceeding further, particularly with the addition of other degrees.

Response and Suggested Actions: The Strategic Plan has been completed and approved by the Board in June 2023 and it will be used to assess proposed initiatives coming from the MBA, including new program proposals.

Implementation Timeline: Fall 2024.

Next Steps

The Master of Business Administration program is UCW's largest program, and thus, it is of an utmost importance that the program offers a high-quality curriculum that reflects the latest industry approaches and trends, that delivers students an excellent educational experience, and that equips them with the necessary knowledge and skills to achieve their personal and professional goals after graduation.

The External Program Review Panel for the MBA program had much to praise about the program, noting that it is a "flagship program" for the institution with a "positive reputation" that has become "a destination for international students seeking a work-ready graduate business credential and the potential for meaning and relevant employment, either in Canada or abroad" (Report of the External Program Review Panel, p. 2). This evaluation by the Review Panel embodies many of UCW's goals for its MBA program, such as preparing its students to transition easily into their desired fields of employment, so it was encouraging to receive this positive assessment from the review committee.

The review process of the MBA program was similarly commended, with the Review Panel praising the "rigorous, comprehensive, and impressive review process" (Report of the External Program Review Panel, p.2) that the program and university undertook during the past year. The Review Panel's Report demonstrates an equal rigour to their review of the MBA, which was presented with 39 recommendations aimed at the continuous improvement of the program and the institution. Many of these recommendations relate to the expansion of experiential and applied learning opportunities for MBA students, as well as a scaling of necessary infrastructure and resources to support student success as the university continues to grow. As can be seen in the MBA program's responses to these recommendations, there is an understanding of the importance of the recommendations made, and there are many initiatives already underway to implement them.

Over the course of the next 12-24 months, the MBA program and the university 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 MBA program will be submitted to the Degree Quality Assessment Board (DQAB) in August 2023, and the program's next scheduled cyclical program review will take place as scheduled in accordance with Ministry guidelines.

Both the MBA program and University Canada West have benefited from this comprehensive and future-oriented cyclical program review process. The process of consulting with, and collecting data from, internal and external program stakeholders, and the internal discussions that took place with faculty, students, and administrators during the cyclical program review, have already resulted in positive changes to the MBA program, aimed at improving the quality and relevancy of the curriculum and the student experience both within the program and at UCW as a whole.