DOUGLAS COLLEGE

Comprehensive Program Review

Faculty of Commerce and Business Administration

Computing Studies and Information Systems Diploma

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Recommendations: Summary and Summary List

The most immediate concerns that need to be address are additional faculties and computer labs. If left unresolved, we might result to overloading the faculties and/or cut down our student intakes.

Limiting the student intakes might have repercussions in terms job security and fewer students taking our upper level courses.

EXTERNAL PROGRAM REVIEW

for

Douglas College

Computing Studies and Information Systems (CSIS) Diploma

Reviewer:

Donna Turner
Associate Dean, Computing and Technical Professional Programs
School of Computing and Academic Studies
BCIT

Date:

July 2022

Recommendations

Self-Study Recommendation		External Reviewer Assessment			
No.	**Content**	**Agree** ✓	**Disagree** ✓	**Other** ✓	**Comments / Rationale**
1a	The most immediate concerns that need to be address are **additional faculties** and computer labs. If left unresolved, we might result to overloading the faculties and/or cut down our student intakes.			✓	The need for additional faculty has been highlighted, but there are no recommendations or strategies provided to resolve the issue. The external reviewer agrees that faculty are important, but does not have a recommendation with which to agree or disagree.
1b	The most immediate concerns that need to be address are additional faculties and **computer labs**. If left unresolved, we might result to overloading the faculties and/or cut down our student intakes.	✓			The need for additional computer labs has been highlighted, with one recommendation (page 32) for additional labs at the Anvil and David Lam campuses. The SSR does not mention that "mobile computer labs" are being used as a workaround. This could possibly be expanded or made more permanent. An additional recommendation (requiring student personal laptops) will be described later. Since the Department Chair has confirmed that multiple course have wait lists, the external reviewer agrees that more computer labs are needed.
2	Limiting the student intakes might have repercussions in terms job security and fewer students taking our upper level courses.	✓			This statement seems correct, but it would depend on how much the intakes are restricted, and (regarding upper level course enrollment) on the student attrition rate.

Additional Context and Recommendations

Additional Recommendation	Comments
Industry Connection	
Expand PAC membership beyond the current eight (8) members. Examine how much overlap there is with PAC memberships of similar diploma programs at Douglas College, such as the Computer Science Diploma. Consider combining the two PACs to achieve one larger, more meaningful group.	With each PAC meeting, one can assume there will be members who are not available. Therefore a membership of 8 members is not meaningful enough to "get the pulse" of industry. When searching for new PAC members, employers of CSIS graduates, or CSIS alumni, would logically be the first place to look.
Add mandatory group projects into required courses, one each for the 3000 and 4000 level. There are probably courses whose instructors already informally use group projects to teach their material. The recommendation is to formalize this by adding Teamwork as a learning objective, and a Final Project as a assessment item, to at least two courses.	The Computing industry values the experiences gained by completing projects in a team environment. The final product of these two courses would be valuable items for students to include in their portfolios and resumes, and increases chances of success for graduates searching or employment. External hackathons could also be mentioned to the students as a source of portfolio building material.
Invite industry speakers, with a two pronged focus: - Recent alumni - Senior developers, managers, or hiring managers	Students expressed a disconnect from industry, and that it was a "rare case" when an instructor might invite an industry speaker. Consider inviting different types of industry speakers to campus each term, and advertising these sessions to all students in CSIS and related programs. The Douglas College Career Hub would be a good partner in this endeavour.

Additional Recommendation	Comments
Curriculum	
For the 12 elective credits of upper level CSIS courses, group the available courses into specialities, and publish this information on the CSIS web page as suggested specializations.	The Program Chair stated that he will suggest groupings of elective courses to students who inquire. Formalizing and publishing this information could decrease student uncertainty/confusion, and increase enrollment upper level courses.
Examine the non-CSIS-prefix curriculum for relevancy and industry need. Consider whether the required 12 credits of ACCT, BUSN, ECON, MARK are a historical remnant, a byproduct of the Faculty under which CSIS runs (Commerce & Business Administration), or are skills desired by employers of CSIS graduates.	If breadth is desired for the CSIS program, it may be beneficial courses to teach more Communication, Team Work, and other soft skills, while removing some of the other non-CSIS-prefix courses. A comprehensive PAC would be useful in making this determination.
If the non-CSIS-prefix course content remains the same, update the Career Pathways portion of the program website. Job titles would hopefully include those related to entrepreneurship, business, marketing, or accounting.	At the moment, there is a disconnect between some of the non-CSIS-prefix courses, and the job titles listed under Career Pathways. For example, a Software Developer or Junior Web Developer position would likely not list Economics or Accounting as desired skills, but would likely list Communication skills as required.
Operational/Logistic	
Consider making the mobile computer labs more permanent. If instructors object to wheeling the laptop carts around, these carts could be placed permanently in regular classrooms which are locked/secured. Consider changing the program to Bring Your Own Device (BYOD), where students must purchase personal machines that meet a provided set of minimum requirements.	The Program Chair stated that many courses had waiting lists, but were unable to run due to lack of computer lab space. This is a loss of (International) revenue which seems like it could be easily rectified. Many students have personal laptops already for non-campus work; the external reviewer observed a computing class where ~50% of the students had personal laptops open. A BYOD program would enjoy the benefit of being able to hold any class in any room, regardless of desktop workstation availability.

Additional Recommendation	Comments
Operational/Logistic, continued…	
These recommendations for computer lab improvements are based on student feedback: - Widescreen or multiple monitors for each workstation - Improve login time (anecdotally reported at 30 minutes for the Coquitlam campus, and a few minutes for the New Westminster campus.)	If the program expects students to work primarily on desktop computers on campus, students would benefit from upgraded monitors, especially in exam situations. It is very common in industry for a developer to have a very wide or multiple monitors. Understandably, it is frustrating for students to lose time during quizzes/exams because the workstation login is slow.
Evaluate and improve educational technologies. Students made specific note of increased stress and anxiety due to: - Blackboard - Lockdown Browser	Students reported that Blackboard would provide warnings or make it appear as if their submissions were unsuccessful. Students had taken to emailing submissions to their instructor each time, just in case. Lockdown Browser was stated to be confusing, and uncertainty in its use had resulted in an entire class being issued warnings or a 0 that required correction by the instructor.

Other student concerns included having no support for MacOS, no tutoring available for 3000/4000 level courses, and a fear of asking too many questions in 1000 level courses because of (possibly) impatient instructors. Students expressed a strong desire for recorded lectures to be available to them for the duration of the course, without requiring a download.

In general, the 1000/2000 level junior students did not seem to have a good picture of the program as a whole. They stated a desire for things that are planned for them in the 3000/4000 level, but of which they had no knowledge. Information sessions or a one-page Program Map (with associated skill sets) could remedy this.

Conclusions

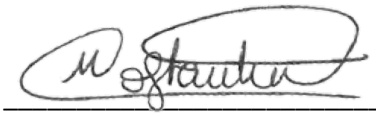
The CSIS Diploma program at Douglas College enjoys a position of strength in their International Student enrollments, and would like to grow their Domestic Student enrollment. The program has already undertaken curriculum updates to better align with industry, and can continue to build more industry connection. The main challenges this program faces are operational/logistical, many of which can be solved through additional space, faculty, and other budget-related matters. Despite any challenges, the continued success of this program seems very likely given it's strong foundation, good reputation, and dedicated faculty and management.

DOUGLAS COLLEGE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW (CR)
RESPONSE FROM THE
OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC AND PROVOST

Douglas College Administration policy A38: Program Review requires a follow-up plan be developed by the Vice President, Academic and Provost, in response to the Self-Study and External Report.

FACULTY (Lead Dean/Associate Dean)	**Commerce and Business Administration**
Department / Program	Computing Studies and Information Systems Diploma
Date Submitted	November 2021
External Review Panel (ERP)	Donna Turner, Associate Dean, School of Computing and Academic Studies, BCIT.
Reason for Timing of Comprehensive Review	☒ Schedule (routine) or ☐ Off-cycle, due to emergent concerns (specify below) ☐ Changes in discipline/field/licensing ☐ New program development ☐ Demand/enrolment/budget concerns ☐ Other (specify)
Date of last Comprehensive Review	2016
RESPONSE/RECOMMENDATIONS	
SUMMARY RESPONSE AND VPA RECOMMENDATIONS In particular, DDP name should focus on the following:	This response comes after a significant delay after the completion of the self-study and external reviewer's reports. As a result, several of the issues identified in the self-study and recommendations outlined in both reports are no longer relevant. This VPA response document will therefore focus on elements that are still relevant and will help the Computing Studies and Information Systems (CSIS) department move forward in their delivery of the CSIS Diploma program. In their report, the external reviewer praised the CSIS department for their delivery of an interdisciplinary credential that trains "well-rounded" graduates with multiple options for further education after the diploma. They also noted that this interdisciplinary "well-roundedness" could potentially lead to a lack of focus on specialized computing areas of study that might hinder graduates in their future educational goals. The external reviewer made the following recommendations: • Expand PAC membership to ensure that regular meetings can be scheduled regularly

	• Use the expertise of the PAC to reassess the courses that constitute the "interdisciplinary" nature of the diploma. The interdisciplinary focus is currently on courses in MARK, ACCT, BUSN, and ECON, where other skills might be more valuable for industry (i.e., skills like communication, teamwork, etc.) • Revise curriculum to incorporate teamwork as a learning outcome and project work as an assessment item • Invite regular guest speakers from industry partners and alumni to help mitigate the students' feeling of disconnection with the industry they are aiming to enter I support these recommendations and encourage the department to engage in curriculum revisioning in light of these recommendations and the new context in which the program is being offered: developments in Artificial Intelligence, the College's proposal for a bachelor's degree in computing science, and a different student population (i.e., fewer international students). As per the College's routine follow-up to comprehensive program reviews, the Department is to submit its Implementation and Action Plan (IAP) to the Dean within 45 days of receipt of this Report, and to report back to the Dean one year after submission of the IAP to account for progress made.
All Self-Study recommendations accepted?	☐ Yes ☒ No [Delay between completion of Self-Study and VPA report means that some recommendations were no longer relevant.]
All External Report recommendations accepted?	☐Yes ☒ No [Delay between completion of External Report and VPA response means that some of the recommendations were no longer relevant.]
Next scheduled PR (5 – 7 years):	2029



Vice-President, Academic and Provost

April 24, 2026

Date