

The University of British Columbia



School of Kinesiology Faculty of Education

Response to the External Review of the School

April 23, 2015*

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*Note: This report was approved by the School of Kinesiology on April 23, 2015.

Preamble

An external review of the UBC School of Kinesiology was conducted on November 24-26, 2014 under new *Principles, Procedures and Guidelines for External Academic Unit Reviews* issued on March 1, 2013 by Dr. Anna Kindler, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President Academic, Office of the Provost, The University of British Columbia.

A. Members of the External Review Committee (ERC)

The members were as follows:

Dr. Ira Jacobs (Chair) Professor and Dean, Faculty of Kinesiology and Physical Education, University of Toronto

Dr. Diane Ste-Marie, Professor, Director and Associate Dean, School of Human Kinetics, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Ottawa

Dr. Jim Weese, Professor and Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences, Western University

Dr. Gwen Chapman, Professor and Associate Dean, Nutritional Sciences, Faculty of Land and Food Systems, University of British Columbia

B. Itinerary

During their visit, the Review Committee met with the following individuals and groups:

Dean of Education Director, School of Kinesiology Associate Deans, Faculty of Education Interim Vice-Provost & Associate Vice President Academic Affairs Associate Dean, Faculty of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies School of Kinesiology: Leadership Team Graduate Committee Undergraduate Committee Student & Community Engagement Team Kinesiology Undergraduate Society (KUS) Executive Open Meetings: Faculty, School of Kinesiology Graduate Students, School of Kinesiology Staff, School of Kinesiology

The Review Committee also had a partial tour of facilities – War Memorial Gym, Osborne Centre, Allan McGavin Sports Medicine Centre, Auditorium Annex.

C. Timeline of events following the review

- External Review Report was received on January 9, 2015
- Report was circulated to all members of the School of Kinesiology
- School of Kinesiology held an extraordinary meeting to discuss the Review Report on February 12, 2015
- Corrections of factual errors contained in the Review Report were sent to the Dean of Education on February 13, 2015
- Progress report presented at a Faculty of Education Council meeting March 17, 2015
- Draft response to the Review Report presented for approval at the April 23, 2015 School Meeting

D. Overview & Acknowledgements

The School acknowledges the ERC's positive assessment of the School's national and international standing with respect to "research excellence and scholarship", as "one of the 'flagship' schools of the evolving academic discipline of kinesiology in Canada and as an exemplar of the integrated model of classroom and experiential learning", and with respect to "[the School's] outstanding engagement programs that extend and embed student learning".

The School also acknowledges the ERC's characterization of the current context as "a particularly significant, auspicious, and exciting time for the School" in that 1) "a new director will shortly be assuming the School's leadership mantle"; 2) "the School is at a university i) where research intensification is a priority of the new President, ii) where 'health' is a strategic research priority, iii) where the interaction of human movement and physical activity with health and human performance is a research strength --- and iv) all of this at a time when public awareness of the significance and potential impact and consequences of those interactions for the individual and for society have never been higher."

Equally, the School appreciates the challenges the ERC has identified, including the emerging "climate of increasing fiscal restraint, dramatic global economic, demographic and technological transformations, [the new President's] bold vision to significantly advance research, and heightened competition from other universities, both old and new." As the ERC notes, "academic units can lose standing quickly if members don't pay attention to environmental cues and the unit chooses to rest upon its laurels. This is especially true in times of rapid change."

The School has a rich history of leadership and innovation. This document outlines how the School plans to respond to these challenges as expressed in the ERC's comments and recommendations.

The School thanks the review committee for their hard work and insightful comments and for taking time from their own busy leadership roles to review the School's self-study documents, travel to UBC, interview faculty, staff and students and prepare their report. External reviews are a daunting task given the short time span of the site visit and the amount of information and points of view that need to be synthesized. The School feels the ERC did a highly commendable job. The Report is well written, and makes many excellent points, including several recommendations to the University for additional information that would have been helpful and should be considered for future reviews. The complexity of the School's operations and the limited background information in several areas may have contributed to misunderstandings in a few cases. These are identified and hopefully addressed in a fair and objective manner in this document.

E. Purpose of the School's response to the Review

The purpose of this response is twofold: (1) to explain the timeline and actions the School is proposing to take with respect to the recommendations in the Review Report, and (2) to point to observations and recommendations in the Review Report which are not supported by information available in the self-study document or which were based on incomplete or missing data.

School's Response

The *External Review Report of the UBC School of Kinesiology* (January 9, 2015) contains 16 recommendations, along with associated comments and occasional sub-recommendations in the body of the report itself. This *Response to the External Review Report* is structured around the main recommendations in the order in which they are listed on p. 4 of the Report. Related comments and sub-recommendations are dealt with in the context of the main recommendations. With one exception (Recommendation 1, see below), the recommendations were set out in four sections of the Report:

- Scholarly and professional activities
- Undergraduate education
- Graduate education and post-doctoral training
- Faculty and Staff

Recommendations (by Report Section)

Sections: Executive Summary & Comments on the Sequencing of the External Review

1. ***Employ a highly strategic approach to academic planning that aligns the allocation of time, energy, and other resources in accordance with the strategic priorities of the School, the Faculty, and the UBC.***

Comment: Recommendation 1 is introduced in the Executive Summary of the Report and is formalized in a subsequent section that comments on the timing and sequencing of the External Review. This is a defining recommendation in the Report and warrants special consideration.

Three statements in the Executive Summary set the stage for the recommendation.

1. The ERC writes: "It is our collective and firm opinion that in order to maintain its leadership position on campus and in the field, the School must: (a) sharpen and align its research focus with the expanding health area that is being embraced at the University; (b) engage in strategic curriculum planning to ensure that the undergraduate and graduate programs are progressive, innovative and closely aligned with emerging trends and campus priorities, and (c) trumpet a strategic plan that will set a firm direction for where the School will be 20 years into the future.

2. They continue: "Our primary recommendation is that the unit undertake the necessary steps to establish a clearer focus with well-defined and prioritized initiatives, and to align the programs and administration of the School with those priorities. An important anchor for that focus should be the UBC institutional research intensification aspirations. The School can and should be encouraged to take a leadership role in leveraging those aspirations at a time when awareness of individual and population health, and the intersection with physical activity, has never been higher."

3. "The School has desperate and well documented physical space issues, both in terms of quality and quantity. For some time, their facilities have been outdated, dispersed, and incongruent with the needs of a progressive and innovative Kinesiology program at an institution with a reputation as strong as the University of British Columbia. This area needs immediate attention. Our position is that a clear alignment with the campus health focus

will position the School for significant investment in centralized, state-of-the-art facilities to support team-based research programs and clusters, and their teaching and learning activities. As well, this focus will align the School with the funding priorities of the Tri-Councils, foundations, donors, and other funding sources that will facilitate investments in infrastructure.”

The recommendation itself is formulated in a subsequent section (Comments on the Sequencing of the External Review) in which the ERC notes the unusual timing of the external review as it is post-appointment of a new Director of the School and in the midst of a curriculum review which they feel could otherwise benefit from their input. Accordingly, they propose that “regardless of the timing, we do recommend that a highly strategic approach should be taken to the academic planning.”

Response: The School fully supports taking a strategic approach to academic planning that aligns the allocation of time, energy and other resources in accordance with strategic institutional and unit priorities. It is noteworthy that in 2011 the School engaged in an extensive strategic planning process that was intended to align the School’s activities and priorities with University priorities and to set realizable goals.

Place and Promise, The UBC Plan was launched December 2, 2009 with the understanding that academic units would develop unit-level strategic plans that engaged the nine commitments in the University’s plan. The School reviewed the University’s commitments at seven School meetings during the 2011-12 academic year, and participated in a facilitated strategic planning retreat on May 27, 2012 that resulted in the School’s Strategic Plan (December 6, 2012) and an Accountability Framework (January 23, 2014). The Accountability Framework provides an implementation strategy for the Strategic Plan.

This information was available in the self-study documents (Module 2. Overview of the School of Kinesiology), but no reference is made by the ERC to the Strategic Plan or Accountability Framework in the External Review Report, and it is not clear that the ERC was able to review these documents in any detail.

Nevertheless, the School finds Recommendation 1 very useful. The School’s current Strategic Plan notwithstanding, it is quite clear that the new UBC President is placing greater emphasis on research intensification than the previous President, as noted by the ERC, as well as on innovation, life-long learning and professional development, teaching excellence, internationalization and community engagement including Aboriginal engagement, among other priorities. Accordingly, the School readily accepts the ERC’s recommendation to undertake further academic planning.

Action: As part of annual planning in the 2015-16 academic year, the School will obtain updated information on the University’s emerging priorities under the new President, and will develop an action plan to ensure that the School’s academic activities and initiatives and its strategic plan are supportive of and synergistic with the University’s priorities. This will include examining emerging opportunities with the UBC Health initiative, as well as with professional development in key areas such as coaching and technical leadership, strength and conditioning, physical activity leadership, and clinical Kinesiology. The School will also continue to work with the Provost’s Office on finding better space on campus over the short term, and a permanent facility over the long term that is appropriate for the School’s large student body and the School’s research, teaching and community engagement activities.

Report Section: Scholarly and professional activities

Note: The original order of the recommendations in the Report is 3, 4, 2.

2. *Develop a School of Kinesiology strategic research plan that aligns with the institutional strategic research plan, perhaps using the School's extant clusters as themes.*

Comment: Although the UBC Research Strategy was published in May, 2012, it remains a highly relevant planning document for the University and a worthy guide for strategic research planning in the School, particularly if supplemented with the research components outlined in the UBC Health Blueprint (December 2014).

Response: The School supports developing a strategic research plan that aligns with the institutional strategic research plan and capitalizes on the School's research strengths in key themed areas for the University.

Action: The School will meet during the 2015-16 academic year to formulate a strategic research plan. The planning process will take account of the UBC Research Strategy, UBC Health Blueprint, the President's priorities for research intensification, and the School's strengths in key thematic areas emphasized in the UBC Research Strategy (see Recommendation 1, above). If the School elects to support the creation of an Associate Director Research position (see Recommendation 4 below), it is anticipated that the strategic research plan will be a priority for the appointee.

3. *It is now time for the School to take a leadership role in championing multi-divisional research proposals, or at least to become a key player in such proposals.*

Comment: Recommendation 3 is set out in the context of a discussion of the "potential for [the School's] engagement in 'big ticket' cross-divisional research initiatives." The ERC report that the School has "tremendous capacity for strong contributions to [the *Partnerships for Health Research*] theme" in the UBC Research Strategy. They add: "Public and government awareness has never been higher about the interaction of physical activity and physical inactivity with individual and collective physical and mental health. The social, political, and economic consequences of those interactions in terms of our health care systems provide a target for the kind of big ticket research proposal mentioned above, with input by several divisions from large universities." – "This is a very auspicious time for the School in terms of the extramural validation of their research and scholarship yet we were left with the impression that internal UBC recognition lags in that regard." – "Strong research leadership will be required to increase the institution's recognition of the research capacity and profile of the School."

Response: The School is already engaged in cross-divisional research at UBC and across Canada and internationally, however, the School agrees with Recommendation 3 that as a next step it needs to build on these pre-existing collaborations and take a more active leadership role intramurally on campus as well as extramurally, in championing 'big ticket' multi-divisional research proposals relating to physical activity and health, or at least to become a key player in such proposals.

The School's current involvement in cross-divisional research is a good base to build on, as demonstrated in the self-study document in the number of joint publications by faculty and

through their participation in multi-site research grants. It is also discussed in Module 2 of the self-study (Overview of the School of Kinesiology) which reports faculty research collaborations within the University and externally. As noted in Module 2, these collaborations typically engage the School's graduate students and postdoctoral fellows, in addition to the faculty members themselves. In response to an internal survey, faculty members listed collaborations with 36 different centres, programs and departments within UBC, including: ICORD, Brain Research Institute, Physical Therapy, Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy, Women's and Gender Studies, Population and Public Health, and Sports Medicine. Similarly, 40 institutions and programs across Canada were identified including Kinesiology at McGill, Business at Queen's, Physical Therapy at Laval, and Public Health Sciences at University of Toronto. Internationally, 27 institutions and programs in 8 countries on 5 continents were identified, including Peking University in China, Karolinska Institute in Sweden, Purdue University in the US, Kenyatta University in Kenya, University for Peace in Costa Rica, and University of Queensland in Australia.

Action: In conjunction with developing a strategic research plan during the 2015-16 academic year, the School will develop a strategy for addressing opportunities for leadership and increased participation in multi-divisional, "big ticket" research initiatives drawing on the School's expertise in the area of physical activity and health as well as other areas of strength.

4. Reconsider the strategic priorities of the School with a view to augmenting research capacity and changing the School's administrative organization accordingly. Specifically, establish a new School Associate Director Research position as well as a full-time School research services staff position.

Comment: Recommendation 4 follows from the ERC's discussion about engagement of the School's researchers in multi-divisional research initiatives (see Recommendation 3 above) and about the UBC President's institutional goals for research intensification. They recommend that "increased and segregated research supports would be prudent, starting with a School Associate Director whose administrative service role is dedicated to Research, and not the combination of research and graduate education as is currently the case. [They] also recommend that the size of the faculty complement is and will be such that a full-time grant facilitator staff position is warranted."

Response: The School agrees with the ERC's assessment of the School's size and research needs and with the recommendation to consider enhancing internal administrative supports for research through an Associate Director Research position as well as a full-time School research services staff position.

Action: In conjunction with developing a strategic research plan during the 2015-16 academic year, the School will meet to approve the creation of an Associate Director Research position as well as a full-time School research services staff position.

Report Section: Undergraduate education

Note: There are 6 recommendations in this section (5-10) that are discussed independently below.

5. *Carefully consider the resource allocations to the School's community engagement programs in light of evolving priorities.*

Comment: Recommendation 5 follows from the ERC's review of the School of Kinesiology Community Engagement Working Group Report (May 2012). The Report was included in the Self-study materials to provide an overview and status report on the various programs in the community engagement area. They write: "We reviewed [the Report], and considered the current outreach and experiential education programs together with the strategic analysis and planning represented in that report. It was not clear to the reviewers that the community engagement programs were prospectively designed to be aligned with curricular and research objectives of the school. Therefore, we recommend that the allocation of time, energy, and other resources to the community engagement programs should be re-considered vis-à-vis strategic priorities of the division."

Response: The School agrees it is paramount that strategic priorities of the unit, including curricular and research objectives, be considered when developing community-based programs such as those currently offered by the School in the area of community engagement. It also agrees that the linkages between academic programs and academic priorities should be regularly reviewed.

As noted in the Working Group Report, the School's community engagement programs encompass a broad range of functions, including Alumni Relations, Co-op, Community-based Experiential Learning (CBEL) and Outreach. Although the development of each of the programs has been ad hoc and iterative, in each case they were undertaken to enhance the School's teaching and learning, community engagement and research activities. The programs also support the School's community engagement goals and actions which are set out in the School's Strategic Plan and Accountability Framework and include community-based research and service.

There is certainly opportunity to review the overall alignment of the programs and their contributions to the School's academic priorities. For example, the Kinesiology Outreach Programs are currently self-standing but have significant potential to support curricular and research objectives in the School. A formal external review of the Outreach Programs (Active Kids; Changing Aging) was conducted in March-April, 2012 that led to a series of recommendations including the hiring of an Outreach Program Manager, and better integration of the programs into the curricular and research activities of the School. The review report was made available to the ERC in the self-study materials. There are now several success stories of research subject recruitment from the Changing Aging program and of class projects within Active Kids. Also, a new Outreach program called PARC (Physical Activity Research Centre) is located within ICORD at the Blusson Spinal Cord Centre, and has research as a core feature of its operations.

Action: In conjunction with reviewing the School's academic priorities during the 2015-16 academic year, the School will review the community engagement programs and consider their role in supporting the University's and School's strategic priorities.

6. *The undergraduate program review should include reflection on current trends in kinesiology and related professional and other career paths, the currency of the current curriculum in light of such trends, and the identification of “learning outcomes” that will be aligned with those expected outcomes.*

Comment: Recommendation 6 emanates from the ERC’s discussion of the School’s curriculum review and their earlier acknowledgement of the emergence of Kinesiology as a health profession in Canada. They write, “...we were gratified to learn that an extensive curriculum review was ongoing and would be completed in preparation for the arrival of the new School Director. We also heard of an exciting proposal being considered as part of that review to revise the current *Physical Education* stream into a *Physical Activity Leadership* stream, which we warmly endorse.” – “If not already considered and included in the report, we recommend that the undergraduate program review should include serious reflection on current trends in kinesiology and related professional and other career paths, the currency of the current curriculum in light of such trends, and the identification of ‘learning outcomes’ that will be aligned with those expected outcomes.”

Response: The School agrees that the curriculum review should take account of the current trends in kinesiology and related professional and other career paths and the identification of ‘learning outcomes’ that will be aligned with those emerging career paths. The School also acknowledges that such an approach is commensurate with the new President’s emphasis on professional development, identification of career opportunities within degree programs, and engagement with industry. This also fits well with Government of BC priorities stemming from the Provincial Core Review. The Curriculum Review: Undergraduate Program Report (April 28, 2014), which provides a framework for revising the curriculum, already contains much of this information and a rationale for considering local, national and international trends in kinesiology and related professions.

Action: A proposal for a clinical kinesiology pathway within the BKin was presented to the School on October 30, 2014 and will be brought forward for approval at the April 23, 2015 meeting. The pathway is intended to enable BKin students to apply for professional certification through the American College of Sports Medicine, Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology and the Health and Fitness Federation of Canada as well as for program graduates to sit the Ontario College of Kinesiologists examinations for certification as a Kinesiologist. As part of the undergraduate curriculum review, the School will also assess trends in other career paths and develop opportunities for BKin students to achieve professional certification. Other potential areas for consideration are coaching, physical activity leadership, and strength and conditioning. The School will hold a half-day retreat in June 2015 to consider these and other curricular changes.

7. *Consider and compare to other UBC units the increasing trend for the School’s undergraduate students to take longer than 4 years to complete their degree (currently at 40%).*

Comment: Recommendation 7 originates from the ERC’s observation that they lacked comparative data to establish whether the BKin completion time was unusual at UBC. They write: “We observed that 40% of the School’s students, a trend that has been progressively increasing, take >4 years to complete their degree. The trend itself may not be unusual in large urban universities, particularly for students in co-op programs, and where students may take less than a full load to participate in other activities (e.g. part-time work, varsity athletics, volunteer work to build a résumé for a second degree program, etc.). But, the absolute ratio of 40% is concerning and should be further analyzed. We were not provided

with comparative information and therefore we recommend that the dean consider this 40% figure relative to other UBC divisions.”

Response: The School’s Advising Office has monitored the elevated degree completion times in the BKin for a number of years. Students report several reasons for taking extra time in addition to those cited by the ERC. The predominant reason is that they choose to carry a reduced course load in order to maintain a higher GPA for admission to post-graduate studies, including research Master’s and programs in Medicine and Rehabilitation Science. Part-time work for financial support, fifth year eligibility for varsity sports, internships and volunteer work are additional reasons. Co-op is a relatively small proportion of these students at around 25 students per graduating class.

Action: The School will obtain data from Enrolment Services on degree completion times across campus and bring this forward for consideration at the June 2015 retreat on curriculum.

8. *Explore alternative course delivery modes as one component of an evolution and refreshing of the undergraduate curriculum.*

Comment: Recommendation 8 is framed in terms of student/faculty ratios and course enrolment pressures. The ERC writes: “Given the high student/faculty ratio we were surprised to learn that currently there are no on-line courses delivered by the School and we recommend that the exploration of alternative course delivery modes be encouraged as one component of an evolution and refreshing of the undergraduate curriculum.”

Response: The School recognizes the importance of incorporating alternative course delivery modes into both the undergraduate and graduate programs, including online, ‘flipped classroom’, and distance education modes. This enhances program accessibility, overcomes the limitation of classroom sizes at UBC and timetabling restrictions, and enables courses to be shared across the two UBC campuses. The new Graduate Certificate Program in High Performance Coaching and Technical Leadership has been approved by Senate and the Board of Governors and will be offered online in 2015-16. Development of the online interface and protocols for the four certificate courses (515, 585, 586, 598) affords an important opportunity for the School to begin to gain experience and build expertise in online delivery.

Action: The School will develop a strategy for increasing the use of alternative delivery modes in the undergraduate and graduate programs. Initial discussion will begin at the June 2015 retreat.

9. *Compare the grade distribution of the School’s undergraduates to their performance in their electives outside of the School of Kinesiology.*

Comment: Recommendation 9 results from concerns about high grades in the BKin. The ERC writes: “The grades distribution caught our attention because of how high they were. It is true that the School is able to select top notch students which may explain the distribution, but we also recommend comparing the grade distribution to how well the unit’s students are doing in their electives outside of the School of Kinesiology to better assess the appropriateness of the current grades distribution. “

Response: The School's Advising Office has monitored student averages in the BKin for many years. BKin students tend to do well in their elective courses, as well as Kinesiology courses, however, the School agrees that this is an area that warrants attention.

Action: The School will review BKin student grade distributions in Kinesiology courses and outside courses over the last 5 years; the findings will be brought forward at the June 2015 retreat.

10. Consider how to achieve greater efficiencies in staffing and, in the process, consider the value of the co-op program compared with the value of investing the supporting resources in other priorities (e.g. research, other types of experiential learning).

Comment: Recommendation 10 is based on the ERC perception that the School has high staffing levels. They write: "Relative to our own experiences we noted large administrative and program staffing levels. Both students and faculty members commented on the increasing numbers of staff at the perceived expense of other academic priorities. Therefore, we recommend that consideration be given to achieving greater efficiencies in staffing and in the process consider the value of the co-op program compared with the value of investing the supporting resources in other priorities (e.g. research, experiential learning)."

Response: The School appreciates the ERC's position, but staffing decisions are always subject to competing priorities, and all new staff positions that have been created in the School have been a response to academic priorities that extend beyond administrative and program functions alone. The School is kept informed of all staff hiring. One way to assess which academic priorities have been addressed is to consider the rationales for the positions. Here is a brief account of staff hirings since the previous External Review of the School in 2009.

- i. Two staff positions were created shortly after the 2009 review. These included an alumni coordinator position to better manage alumni relations with the School's 7,000+ alumni, provide alumni mentoring to senior undergraduate students and assist with fundraising events, and a student engagement officer position (50% funded centrally) to provide better supports for undergraduate students during key transition periods in the program. Goals of the position were to enhance student learning, student mental health and wellbeing, and retention for the School's increasingly diverse student body.
- ii. The School was awarded a University Investment Fund grant in 2008 to develop and start a Co-operative Learning Program. Co-op had been requested by students for years and was also seen as a potential attraction for international students. The Co-op coordinator position was created in 2009 in conjunction with the start-up of the program. A Co-op assistant position was subsequently added in 2011. The Kinesiology Co-op program is highly successful and this year has 100 placements. Importantly, UBC's new President has called on the University to "connect our students to career opportunities by doubling UBC's extra-curricular student experiences on- and off-campus through internships and co-op programs."

- iii. A key recommendation of the External Review Report of the Outreach Programs (March-April, 2012) was to hire a full-time staff member to manage the Outreach Programs, which previously had been operated off the sides of the desk of three faculty members. An Outreach Programs manager was hired shortly after the report was brought forward to the School. The position is now empty, which affords an opportunity to reconsider staffing for the Programs.
- iv. In 2013, the School supported hiring an International Student Recruiter and Advisor to help increase the School's ISI enrolments and expand the School's international recruitment initiatives in the US, Latin America and Asia. The School's ISI intake of new students increased 48% (15 to 29) in the first intake cycle of the position being in place. In addition to ISI student recruitment, current duties of the position include recruitment for the Kinesiology Summer Program, student exchange and potential transfer (2+2) programs.
- v. In 2014, an Associate Advisor position was created to provide more support for Student Advising. In some areas, the School is actually under-resourced with respect to comparator programs at UBC. In Student Advising, for example, the current complement of 2 FTE/1197 students is 50% of the staffing level of other programs.

It is also important to take account of the funding sources for staff positions. The Table of Staff Members Appointed in Kinesiology (Module 9 Resources, Administration and Governance) in the self-study document lists 21 staff members overall (headcount; 20.3 FTE) but does not specify that some of the positions are supported in all or in part through central funding or cost-recovery programs in the School. Funding sources for staff positions include Outreach, Co-op, International Student Initiative, and Student Development for a total funded complement of 5.4 FTE with the remaining 14.9 FTE covered by the School's core GPO funding.

In the context of Recommendation 10, the ERC question the viability of the School's international student enrolment targets (10-15% of study body) "given the collective experience of kinesiology units across [Canada]". The School is aware of the issues raised by the ERC, however, the approach the School is taking is more holistic than seen on other campuses and engages opportunities for exchange as well as 2+2 transfer programs, summer programs and dual degrees. The School is also recruiting in a wide market that includes Latin America as well as the US and Asia. This is made possible in part through the hiring of an international student recruiter and advisor.

The School will certainly want to review its current staffing in accordance with the recommendation by the ERC and prior to taking on an additional staff position in the area of research services as recommended by the ERC. Traditionally, this area has been covered, at least in part, through services provided by the Faculty of Education Office of Graduate Programs and Research (OGPR).

Action: As part of annual planning in the 2015-16 academic year, the School will review its current staffing and consider staffing priorities and efficiencies and additional areas for support such as research and other types of experiential learning opportunities. This process will take account of University priorities and the new President's interest in research intensification and in developing "pathways to employment for graduates" and in "doubling UBC's extra-curricular student experiences on- and off-campus through internships and co-op programs."

Report Section: Graduate education and postdoctoral training

Note: There are 4 recommendations in this section (11-14) that are discussed separately.

11. *With a view to enhancing cohesion among the School's graduate students, establish a monthly graduate student seminar series that provides a multi-disciplinary flavour throughout the academic year. It could include a mix of graduate student and invited guest speaker presentations.*

Comment: Recommendation 11 is based on student input to the ERC. The ERC write: “The message we received loud and clear was that the graduate students themselves perceived their research experience as a very positive one. They also expressed a desire for more concrete efforts to build a sense of graduate student community within the School. They recognized the confounding effect of having research groups distributed geographically around the campus, but they thought the identification of some graduate student “common space” could facilitate more engagement across research groups. We recommend the creation of a monthly graduate student seminar series with mandatory attendance, perhaps with a mix of graduate student presentations and invited speakers, that provides a multi-disciplinary flavour throughout the academic year.”

Response: This is an idea that has been tried previously with varied success, but the School felt it is worth considering again. The School ran a graduate seminar series for many years that brought in guest speakers, but it was not well attended by faculty members or graduate students outside of the cognate field of the presenter. Of note, this program was not mandatory and this might be a consideration going forward. The seminar series was eventually renamed the School of Kinesiology Seminar Series. Presently, graduate students in the School organize two symposia, both in the spring: a “Graduate Research Day” that encompasses both quantitative and qualitative research and a “Socio-cultural Research Day” that focuses on social science research.

Action: The Graduate Committee will consult with graduate students as part of the graduate program review, and bring forward a proposal to the School during the 2015-16 academic year that identifies concrete ways to help build a graduate student community within the School including identifying a “common space” for graduate students and developing a student-led seminar series.

12. *Review the graduate curriculum course offerings to assess their alignment with School and UBC strategic objectives. Ground that assessment in the identification of desired learning outcomes and degree expectations.*

Comment: Recommendation 12 follows from the ERC’s recommendation to conduct a review of the undergraduate program. They write: “Similar to our recommendation about the undergraduate curriculum review, we recommend that the graduate curriculum course offerings be reviewed to assess their alignment with School and UBC strategic objectives. That assessment should be grounded in the identification of desired learning outcomes and degree expectations.”

Response: The School supports Recommendation 12. A review of the School’s graduate curriculum is anticipated in the School’s Strategic Plan and Accountability Framework. It is clear that given the new President’s emphasis on research intensification and on developing “pathways to employment for graduates”, the graduate curriculum review should focus on research opportunities as well as on professional development.

Action: The Associate Director Graduate Affairs will lead a review of the School's graduate curriculum and the four graduate programs (MKin, MSc, MA, PhD) during the 2015-16 academic year.

13. Consider lowering the course load for MSc and MA degrees, as it is viewed as high relative to other research thesis-based graduate programs.

Comment: Recommendation 13 is based on the ERC's experience at other campuses. They write: "The generally very positive impressions of the graduate programs notwithstanding, there was consensus among the reviewers that a recommendation be made to reconsider the course load for MSc and MA degrees as we considered them to be high relative to other research thesis-based graduate programs. The credit value for Masters theses could be increased to 18, consistent with a trend in other UBC Masters programs (particularly in Science areas), allowing required course credits to decrease to 12."

Response: The School agrees that the course load for the MSc and MA degrees should be reviewed.

Action: The course load in the MSc and MA will be reviewed during the 2015-16 academic year in conjunction with the graduate curriculum review.

14. Consider establishing and communicating broadly guaranteed minimum funding for graduate students.

Comment: Recommendation 14 is again based on the ERC's experience at other campuses. They write: "In contrast with many other kinesiology graduate programs at other universities, there is currently no minimum funding guarantee offered by the School to its graduate students. We recommend consideration be given to guaranteed minimum funding for graduate students."

Response: The School agrees that it would be advantageous to be able to provide guaranteed minimum funding for graduate students. The School and Faculty of Education currently provide a series of competitive awards and the School provides TAsip funding to all graduate students who apply for this funding. This is not dissimilar from other graduate programs at UBC.

Action: Opportunities for guaranteed minimum funding for graduate students will be reviewed during the 2015-16 academic year in conjunction with the graduate curriculum review.

Report Section: Faculty and Staff

Note: There are 2 recommendations in this section (15-16) that are discussed separately.

15. Continue with the expansion of the professoriate in order to nurture, sustain, and improve the academic experience and research productivity of this high performing unit. Student/faculty ratios remain too high.

Comment: Recommendation 15 is based on the ERC's perception of the need to increase the faculty complement to improve student/faculty ratios in the School. They write: "We consider the School to be under-resourced in terms of: Faculty complement --- see our early comments about the student/faculty ratio." – "At least three new faculty searches are posted, which is a key action required to address the very high student / faculty ratio mentioned elsewhere in this report. That ratio will remain high even after those new searches are completed and we recommend continuing with the expansion of the professoriate in order to nurture, sustain, and improve the academic experience and research productivity of this high performing unit."

Response: The School supports the first part of Recommendation 15 and acknowledges the need to increase the faculty complement. The rationale for doing this includes an acute need to address high student/faculty ratios in the School and the increasing demand for course seats, as well as to contribute to the quality and range of educational opportunities for students and to enhance the School's scholarly activity. While acute, the student/faculty ratio is not as high as reported by the ERC and warrants comment. Also, the ERC's figures on sessional instructor positions are slightly inflated, and their count of faculty FTE is slightly low.

The ERC report a headcount of 21 faculty members in the School, but the actual faculty complement when they visited was 25 faculty members [23.73 FTE], including two RHI-MSFHR scholars who were hired in grant tenure positions in September 2014. The School had seven additional hirings underway at the time, which will potentially bring the faculty complement to 32 headcount and 30.23 FTE. These include the new Director of the School, a CRC in Exercise Psychology, a senior spousal appointment in Exercise and Sport Psychology, and searches for Socio-cultural studies, Statistics and Research Methods, Sports Nutrition & Dietetics (.5 FTE), and Aboriginal Health, Physical Activity and Exercise.

The ERC also report that "The Student/Faculty ratio is currently over 50; with the desperately needed new faculty hires that are approved and ongoing the ratio may move to the low 40s." The actual student/faculty ratio during their visit was 1197/25 or 47.88. The projected ratio based on the seven new hirings is 1197/32 or 37.41.

Finally, the ERC also observe that "another consequence of such high student/faculty ratios is that almost 50% of the current curriculum is delivered by sessional instructors." In actuality, 41.4% of the undergraduate curriculum is being delivered this year by sessional instructors (29 course sections/70 total sections), including summer and winter sessions. The sessional figure includes 9 courses offered by graduate students and 2 taught by postdocs, however, and teaching experience for graduate and postdoctoral students is a priority for the School. Excluding these 11 courses, the percentage of sessionally taught courses is 25.7% (18/70).

Sessional Instructors provide a valuable service to the School and an important learning opportunity for students, and the School is fortunate to have an accomplished group of

Sessional Instructors who teach within the undergraduate program. The flipside of sessional coverage of courses is faculty coverage. This issue is much more complex than student/faculty ratios alone, and hinges on a number of factors including faculty teaching FTE, available classroom sizes, modes of instruction and pedagogy, and the current lack of online course delivery in the School. As an example, faculty teaching FTE (16.93) in 2014-15 is currently well below the School's faculty FTE (23.73) because of reduced teaching loads associated with career scholar awards, course releases to support administrative positions, and reduced appointments associated with phased retirements. This is an important factor in the ability of the School to mount faculty-instructed courses, but classroom size, pedagogy and modes of delivery are also important factors.

Action: Opportunities for additional faculty hiring will be reviewed during the 2015-16 academic year in conjunction with the School's review of academic priorities (see Recommendation 1). In addition, a review of teaching loads will be conducted with an emphasis on how teaching loads might be better configured to "nurture, sustain, and improve the academic experience and research productivity" of the School.

16. We recommend that a new forum be established for monthly meetings of the professoriate alone for discussions related to their interests and roles, e.g. around academic planning, teaching and learning, and scholarship.

Comment: Recommendation 16 is based on faculty and staff input to the ERC. The ERC write: "We heard repeatedly in conversations with staff and faculty that the current School Meeting forum is used for both academic and operations management discussions, and that the meeting is a combination of a decision-making forum with votes as well as an administrative information meeting. We recommend that an additional new discussion forum be established for monthly meetings of the professoriate alone for discussions related to their interests and roles, e.g. around academic planning, teaching and learning, research and scholarship."

Response: The School agrees that School Meetings currently deal with both academic and operations information and decisions. School voting is currently restricted to faculty members and student representatives (2 undergraduate, 1 Master's and 1 PhD). Staff members currently hold staff-specific meetings, and there is nothing to prevent the School's faculty members from holding similar faculty-specific meetings. Faculty members in the School are supportive of conducting separate meetings that will allow dedicated discussions on academic topics and issues that generally cannot be dealt with in regular (once per month) School meetings where administrative matters often take priority and have to be dealt with in a timely manner.

Action: Faculty members will meet early in the 2015-16 academic year to decide on a schedule of faculty meetings for discussions related to their interests and roles, such as around academic planning, teaching and learning and research and scholarship.