

# Implementation Report on the 2018-2019 Cyclical Review of the Bachelor of Business Technology Management Program

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**Date:** February 28, 2022

## INTRODUCTION

This is the first implementation report for the Bachelor of Business Technology Management (BBTM) cyclical review that took place in 2018-2019. The full language for each recommendation from the External Reviewers' Report has been included, along with the corresponding information about implementation from the Final Assessment Report. For each recommendation, the unit has provided an update on the progress or action made toward the implementation of that recommendation, followed by comments from the relevant dean(s) and the Program Review Sub-Committee. Taking into account the updates provided by the unit and the comments from the dean(s), the Program Review Sub-Committee will review the report and determine if all recommendations have been implemented satisfactorily or if a subsequent report will be required.

## RECOMMENDATIONS PRIORITIZED FOR IMPLEMENTATION IN FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

| Full Recommendation from External Reviewers' Report: Recommendation #1: The BTM team needs to build reputation by increasing gradually its admission standards to a point matching the admissions standards of the BBA Program. |  |                             |                                  |
|---|--|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)   | Responsibility for Implementation                      | Anticipated Completion Date | Additional Notes                 |
| Recommendation #1: The BTM team needs to build reputation by increasing gradually its admission standards to a point matching the admissions standards of the BBA Program.  | Program, Recruitment and Admissions, and Dean's Office | Ongoing                     | Balance with admissions numbers. |

**Unit Update:** Our admission average has been going down (from 80% in 2018 to 78% in 2021), but we have fixed a key problem with students from China who were not required to compete the International English Language

Testing System (IELTS) exam. Thus, even though our average has gone down, our quality has increased. At the same time, first-year numbers have not gone up significantly, but we have seen a healthy increase in in the quality of the students. This has allowed us to balance the admission average with the admission numbers. At this point in time, there are no plans to increase the admission averages to the program further, but every year we will assess our incoming numbers and adjust our averages. We believe that the changes made have increased the quality of program applicants, which will, by extension, enhance its reputation, thus satisfying the intent of this recommendation.

**Decanal Comments:** I agree with the Unit Update. The admissions issue that was addressed has made a significant difference in overall quality of students. The BTM faculty and our own External Relations team have actively engaged in recruitment, trying many different strategies to attract additional students. Until we attract a larger number of qualified students, however, the admissions average is unlikely to go up. I consider this recommendation to be completed and require no further reporting.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** The committee appreciates that admissions averages need to strike an appropriate balance between the quality of students accepted into the program, and the necessary enrolment numbers to meet targets. Comments provided by both the program and the dean indicate that at present, there is an appropriate balance that has been achieved between the two. The committee agrees that no further reporting on this recommendation, which is an ongoing area to pay attention to, is required.

| <b>Full Recommendation from External Reviewers' Report: Recommendation #2:</b> Because business technology is fluid and developing, we believe that the program would benefit from the BTM faculty monitoring and updating its curriculum with relatively recent and highly in-demand topics such as predictive and prescriptive analytics, information/cyber security, and the business impact of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, internet of things, and blockchain. |  |                                    |
|---|--|------------------------------------|
| <b>Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)</b>  | <b>Responsibility for Implementation</b> | <b>Anticipated Completion Date</b> |
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**Unit Update:** We have introduced several changes to our courses to both ensure alignment with BBA and industry requirements, as well as prepare our students for challenging upper courses. In 2020, we introduced a new course- MB216 Data Visualization- to introduce students to data analytics. In 2020, we hired a new technically oriented faculty member under the Teaching Stream with research and teaching expertise in Cyber Security. It is our hope that once they settle into the program, they will develop a new course on Cyber Security as well as expand their research on Cyber Security. We have also noticed that our students struggle in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year with quantitative courses, impeding their development and performance in the program. In addition, a growing number of our students are applying to do graduate studies in Business and Data Analytics and require undergraduate calculus course(s) to get in. While some are doing Calculus by themselves, we need to make sure we are giving them that opportunity in BTM. To address these issues, we are replacing MA127 Math for BTM with MA129 Calculus for Business effective winter 2024. MA129 is a course for BBA and Economics students. The hope is that our students will be prepared do well in upper year courses and can succeed in graduate programs that require strong quantitative skills. The program believes that the curriculum changes made align with the intent of this recommendation and therefore, we consider it to be completed.

**Decanal Comments:** The Unit Update includes important modifications consistent with continuous monitoring and improvement, in which the BTM program engages regularly. I consider this recommendation to be completed and require no further reporting.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** The committee appreciates the details provided by the program as to how they have implemented the intentions of the recommendation to ensure that the BTM curriculum addresses important, contemporary topics. The changes described to the curriculum, and the deans' assessment that the program is engaging in a regular review of its programming, satisfy this recommendation, and no further reporting is required.

| <b>Full Recommendation from External Reviewers' Report: Recommendation #3:</b> We recommend that the university find ways to better support the language learning needs of their international students prior to these students attending BTM classes. Related to this is that all BTM students receive assistance to improve writing skills. |  |                                    |
|---|--|------------------------------------|
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**Unit Update:** Prior to 2018, international students from China would be admitted in the BTM without taking the standard English proficiency (International English Language Testing System, IELTS) test. We have now made IELTS a requirement for admission, a move that has increased the quality of incoming students. In addition,

Laurier has restructured its Teaching & Learning Services department and hired new writing consultants for the Brantford Campus, one of whom is working with BTM faculty to address student writing needs. Starting fall 2022, BTM will be able to recruit second year students through the newly created Wilfrid Laurier International College (Navitas). We believe that these changes to the program admission requirements, and the support provided to students through Teaching and Learning have satisfied this recommendation.

**Decanal Comments:** The Unit Update includes many improvements regarding language and writing support for international students. I consider this recommendation to be completed and require no further reporting.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** The committee understands that since the BTM program undertook its last cyclical review, there have been many positive changes made that align with the intention of this recommendation. The committee considers it to be completed, and no further reporting on it is required.

| <b>Full Recommendation from External Reviewers' Report: Recommendation #4:</b> The Co-op component is an essential part of this program. We recommend that the Co-op reviews be provided back to the BTM faculty after each and every cycle of student placements. This information, related to students' experiences, can provide significant data for program improvement and direction. |  |                                    |
|--|--|------------------------------------|
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**Unit Update:** We continue to consult our Co-op office for employers' feedback and advice on how to best provide in-class support to our students before and after their co-op placement. The Brantford Co-op manager is always invited to our first fall meeting, where they provide an update on the work term's performance and employer insights. We used this data to inform our curriculum mapping workshop as discussed under recommendation #9 below. Engaging with the Co-op office to ensure that our students are prepared for the workplace and maximizing this opportunity is an ongoing initiative, but we believe that it has been completed from the perspective of the cyclical review recommendation.

**Decanal Comments:** I agree with the Unit Update and believe that this recommendation is completed and requires no further reporting.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** Ensuring that BTM students are prepared for and performing to expected standards in their co-op placements is something that requires ongoing attention and evaluation. The

current and cyclical processes used by the program to monitor the effectiveness of the current co-op structure align with the intent of this recommendation. No further reporting is required.

| <b>Full Recommendation from External Reviewers' Report: Recommendation #9:</b> The BTM faculty need to continuously review all of their courses to eliminate overlaps and make room for new and innovative material. Space in their curriculum for new courses can be accomplished by eliminating any overlap in course content, consolidating courses such as the required Foundations courses and some business foundation courses such as Accounting. |  |                                    |
|--|--|------------------------------------|
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**Unit Update:** We continue to review our courses to ensure we are offering the most rigorous and up to date curriculum. In spring of 2021, BTM embarked on an exercise to update the curriculum map and program learning outcomes, which culminated in a half day workshop on October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The aim of the workshop was to identify gaps and overlaps in the curriculum. We revised the curriculum map to ensure that the program level learning outcomes include all knowledge areas and skills that are important to the program and to employers. We hope to complete the exercise in spring 2022. Concurrently, the Brantford Foundations has been restructured, with implementation of the recommendations expected to start in fall 2022. BTM will continue to work with the Brantford Foundations Committee to ensure that we consolidate the required foundations courses and free some space to introduce some courses for our students. The BTM program is dynamic and requires that we are always forward looking. We will continue to update the curriculum to ensure that it delivers the knowledge and skills that employers are looking for in our graduates. The program considers this recommendation to have been fulfilled through the actions described above.

**Decanal Comments:** Similar to Recommendation #2, the BTM program has made curriculum updates and engages in continuous monitoring and improvement. I consider this recommendation to be completed and require no further reporting.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** The actions that the program has taken to respond to this recommendation since its cyclical review are well-aligned with the specific suggestions made in this recommendation. Like many of the recommendations made by the review committee, curriculum review represents an area that benefits from regular, ongoing discussion and modification where necessary. For

reporting purposes, this recommendation is considered completed, and the committee wishes the program well in its ongoing curriculum work.

| Full Recommendation from External Reviewers' Report: Recommendation #10: The Lazaridis School of Business and Economics needs improved visibility on the Brantford campus. |                                   |                             |
|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)  | Responsibility for Implementation | Anticipated Completion Date |
| Recommendation #10: The Lazaridis School of Business and Economics needs improved visibility on the Brantford campus.  | Dean's Office                     | May 2020                    |

**Unit Update:** Over the last two years, the Dean's Office through the Marketing and External Relations team has invested significant resources towards marketing and recruitment. BTM got signage in the basement of the SC Johnson Building. We were on track to get signage in the lobby of SCJ as well, but the pandemic stopped it. The marketing team has used a mix of tools (online advertising, revamping of the BTM website, Instagram take overs, webinars) to differentiate BTM from BBA at Laurier and other programs across Canada, and increase visibility among high school students. They created a video promoting BTM in Brantford in which BTM is clearly identified as part of the Lazaridis Brand. These new advertising resources for BTM have achieved the intent of the recommendation to improve the program's visibility on the Brantford campus.

**Decanal Comments:** In addition to the updates reported by the Unit, the Dean's Office (Vice Dean, Senior Administrative Officer, and Lazaridis Immersive Learning Coordinator) have been meeting regularly with executives from the BTM Student Association to facilitate better connections with and support from the Lazaridis School for student activities. This has led to additional changes and an improved sense of the BTM being part of the Lazaridis School. I consider this recommendation to be completed and require no further reporting.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** The committee appreciates the examples provided by both the program and the dean of the concrete actions that have been taken since the review to implement this recommendation. All of the examples given align with the goal of the recommendation to increase the BTM program's visibility on campus. This recommendation is considered completed.

#### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

**Unit:** We have made changes to the program in response to the recommendations prioritized in the last cyclical review. We have introduced new courses, hired a technically oriented faculty member to teach our tech courses, fixed the English language admission requirements for international students, increased BTM's visibility through recruitment and marketing, and remapped our curriculum in consultation with the Co-op office. We believe these changes have enhanced the reputation of our program.

Dean: The BTM program has continued to make improvements in response to the changing Business education landscape as well as any issues that have arisen within the program over time. Faculty monitor the program regularly and work hard with administrators to provide an enriching educational experience for students. I concur that changes to date have enhanced the program and I am confident that the regular practice of BTM faculty in continuous improvement will ensure the program maintains a high level of quality.

**Program Review Sub-Committee:** The committee enjoyed reading about the positive changes that have been made to the BTM program curriculum and its operations since the 2018-2019 cyclical review in order to implement the recommendations made by the external review committee. It was clear from the Implementation Report that the BTM program is attentive to the issues raised by the reviewers and is committed to continuous program improvement through regular curriculum review. While many of the recommendations centre around areas of ongoing importance, the committee considers the recommendations to be completed for reporting purposes, and no further Implementation Reports will be required in advance of the program's next cyclical review, currently scheduled as part of the 2015-2026 review cycle.

**Subsequent Report Required: No**