



## Implementation Report for the 2020-2021 Cyclical Review of the Martin Luther University College Programs

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**Date:** July 30, 2024

### INTRODUCTION

This is the first implementation report for the cyclical review of the Martin Luther University College undergraduate and graduate programs that took place in 2020-2021. 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

Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)	Responsibility for Implementation	Responsibility for Resourcing (if applicable)	Anticipated Completion Date
Recommendation #1: Review and consider revisions to either the title and/or the learning outcomes for the MA in Theology: Public Faith and Spirituality in light of the Vision, Mission, and Values of Luther.	Mona Tokarek Lafosse  Allen Jorgenson		2023

**Principal-Dean of MLUC Comments:** This recommendation has been completed. Following a review of the program, a new program name was introduced Fall, 2023. The field is now "Spiritualities and Community Engagement." The change of the field name was accompanied by a change in learning outcomes. The degree is now more clearly aimed at attracting students with an interest in interfaith and community engagement. We are in the final stages of a search for a program director for this field after the departure of Dr. LaFosse in 2022.



**FGPS Decanal Comments:** The program name and learning outcomes have been modified in response to the recommendation from the reviewers. Changes were approved by university governance in early 2023.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** From the updates provided, it sounds like this recommendation has been fully completed. No further reporting is required.

Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)	Responsibility for Implementation	Responsibility for Resourcing (if applicable)	Anticipated Completion Date	Additional Notes
<p><b>Recommendation #2:</b> Luther is encouraged to develop a rubric that defines what kinds of scholarly output it deems acceptable, and the grounds on which that output is deemed meritorious. Laurier is encouraged to receive this rubric and locate it in relation to the university’s research strategic plan. (Note: this relates to Recommendation 11.)</p>	<p>Allen Jorgenson Mary (Joy) Philip Kristine Lund</p>		<p>2022</p>	<p>This will be connected to the needed revisions to the faculty manual.</p>

**Principal-Dean of MLUC Comments:** Luther has worked over the past four years to heighten the profile of research. Principally, this has taken place in the context of our monthly faculty council meetings. “Research” is a dedicated item on the agenda. Faculty are encouraged to share recent publications, experiences at conferences, invitations as speakers etc. In sum, this has become a place to attend to plans for research, research being undertaken, and its dissemination. This has been an important step in preparation for the rubric spoken of, and we will dedicate a session at our next faculty council retreat (August 2024) to discuss a draft under preparation.

**FGPS Decanal Comments:** Luther has taken steps towards increasing awareness and profile of research activities among its faculty. Laurier has a broad definition of Scholarship, as defined by the Collective Agreement: “publications; invited talks and presentations; contributions to papers and conferences; presentations in a credible academic, professional or journalistic forum; contributions in the performing and creative arts; community-engaged scholarship; Indigenous forms of scholarship; research and other scholarly work achieved or in progress; research grants and contracts awarded; workshops and/or courses attended; review activities (internal and external); research reports completed; other research and scholarly activities (e.g., book reviews, journal editorship, external examination of graduate theses)”. The draft Strategic Research Plan has undergone extensive consultation with faculty across the institution – 6 research themes and 67 research strengths have been identified through this consultation that aim to reflect Laurier’s broad research profile.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** The core of this recommendation relates to more deeply integrating research activities into Luther’s culture, and the updates provided by the Principal-Dean illustrate several ways in which this is being accomplished. It also sounds like the specific recommendation of a rubric to



define scholarly outputs is under consideration. Luther is encouraged to evaluate whether or not this tool will be of use to faculty and administrators, and if so, to proceed with its development. No further reporting on this recommendation will be required.

Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)	Responsibility for Implementation	Responsibility for Resourcing (if applicable)	Anticipated Completion Date
<b>Recommendation #3:</b> Laurier needs to review its admissions process for Luther’s BA program, and work together with Luther to improve this process to effectively secure students as early as possible as to remain competitive with other comparable programs/institutions.	Gyeong Kim Kristine Lund Allen Jorgenson		2021

**Principal-Dean of MLUC Comments:** This process has been interrupted by the departure of Dr. Kim. Luther has worked with the Admissions department at Laurier to facilitate incoming applications to this program. Consequently, we have been able to track applications better and be in contact with potential students once they have received an offer to the program. Luther has just offered a contract to Hilla Lahtinen as Director of the BA, who has accepted this. She will begin her position August 2024. Also germane to this recommendation was a review of this degree, which resulted in a relaunching of it as BA in Christianity, Interfaith Dialogue, and Community Engagement. We consider all of these initiatives to speak to the intent of this recommendation.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** There is evidence in Luther’s update that the intent of this recommendation has been fulfilled by the activities described. No further updates on this recommendation are required.

Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)	Responsibility for Implementation	Responsibility for Resourcing (if applicable)	Anticipated Completion Date
<b>Recommendation #4:</b> Luther may wish to review the learning demands that these programs place on students. They may also wish to explore the extent to which targeted admission requirements may help ease those demands. For example, might a BA in one of either psychology, sociology, religious studies, theology, or global citizenship better equip students to navigate their	Kristine Lund Mary (Joy) Philip MDiv Committee		2021



<p>program of studies? We make this recommendation knowing that, given the fact these programs are approved by both CRPO (for the MA) and ATS (for the MA and the MDiv), there may be little room to change the curricular content of the programs themselves.</p>			
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**Principal-Dean of MLUC Comments:** We have been more attentive to the undergraduate education students have completed before applying to our graduate programs and also requiring a minimum of a B average. It is hoped that students would apply with a degree in the social sciences or humanities and a minimum of a B average will be better equipped to be successful in their degree program. We are satisfied with the undergraduate education applicants to the program have completed as students are able to do well in their graduate program.

**FGPS Decanal Comments:** Requirements for the MA Spiritual Care and Psychotherapy and the Master of Divinity include a bachelor’s degree from a recognized accredited university or university college with minimum B average. Based on comments provided by the Principal Dean, closer scrutiny of the undergraduate education received by students that have recently entered these programs is contributing to their success at the graduate level.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** The responses provided indicate that the intent of this recommendation has been met in order to ensure that incoming students are prepared for success in their program of choice. No further reporting on this recommendation is required.

Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)	Responsibility for Implementation	Responsibility for Resourcing (if applicable)	Anticipated Completion Date
<p><b>Recommendation #5:</b> Luther’s programs should be reviewed with an eye toward reducing course load. In particular, Luther should critically review the program demands of the joint MA/MDiv program. If program demands cannot be decreased, we recommend investigating whether (a) there might be better ways to sequence the curriculum to better accommodate students’ success, experience, and wellness; or (b) the curricular demands of the joint program could be spread out over four years rather than three.</p>	<p>Mary (Joy) Philip Allen Jorgenson Kristine Lund</p>		<p>2021</p>

**Principal-Dean of MLUC Comments:** This recommendation has been completed. We have reviewed the



number of courses in each of the programs. In the review of the MDiv. Program, the degree was shortened from 27 to 24 courses and the double degree MDiv -MA in Theology degree was reduced from 33 to 28 courses. In the MA in Theology: Spiritual Care and Psychotherapy, attention is being paid to sequencing the courses so that students will be prepared for their clinical placement.

**FGPS Decanal Comments:** As described by the Principal Dean, in response to the recommendation, efforts have been made to reduce the course demands in the MDiv and MDiv-MA programs and improve course sequencing in the MA Theology Spiritual Care and Psychotherapy program.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** It is clear from the responses that this recommendation has been completed and there is no further reporting required.

Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)	Responsibility for Implementation	Responsibility for Resourcing (if applicable)	Anticipated Completion Date
<p><b>Recommendation #6:</b> Luther should do some foundational visioning work, perhaps in partnership with the Eastern Synod, regarding the vision of what a pastor ought to be in today’s world, and thus what training requirements are needed in the MDiv (working within the ATS guidelines, of course). (Note: Recommendations 6 and 7 work toward different though related ends. Luther should work with the Synod to find the best path forward.)</p>	<p>Kristine Lund Allen Jorgenson Mary (Joy) Phillip</p>		<p>2022</p>

**Principal-Dean of MLUC Comments:** Work has been done with the Eastern Synod to determine the current educational needs for a pastor. This was done through a research study funded by the Lilly Foundation. The research study entitled If you had asked me: Qualities and Competencies of a culturally and contextually competent Canadian church leader in a post pandemic world. Also, a survey was offered to congregational lay leaders to ascertain what needs they had for educational experiences. Information from both these research projects are informing the current MDiv curriculum and ongoing continuing education offerings and satisfy the intent of this recommendation.

**FGPS Decanal Comments:** The requested foundational work has been completed, and results are informing MDiv curriculum.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** The updates provide confirm that this recommendation has been completed, which is great to hear, and no further updates on this recommendation will be necessary.



Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)	Responsibility for Implementation	Responsibility for Resourcing (if applicable)	Anticipated Completion Date	Additional Notes
<b>Recommendation #8:</b> Review and implement clear structure regarding how faculty time is quantified and allocated, with realistic time allotments being given to teaching, research, and service.	Kristine Lund Mary (Joy) Philip Allen Jorgenson		2022	This will be connected to the needed revisions to the faculty manual.

**Principal-Dean of MLUC Comments:** This remains an ongoing challenge with limited resources available to academic units. Luther is currently updating its faculty manual and this will be reviewed for its release in fall 2024. The newly hired Human Resources Advisor at Luther has created a survey to ascertain how faculty time is used. The information from this survey is expected by the end of August, 2024. This information will help set realistic expectations for teaching, research and service.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** The comments provided by the Principal-Dean indicate that the implementation of this recommendation is in progress, and Luther is encouraged to continue with the initiatives described above. No further reporting is required.

Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)	Responsibility for Implementation	Responsibility for Resourcing (if applicable)	Anticipated Completion Date
<b>Recommendation #9:</b> As Luther expands its faculty complement, senior leadership should also assess the staffing needs and grow the staff complement as appropriate.	Kristine Lund Allen Jorgenson Mary (Joy) Philip	Principal-Dean	2021

**Principal-Dean of MLUC Comments:** Luther has recently increased the staffing complement to provide more support in each of the staff departments. We are concluding two searches. We have completed the search for an Assistant Professor in Christianity, Interfaith Dialogue and Community Engagement and will complete the search for an Assistant Professor in Spiritualities and Community Engagement soon. Once these searches are completed a review of the faculty needs will be completed and this information will inform future searches.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** It is encouraging to hear that Luther has been able to increase its faculty complement since the cyclical program review, and that a needs assessment to inform future hiring will be undertaken. No further reporting on this recommendation is required.





Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)	Responsibility for Implementation	Responsibility for Resourcing (if applicable)	Anticipated Completion Date
<b>Recommendation #10:</b> Review research and funding expectations, with an eye toward (a) evaluating what barriers currently impede research/funding success, and (b) setting clear research/funding goals for the institution over the next seven years.	Allen Jorgenson  Faculty		2022

**Principal-Dean of MLUC Comments:** Developments in this area have been stalled, in part, because of the disarray of the pandemic. Luther has plans to further explorations regarding funding in the 2024/25 academic year. It should be noted, however, that faculty have secured four significant (for theology) grants since the review: Louisville Institute Major Project Grant by Laura MacGregor and Allen Jorgenson (30, 000 USD); University of Birmingham Psychology Cross-Training Fellowship Programme for Theologians by Allen Jorgenson (20, 000 £); Hector Acero Ferrer and John Milloy were successful in receiving a SSHRC grant for a conference in May, 2023.

**FGPS Decanal Comments:** Congratulations on the recent research grant success. The Office of Research Services (ORS) formerly ran a Faculty Mentorship and Development Program that would likely be of interest to the newly hired faculty in Luther [see: <https://lauriercloud.sharepoint.com/sites/office-of-research-services/Pages/Faculty-Mentorship-and-Development-Program.aspx>]. I'm not aware if this program is still in existence, but staff from ORS could be approached to provide seminars/workshops to faculty in Luther to support their development of research grants. ORS has also introduced new internal grants programs: the Laurier Early Career Research Program and SSHRC Institutional Grant Program [[Internal Grants | Connect - Wilfrid Laurier University \(sharepoint.com\)](#)], both of which are designed to help leverage external grant success.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** The committee echoes the congratulations of the Dean of FGPS on the recent funding awards secured by Luther faculty. Luther is encouraged to look into the programs identified by the Dean of FGPS to continue to support faculty in applying for (and hopefully obtaining) internal and external research funding. No further reporting is required.

Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)	Responsibility for Implementation	Responsibility for Resourcing (if applicable)	Anticipated Completion Date	Additional Notes
<b>Recommendation #11:</b> We recommend that the Luther faculty and Laurier administration work together to clarify and broaden the faculty	Kristine Lund  Mary (Joy) Philip		2022	This will be connected to the needed



<p>evaluation process, so that the university can better understand and appreciate the scholarship of the MLUC faculty. One possibility is to honour the Boyer model of scholarship, which includes discovery, integration, application, in addition to teaching. Other models might be those used by Laurier’s school of Social Work, or other seminary schools across Canada. (Note: this relates to Recommendation 2.)</p>	<p>Allen Jorgenson Faculty</p>			<p>revisions to the faculty manual.</p>
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**Principal-Dean of MLUC Comments:** Luther has initiated an annual review process for faculty members in response to this recommendation. In this review process, Luther faculty have opportunities to highlight the variety ways their scholarship contributes to knowledge generation and also informs their teaching. Luther will continue to highlight faculty research in the 2024/25 academic year.

**FGPS Decanal Comments:** Please see response to Recommendation #2.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** Based on the comments provided, this recommendation is considered to be completed, and no further reporting is necessary.

Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)	Responsibility for Implementation	Responsibility for Resourcing (if applicable)	Anticipated Completion Date
<p><b>Recommendation #12:</b> It is evident that there are outstanding and gifted teachers at MLUC. We recommend that MLUC consider how it can better highlight its faculty excellence by actively encouraging the nomination or self-nomination of its faculty for external teaching awards. One possible model of nomination is an internal teaching award committee. One possible model of self-nomination is application for the 3M National Teaching Fellowships. Luther’s faculty and administration may choose to work with Laurier’s Educational Development Team on this.</p>	<p>Kristine Lund Allen Jorgenson Mary Joy Philip</p>		<p>2022</p>





**Principal-Dean of MLUC Comments:** We have endeavoured to satisfy this recommendation. One faculty member was nominated for but did not receive the Donald F. Morgenson Faculty Awards for Teaching Excellence (Allen Jorgenson in 2022). Luther will consult with Laurier’s Educational Development Team to consider possible pathways forward over the next four years.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** Ensuring that the scholarly and pedagogical work being done within Luther is visible to internal and external communities is an evident theme in the recommendations made by the external review committee. Luther is encouraged to stay informed of internal and external teaching award opportunities through Teaching Excellence and Innovation’s [website](#), and by connecting with them directly. The committee wishes Luther future success in nominating its faculty for teaching awards that recognize their accomplishments. No further reporting is required.

Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)	Responsibility for Implementation	Responsibility for Resourcing (if applicable)	Anticipated Completion Date
<p><b>Recommendation #13:</b> We recommend that Laurier administrators who oversee recruitment, admissions, and on-line student information pro-actively reach out to MLUC to design new strategies that integrate the college into these Laurier systems in a lasting way. Agenda items might include highlighting MLUC in recruitment, adjusting dates for notifying undergraduate applicants, clearly integrating MLUC undergraduate minors into on-line advising systems.</p>	<p>Kristine Lund Gyeong Kim BA Committee</p>		<p>2021</p>

**Principal-Dean of MLUC Comments:** Program coordinators, student advisors and recruitment committee at Luther have been working more intentionally with Laurier Administrators and those who oversee recruitment, admissions and online student information. Laurier has been learning more about Luther courses and programs so as to be more able to inform prospective and current students. Luther staff have also made important connections with Laurier staff in these areas in order to work more closely and effectively with them. We consider this recommendation to be completed.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** From the updates provided, it sounds like progress has been made in implementing the intent of this recommendation. Luther is encouraged to continue this proactive communication and collaboration with Recruitment and Admissions. No further reporting is required.



Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)	Responsibility for Implementation	Responsibility for Resourcing (if applicable)	Anticipated Completion Date
<p><b>Recommendation #15.</b> We recommend that Luther examine factors internal to the graduate program critical to student success and retention, such as advising checkpoints, pre-requisites for courses, and, in some cases, assumptions of background knowledge within individual courses.</p>	<p>Allen Jorgenson Mary (Joy) Philip Kate Harper Mona Tokarek Lafosse</p>		<p>2021</p>

**Principal-Dean of MLUC Comments:** Early in 2024, another student advisor was hired which has provided needed resources in the areas of student advising. Students are able to book an appointment online and meet with a student advisor either online or in person. Updated checklists for degree programs have been created so students are better able to track their progress through the degree. A number of Qualtrics forms have been created to support students in their application for a practicum site, completion of evaluation forms and submission of their final clinical hours. All of these new and revised initiatives are making the whole process much more efficient for everyone.

**FGPS Decanal Comments:** I appreciate the efforts made to help ensure successful progress of graduate students in Luther programs. In addition, the PhD progress and activity report is designed to help keep PhD students on track. If reasons warrant, checking off the box that indicates ‘with some concerns (first instance)’ should be viewed as a mechanism to help PhD students, with the aid of a formal action plan, get back on track. Although these reports are required annually, they can be completed at any time by a supervisor if warranted. Note also that FGPS is currently piloting a progress report for 2-yr research master’s programs that Luther may want to consider adapting to their master’s programs.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** All of the activities described by the Principal-Dean support the intent of this recommendation, and the committee appreciates the examples provided. Luther is encouraged to consider the suggestions of the Dean of FGPS, and to solicit student feedback, as appropriate, to inform future changes or additional resources that may support student retention. No further reporting is required.

### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

**Principal-Dean of Martin Luther University College:** We are very appreciative of the helpful recommendations made by the review committee. We have done our best to respond to them and made significant progress on them in spite of the many challenges created by the pandemic. We are committed to ongoing work on the identified areas so as to support an excellent learning experience for students at Luther and a meaningful work experience for faculty and staff.

**Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies:** Martin Luther University College delivers a broad range of excellent graduate programs that have been strengthened via the external review process. The Principal



Dean of MLUC has provided evidence of initiatives that have addressed (or are in the process of addressing) the recommendations from the external reviewers.

**Program Review Sub-Committee:** The committee appreciates the updates provided by Martin Luther in this Implementation Report, which confirm that all of the recommendations made by the 2020-2021 external review committee have been fully completed or are in progress. The committee encourages the unit to maintain the momentum of those recommendations that have been initiated but not yet completed, and there will be an opportunity to discuss further developments in these areas in the next cyclical program review Self-Study. The committee feels that sufficient progress on the recommendations has been made that no further reporting is necessary in advance of Luther's next scheduled cyclical program review in 2027-2028.

**Subsequent Report Required: No**