

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

### **A. CONCLUSIONS**

This Audit Team concludes that Loyalist College is well on its way to owning an effective and impressive Quality Assurance process. The last two years have apparently seen a substantial and positive shift in the learning culture at Loyalist, while simultaneously experiencing significant changes in administrative personnel. The current “Learning Centred Model” appears to have taken firm roots at Loyalist and the students who were interviewed expressed very strong loyalty to their programs of study and to Loyalist College.

The Audit Team interviewed members of Senior Management, Academic Managers, Support Service Managers, faculty, students, and the team that developed the Framework for Program Review (FPR) process (see Appendix A for list of Interviewees). We were most impressed by the enthusiasm and the general positive regard for the FPR process espoused by all parties.

As recognized in the Self Study, no comprehensive, college-wide Quality Assurance (QA) process has yet been developed or implemented. This said, however, the FPR process that is now in place constitutes a most significant piece in what will become such a comprehensive process. It is largely “owned” by faculty and does a thorough job of reviewing and renewing the various curricula and programs. The energy and enthusiasm expressed by those faculty and academic managers who have undergone formal reviews speaks volumes about the efficacy of the process.

There seems to be a strong will at Loyalist to set the remaining pieces of a comprehensive QA process in place. These constituent pieces will likely include: processes to assess the impact and effectiveness of the academic support services on the Learning-Centred culture, mechanisms to ensure timely availability of required data, mechanisms to ensure broad internal and external stakeholder input, and mechanisms to establish standards and benchmarks.

The Self Study undertaken by Loyalist was comprehensive and done with much candor. Though the site visit was organized very quickly, the Audit Team was impressed with the responsiveness, hospitality, and openness with which the visit was arranged and conducted.

The Audit Team was able to do a cursory tour of the facilities and was most impressed by the cleanliness and upkeep of the physical plant, the program areas’ obvious attention to the learning needs of the students (i.e., the currency of the technology supporting the Media programs) and the general welcoming climate it experienced.

**B. OVERALL FINDINGS OF PANEL**

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Met</b>	<b>Partially Met</b>	<b>Not Met</b>
Criterion 1	X		
Criterion 2	X		
Criterion 3	X		
Criterion 4		X	
Criterion 5		X	

**C. COMMENDATIONS**

The Audit Team makes the following commendations:

1. The Self Study was completed with rigour and candor and this was very much appreciated and greatly assisted the Audit Team with its task.
2. The process of using faculty facilitators in the program review process who have just come through their own program review is commended. These individuals are seen as keen and energized as a result of their own recent experience and can thus enthuse those faculty members about to begin the process.
3. The use of Program Manuals to “tailor” explicit program expectations, as well as to reiterate general policies and procedures, is seen as a useful tool (though some mechanism of standardizing their format might be considered).
4. The Mentor/Student Advising process that the Student Success Department operates appears to be innovative and very effective in meeting the students’ needs.

**D. AFFIRMATIONS**

The Audit Team affirms the following:

1. Whereas the Self-Study document clearly states that: “the college does not have an overall quality assurance process as such”, the Framework for Program Renewal: A Guide to Program Review , now in effect, is certainly a major piece of such an overall process and does, in fact, meet the PQAPA expectations regarding at least the academic program review components.
2. This new FPR process appears to have been effective throughout its developmental and pilot stages. Some of these indicators, as witnessed by the Audit Team include: an energized and positive faculty, an appreciative and engaged student body, and a supportive management structure.
3. In general, the Audit Team agrees with and endorses the list of recommendations set forth in the Self Study though it is noted that the update of the web

site, including a Content Management System, has already begun (see Recommendation #5 in Self Study).

## **E. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Audit Team respectfully makes the following recommendations:

1. As the College moves towards a comprehensive college-wide QA process, broader internal stakeholder involvement should be systematized. Specifically, student input should be more formalized in the FPR process; Academic Managers (Deans and Chairs) should be more involved throughout the FPR process; and, processes should be set in place to garner input from the various Academic Support Services (i.e., Student Success, the Library, Physical Resources, etc.) so as to complement and augment the FPR process.

2. Subsequent developments of the FPR process should include the development of service standards and the setting of benchmarks against which to measure review outcomes.

3. The existing FPR process though deemed thorough is seen as quite onerous or labour-intensive thus potentially challenging the ultimate sustainability of the undertaking. It is recommended that the process be continuously reviewed with an eye to streamlining the data-gathering and analysis phases.

4. Though the PLAR policy remains present and in effect, it appears to have been somehow (not intentionally) relegated a “backseat” to other initiatives and priorities. The audit team understands that work is currently underway to address this issue and recommends that the provision of PLAR services be reviewed and brought back to the mainstream.

5. A more formal and consistent mechanism to utilize the various KPI data in the FPR process should be established.

6. It is recognized that Loyalist has recently undergone (and continues to undergo) numerous staffing changes in the academic administration area. With the pending departure of the DETL, who has played a major role in the development and execution of the pilot phases of the FPR, the positive momentum achieved to date could be at risk. It is recommended that provision for accountability of the FPR process be given high and immediate priority so as to reduce any negative “slide” effect.