



Ontario College Quality Assurance Service
Service de l'assurance de la qualité des
collèges de l'Ontario

Program Quality Assurance Process Audit

**Final Audit Report –
Executive Summary**

CANADORE COLLEGE

April 2009

This report represents the findings of the Program Quality Assurance Process Audit for **Canadore College**; the on-site portion of the audit was performed during the period **April 1-3, 2009**.

This report has been prepared, reviewed, and accepted by all parties to the Audit, including the college personnel, members of the Review Panel, and the Management Board of the OCQAS. The signatures of the representative parties demonstrate their acceptance of the content of this Report.

For the College:

Signature

Date

For the Review Panel:

Signature

Date

For the Management Board:

Signature

Date

Review Panel Membership

Chair: Hans van der Slagt, Consultant, Vancouver, British Columbia

Members: Susan Lomas, Program Quality Assurance Administrator;
Algonquin College, Ottawa, Ontario

Janice Priest, Dean, Centre for Teaching and Learning;
Georgian College, Barrie, Ontario

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. CONCLUSIONS

The Audit Team finds that Canadore College has, substantially and satisfactorily, met Criteria 3 and 4 and partially met Criteria 1, 2 and 5.

It was clear, throughout the audit, that student support and success are key drivers at all levels of the organization. There was evidence, both at the meetings and during the tour, that students feel supported and valued by program staff as well as staff working in support services. In particular, the program staff who were interviewed by the team showed a high level of commitment and professionalism. They were able to demonstrate that program quality is an integral concern in their day-to-day work.

While there are a number of areas where college-wide policies and processes have yet to be put in place, this seems to be well understood, particularly at the senior level of the College and there is every indication that such policies and processes will be implemented. The work plans that have been prepared to address the gaps identified in the College's self-study are a clear indication that Canadore is planning to strengthen its program quality assurance processes. The College has also provided evidence that a number of academic policies have recently been updated and will soon be approved and put in place.

B. OVERALL FINDINGS OF PANEL

Criterion	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
Criterion 1		X	
Criterion 2		X	
Criterion 3	X		
Criterion 4	X		
Criterion 5		X	

C. COMMENDATIONS

The Audit Team identified a number of areas where Canadore showed exemplary practice and leadership in the field of quality assurance and improvement. A number of these would be worthy of emulation by other colleges. A short description of each follows:

- Audit Team members were particularly impressed with the “Service excellence is our theme” philosophy and the “No wrong door” approach practiced by the Student Services group; the College has systematically and deliberately adopted a one-stop, student friendly approach to the provision of student services; for example, the “No wrong door” approach means that whichever staff are approached (whether in the right department or not), that person is committed to assisting students or taking them directly to the department that can assist them
- The Program Advisory Members for both of the programs that were interviewed in depth showed a remarkable commitment to the College; meetings are held at least twice a year, attendance percentage levels are very high and significant program issues are reviewed on a regular basis; Audit Team members were also impressed that the PAC members showed enough interest to attend the audit meetings
- Canadore demonstrates a high level of commitment to meeting the needs of its special needs students; interviews with students indicate that faculty provide a high level of flexibility in accommodating students with special needs; staff employed in the special needs areas showed a very caring attitude and conveyed the impression that the College’s culture embraces the requirements of special needs students; facilities and equipment for special needs students were also very impressive

D. AFFIRMATIONS

As noted above, Canadore has prepared a “Quality Process Gap Initiatives and Improvement Plan”, identifying 14 areas, arising out of their own self-study that require further work.

Some of the more significant “Initiatives/Improvements” include:

- Improve accessibility to academic policies by making them available electronically
- Improve accessibility to program information (e.g. advancement through a program) by making the information accessible electronically

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, continued

- Improve accessibility to awards of merit, distinction and other grades by making the information available electronically
- Improve processes to map courses to program standards (or program descriptions)
- Improve evidence of laddering and articulation opportunities for students
- Develop a policy for assigning credit values
- Fully implement the revised PLAR policy
- Establish a process to ensure that annual program reviews are completed
- Revisit the existing, proposed faculty evaluation model in order to develop a revised model that ensures faculty buy-in
- Establish a corporate process to ensure that action is taken on issues arising out of program reviews

The Audit Team is in agreement with the issues raised by Canadore and congratulates the College for identifying these issues in a clear manner and for developing realistic work plans to address them.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Audit Team identified several areas that should assist in improving program quality at the College. A short description and rationale for each of these items follows:

- The College is encouraged to implement a formal student evaluation system that requires every course to be evaluated on a regular basis
- While it is appreciated that the implementation of a faculty evaluation process is complex and, further, it is acknowledged that the College has identified this as a gap (with associated work plan), the College is urged to give this issue a high priority with implementation to be effected within a reasonably short time frame; the faculty evaluation should include a review of the evaluations of the courses most recently taught by the professor
- The College needs to act promptly to implement the Ministry's policy to provide students with a choice in General Education courses
- The current Program Revitalization Process should be modified to incorporate a stronger emphasis on program quality issues