

# Final Assessment Report

## Name of Program

Jewish Studies

## Degrees Offered

B.A.

## External Consultants

Benjamin M. Baader - University of Manitoba  
Hartley Lachter - Lehigh University

## Internal Reviewers

John Mitchell - Brescia University College

## Date of Site Visit

February 29, 2016

## Evaluation

Good Quality with Report in Two Years

## Approved by SUPR-U

May 18, 2016

## Approved by SCAPA

May 25, 2016

## Executive Summary

The external consultants, Drs. Benjamin M. Baader, University of Manitoba, and Hartley Lachter, Lehigh University, had their site visit on February 29, 2016. During the site visit they met with Vice Provosts John Doerksen and Alan Weedon, Karen Campbell, the Deans of Huron University College, King's University College and the Faculty of Social Science, Chair of the History Department, the Director of the Jewish Studies Program, internal reviewer, faculty who teach in the Jewish Studies Program, and History 2851E students.

Jewish Studies is an interdisciplinary program involving Huron University College, King's University College and the Department of History. Structure of the program was identified as consistent with best practises in the field, and curriculum as consistent with the most rigorous and prestigious programs in the field. Although this is a small program by Western University's standards (15 majors, 5 minors), the consultants commented that this enrolment compared favourably to similar programs at other North American universities.

The consultants praised the program's structure, requirements, learning outcomes, pedagogy, and the quality of faculty. The faculty involved in the program were praised as scholars who are well-known in the field.

Two issues identified by the consultants concerned access to main campus courses by affiliate students and placement of students in Hebrew courses. The most serious issue, and recommendation, raised by the consultants was that to covert the position of Director of the Jewish Studies Program into a tenure-track positon.

## Significant Strengths of Program

The collaboration and cooperation between different academic disciplines at two affiliated university colleges and the constituent university is one of the true strengths of the program, and held out as a model of a successful interdisciplinary program. The collaboration "allows for a scope and vibrancy that would not be possible without all three participants" (p. 4).

Module requirements, structure of the Jewish Studies curriculum, and learning outcomes are rigorous and in keeping with best practices in the field.

The combined faculty members are of excellent quality; well published scholars with international reputations. Course evaluations and examination of course syllabi led the consultants to conclude that “they are thoughtful teachers and scholars who provide a wealth of expertise” (p 7).

The consultant also noted unusual and valuable resources available to this program: The Holocaust Resource Center that houses one of the world’s largest collections of Holocaust memoir literature, and the digital humanities learning initiative.

Suggestions for improvement & Enhancement

Although identified as enhancement, the question of placing students in Hebrew courses will be considered under recommendations.

The consultants strongly encouraged that the Director of the Jewish Studies Program have her position converted into a tenure-track position. In their response, the Department of History commented that this is not consistent with the Department’s 2015-19 Academic Plan; other areas within the Department have higher priority for potential new tenure-track appointments. However, a tenured faculty member who has served as History Undergraduate Chair and has served on the Jewish Studies Program Steering Committee will become Jewish Studies Program Director commencing July 1, 2016. This would seem to satisfy the consultants request that the directorship be held by a tenured faculty member and not someone on a Limited Term Appointment with its accompanying high teaching load.

Recommendations required for Program sustainability:

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Consider development of a 0.5 Introductory Hebrew course for students with no background in Hebrew.	HUC: Department, EPC, Dean	Faculty (0.5 FCE)	2016-17
Review the Director position with all units involved.	All units		2018