

Final Assessment Report
Submitted by SUPR-G to SCAPA

Program:	Physics and Astronomy	
Degrees Offered:	M.Sc. Physics, M.Sc. Astronomy, Ph.D. Physics, Ph.D. Astronomy	
Approved Fields:		
External Consultants:	Dr John Dutcher, Department of Physics University of Guelph	Dr Sara Ellison Department of Physics & Astronomy University of Victoria
Internal Reviewer:	Pam McKenzie, Associate Dean Faculty of Information and Media Studies	
Date of Site Visit:	January 29-30 2014	
Evaluation:	<i>Good Quality</i>	
Approved by:	<i>SUPR-G on April 11, 2014</i> <i>SCAPA on April 30, 2014</i>	

Executive Summary

The reviewers met with representatives of the University, SGPS, Western Libraries, the Faculty, and the program. Faculty, students, and staff were very supportive of both the programs and of the review process.

Significant Strengths of Program:

- Strength of faculty, including significant renewal of Astronomy faculty and broad variety of cross-appointment and adjunct faculty. Faculty have strong international reputations and strong research and funding records.
- Flexible (rolling) admission
- Excellent training and strong academic and financial support for students.
- Students are engaged and motivated, publication rates in keeping with rates at other North American programs, quality of publication venues is high
- Completion rates are compatible with other North American institutions; innovative project M.Sc. in Astronomy allows for quick completion and a publication for a significant number of graduates, Physics M.Sc.s may transfer to Ph.D..

Opportunities for improvement & Enhancement:

- Small number of faculty in Condensed Matter Physics
- Lack of clarity of funding information
- Breadth and regularity of course offerings is a challenge in some areas

Recommendations for implementation:	Responsibility
Ensure parity of M.Sc. degree options: Introduce project-based option in Physics M.Sc. and allow for direct transfer to Ph.D. for M.Sc. Astronomy students.	Department/faculty
Evaluate clarity of student funding communication.	Department/Faculty/SGPS
Review level of TA responsibilities.	TA Co-ordinator
Explore new sources for graduate student travel funding.	Department, Faculty
Explore feasibility of "provisional" supervisor as recruitment incentive.	Graduate Affairs Committee
Prioritize hiring of a condensed matter theorist.	Department, Faculty