Final Assessment Report
Submitted by SUPR-G to SCAPA

Program:	**Chemistry**	
Degrees Offered:	MSc and PhD in Chemistry	
Approved Fields:	Inorganic, Organic, Physical/Analytical	
External Consultants:	Dr Cathleen Crudden Queen's University	Dr Alison Thompson Dalhousie University
Internal Reviewers:	Dr Pam McKenzie Faculty of Information and Media Studies	Ms Raechelle Gibson Graduate student, Psychology
Date of Site Visit:	22-23 February 2017	
Evaluation:	*Good quality with report June 2018 on Health and Safety Concerns*	
Approved by:	*SUPR-G on June 5, 2017* *SCAPA on September 13, 2017*	

Executive Summary

The review committee met with a broad cross-section of program stakeholders: graduate students; administrative, technical, and instructional staff members; graduate faculty and administrators including the Chair and Graduate Chair; representatives of the Faculty of Science, the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, and Western Libraries. In addition, the committee was taken on tours and had the opportunity to observe student spaces and research labs. The committee had an opportunity to discuss a broad range of considerations from micro to macro level, including course requirements and enhancements such as the EPIC professionalization course; the research environment within which the program operates; physical facilities supporting the program; research infrastructure; faculty complement; staffing support; relationship between the Chemistry Department and the Faculty of Science; student recruitment, and in particular the recruitment and funding of international students; student experience including funding, time to completion, orientation and training. Overall the committee agreed that Western's graduate Chemistry program offers one of the strongest research and learning experiences in Canada. Within this context, the external reviewers made a large number of recommendations for further strengthening the program. A very large majority of these recommendations are already on the radar of the Program, Department, and/or Faculty and are not required for program sustainability.

Significant Strengths of Program:

- Research excellence: all faculty are NSERC-funded and there is a strong group of funded Research Chairs;
- Superlative achievements among in-program students (e.g., Trillium and Banting scholarships) and graduates (e.g., Marie Curie Postdoctoral Fellowships and a Governor-General's Gold Medal);
- Supportive and progressive training environment with exposure to cutting-edge research projects and the opportunity for professionalization through the new EPIC course;
- Strong sense of community within the Department;
- Student experience: students are generally extremely satisfied with the Program and with the support of the program leadership including the Graduate Chair and Graduate Assistant.

Suggestions for improvement & Enhancement:

- Review course offerings to identify core courses for each research division, remove non-current offerings, and communicate the anticipated course roster to students in advance;
- Review graduate student workload, including the requirements for 0.25 vs 0.5 credit courses;

- Clarify class size and international student funding requirements with Faculty;
- Revise and clarify communication to students about the sources of their funding;
- Expand graduate student orientation to address all aspects of being a graduate student, including TA responsibilities, the process by which committees are assigned; information literacy; make orientation mandatory.
- Review and where possible remediate resource deficiencies, e.g., international student funding, administrative support for large research, infrastructure, and training grants; aging building and deteriorating lab infrastructure unsuited to current research strengths.

Recommendations required for Program sustainability:	Responsibility	Resources	Timeline
Safety review of teaching and research labs in need of renovation; implement measures to resolve any safety and health issues.	Faculty of Science, Department Chair	University-level budgeting	A) Health and Safety review conducted immediately B) Long-term infrastructure planning
Identify expectations and provide clearer guidelines for EPIC.	Graduate Chair, Graduate Committee	Admin and faculty workload	Immediate
Clarify current course offerings for students; review courses not offered within the past three years and either discontinue or remove from the website.	Graduate Chair, Graduate Committee	Admin and faculty workload	Immediate
Clarify Faculty policy on international student funding; apply so as to maximize the program's flexibility to recruit and retain the best international students.	Graduate Chair, Associate Dean	Admin and faculty workload	Immediate
Review graduate student workload to quantify and standardize across 0.25 and 0.5 credit courses.	Graduate Chair, Graduate Committee	Admin and faculty workload	Immediate
Review the mechanism for allocating research grades to ensure consistency of assessment criteria.	Graduate Chair, Graduate Committee	Admin and faculty workload	Immediate