
Final Assessment Report- Executive Summary

Community Economic and Social Development (CESD)

2018-2025

To: Algoma University Senate

From: Dr. Brett Goodwin, Vice President Academic and Research

Date: November 2025

In accordance with the Algoma University Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), this Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan provide a synthesis of the cyclical program review process (and related outcomes) of Algoma University Community Economic and Social Development (CESD) programming, including: i. Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Community Economic and Social Development, single major [BA4.CESD]; ii. Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Community Economic and Social Development, combined major [BA4.CESD.xxxx]; iii. Bachelor of Arts (General) Community Economic and Social Development, single major [BA3.CESD]; iv. Bachelor of Arts (General) Community Development, single major [BA3.CDEV]; v. Bachelor of Arts (General) Community Economic and Social Development Combined Major [BA3.CESD.xxxx]. This report identifies the strengths of the program, together with the opportunities for program improvement and enhancement. The report sets out and prioritizes the recommendations that have been selected for implementation.

The report includes an Implementation Plan that identifies (a) what bodies are responsible for approving the recommendations set out in the Final Assessment Report, (b) what bodies are responsible for providing any resources made necessary by the recommendations, (c) any changes in the organization, policy or governance that will be necessary to meet the recommendations, (d) what bodies are responsible for acting on those recommendations, and (e) the timelines for acting on and monitoring the implementation of those recommendations.

Cyclical Program Review Summary for the CESD Program

The CESD Self Study Committee submitted the completed self-study to the Office of the CAO on October 7, 2024. The Quality Assurance Committee approved the Self-Study and recommended it for external review at its next meeting on October 28, 2024. The self-study included an analysis of program strengths and areas for improvement informed by quantitative data analysis, feedback from students, and an analysis of the program curriculum. Included were the CVs for full-time faculty, course outlines, and student survey results.

Two arm's length reviewers were selected by the Quality Assurance Committee of the Senate to conduct the external review. The reviewers (Dr. Glyn Bissix, Professor, Community Development, Acadia University and Dr. Jonathan Langdon, Professor, Department of Development Studies, Adult Education, St. Francis Xavier University) were provided with a briefing package on December 24, 2024 and conducted a virtual site visit on January 20 and 31, 2025. The external reviewers met with faculty in the program, the members of the Self-Study Committee, the departmental and Faculty chairs, academic and administrative unit heads, including the Associate Vice President, Academic and Continuing Education, the Chief Information Officer, the University Librarian, Representatives from the Centre for Teaching and Learning, Representatives from the Recruitment Office, the Associate Vice President, Student Affairs, the CESD Program Coordinator, and current students and alumni of the program.

The reviewers submitted the Reviewers' Report on the CESD program on February 21, 2025. In their report, the external reviewers provided feedback on each of the evaluative criteria in the IQAP. The objectives, admission standards, curriculum, teaching and assessment, and quality indicators were assessed for the programs under review.

The reviewers provided 6 recommendations for improvement of the CESD program.

Below you will find a summary of the findings and recommendations.

Summary of Significant Program Strengths

- Strong alignment with the University Mission
 - The CESD program aligns especially well with Algoma University's special mission, particularly its focus on fostering university-community relations, notable with First Nation communities in Northern Ontario.
 - The CESD program has made a commendable effort to build a full multi-campus presence at Sault Ste. Marie, Brampton and Timmins campuses and adapts its approach to be locally responsive in each area.
- Exceptional Experiential Learning and Community Engagement. The program focuses on praxis and a community-based learning approach.
- The CESD program contributes tangibly to the academic ecosystem as an interdisciplinary program, with strong connections and cross-listed courses with many other units, including Sociology, Political Science, Social Work and Business Administration.
- Program faculty are passionate, highly motivated, and well qualified through a broad spectrum of academic and professional experiences and accomplishments.

Summary of Reviewer Recommendations

The External Review Team provided 6 recommendations for continuous improvement of the CESD program. A summary of these recommendations can be found below:

- Find ways to promote and enhance the program.
 - Professional opportunities, including professional accreditation opportunities, and the benefits of deep experiential learning should be included in promotional and recruitment efforts
- Work with other programs to develop joint graduate programs that will build on CESD's undergraduate experience.
- Expand the Coordinator's role in Brampton to include recruitment efforts in collaboration with senior administrators
- Work with other programs and units to foster greater support for first-year students to ensure their success.

The External Review Report was submitted to the Department on March 14, 2025 and responses to it were provided by the Department on April 15, 2025 and the CAO on May 15, 2025.

Program Quality Outcome

The Quality Assurance Committee of the Senate discussed the distinguishing features of the CESD programming described by both the Self-Study Committee and the Reviewers. The Committee determined that the CESD program is of **“Good Quality- QualCom has no serious concerns about program quality, as it is apparent that students are receiving a sound educational experience. The number and nature of the recommendations for quality enhancement, while they may be significant, do not impact the overall quality or viability of the program** on August 25, 2025.

Implementation Plan

The Interim Academic Dean of the Faculty of Cross Cultural Studies (Dean) was asked to review the Report on Program Quality and rank the recommendations. The Dean completed the prioritization practice and informed the Department on September 11, 2025. The Department Chair submitted the draft Implementation Plan to the Designate of CAO on October 17, 2025. The Quality Assurance Committee (QualCom) approved the draft Final Assessment Report and the Implementation Plan on December 8, 2025. Items in the chart below are ordered according to the ranking and priority level provided by the Academic Dean.

The CESD program shall prepare a report of the status of the agreed-upon Implementation Plan 18 months following Senate approval of the Final Assessment Report. This report shall be submitted via the Office of the CAO to the Quality Assurance Committee for review. The date of the next CESD program review is 2030/31.

Community Economic and Social Development Draft Implementation Plan

Priority #	Recommendations	Who is Responsible for Leading /Following-Up?	What Resources are Required?	Timeline for Addressing Recommendation
1.	<p>RECOMMENDATION 3: Work with other programs and units to foster greater support for 1st year (including international students, direct from high school students, and college transfer students) ensuring their success– including library in Brampton;</p> <p>Concerns about high failure rates in recent entry offerings in the Program need a broad, multifaceted approach to encouraging students' success. CESD has the potential to play a leadership role here, given its interconnection with so many aspects of the University. Any contribution to these efforts, through ensuring student English/communication competency for instance, will benefit students and the institution moving forward.</p>	<p>Identifying needs & relevant supports specific to International students: Research team for the <i>International Student Experience, Language Diversity & Acquisition</i> project (including Dr. Sean Meades [P.I.] & Dr. Laura Wyper)</p>	<p>The typical in-kind resources afforded to research initiatives are sufficient, namely non-interference, assistance with promotion through communication memos, and the ability to promote participation through the dissemination of posters. The Centre for Teaching and Learning has committed \$300 in gift cards for draws to incentivize participation.</p>	<p>Data collection is expected to conclude by the end of February 2026.</p> <p>Recommendations for additional support should be available by the end of April 2026</p>
		<p>Teaching & Learning Community of Practice: Dr. Laura Wyper, Centre for Teaching & Learning Staff & collaborators (including multidisciplinary Faculty)</p>	<p>Support of the Centre for Teaching and Learning</p>	<p>Initiated Spring 2025, Ongoing</p>
		<p>Development and/or revision of preparatory courses: CESD Faculty in collaboration with Centre for Teaching and Learning and other interested departments</p>	<p>Support of the Centre for Teaching & Learning</p> <p>Ability of other departments to collaborate depends on their internal resourcing.</p>	<p>Initiation of engagements in Winter 2026</p>
		<p>Development and implementation of a language & communications requirement: CESD Department Chair & Faculty (in consultation with relevant departments, namely the Department of English and History and the Department of</p>	<p>No additional resources are anticipated.</p>	<p>Completion of inter-departmental engagements: December 2025</p> <p>Completion of relevant program revision proposals: January 2026</p>

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		Equitable access to academic resources (including a library) on the Brampton campus: VPAR & Senior Leadership Team. While this portion of the recommendation is outside of the purview of the Department, the Department wishes to express its agreement and is open to suggestions for how it may support this work necessary to implement this recommendation.	Physical academic library on the Brampton campus staffed by at least one academic librarian. Physical location for the writing centre in Brampton, ideally collocated with the academic library.	Outside scope of the Department.
2.	RECOMMENDATION 1: Highlight professional accreditation opportunities in CESD Program, as well as benefits of deep experiential learning engagement through promotional and recruitment possibilities(transfers and 1st years); The community-based learning and experiential learning focus of CESD degrees and certificates provide an important promotional and recruitment opportunity to draw college transfer and direct from high school students. Even though Community Development may not be well understood as a field of study, making clear the ways in which this program can prepare students to find employment in a	Update and renewal of College Transfer agreements: CESD Department Chair & Faculty	Assistance of the Registrar's Office Associate Registrar, Advising & Enrolment Services, the Transfer & Pathways Specialist, the Quality Assurance Office as well as the Director of Strategic Initiatives and Partnerships	Renewal of all existing agreements: February 2026
		Revise CESD Certificate to increase alignment with CANDO accreditation: CESD Department Chair & Faculty	No additional resources are anticipated.	Revision of CANDO Course Alignments: November 2025 Completion of revised program template: January 2026
		Develop specializations for CESD BA4: CESD Department Chair & Faculty	No additional resources are anticipated. Ability of other departments to collaborate depends on their internal resourcing.	Completion of additional research of student body regarding attractiveness of specializations: November 2025 Completion of engagements with relevant

fulfilling career is a crucial way to attract prospective students			departments: December 2025 Completion of revised program template: February 2026
	Pilot of experiential recruitment initiative with Sault Ste. Marie area high schools: CESD Department Chair and SSM CESD Program & Learning Support Coordinator	Assistance from Domestic Recruitment Officers.	Outreach to high schools should take place in October 2025 with the goal of a collaborative experiential learning event tied to social entrepreneurship taking place in the second semester of the secondary school term (February-June) 2026
	Update of promotional materials (leaflets, flyers, website): CESD Department Chair and SSM CESD Program & Learning Support Coordinator	Assistance from Marketing & Communications	Website updates are currently under review with anticipated completion by January 2026. Existing print material is sufficiently current. Revisions should take place in Spring of 2026 (or after completion of program revisions) for use by Fall of 2026.



3.	<p>RECOMMENDATION 6: Work with institutional data analysis staff to better understand how students enter, experience, exit the program:</p> <p>The CESD program is clearly generating various pathways into and through its various degrees and certificates, and onto many destinations. Working with institutional data analysis staff to better capture the complexity of this picture would both benefit the program in better telling its varied stories, but also underscore the importance of interdisciplinary, engaged university programs taking on reconciliation in concrete and relational ways.</p>	<p>Liaise with Registrar's Office re: Data Collection: Department Chair</p>	<p>Institutional data collection on the following metrics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment rates 6 months after graduation • Employment rates 1 year after graduation • Retention rates after 1 year • Degree major & Certificate entrance data • Declared minors • Alumni contact information <p>Academic departments do not have the capacity to track these metrics, however an institution-wide system to which departments can contribute by sharing graduate outcomes (with permission) would make lighter work for all and produce more cohesive data.</p>	<p>The implementation of the <i>Colleague</i> student information system in 2025 has already alleviated many issues related to academic advising, the tracking of program changes, and the tracking of declared minors and certificates.</p>
		<p>Promote Alumni Contact lists to soon-to-be-graduates in 3rd & 4th year: CESD Faculty</p>	<p>No additional resources are anticipated.</p>	<p>Final two weeks of Winter 2026 semester.</p>
4.	<p>RECOMMENDATION 4: Consider expanding role of coordinator position to include recruitment in Brampton, in collaboration with</p>	<p>CESD Department Chair in collaboration with the Brampton CESD Program & Learning Support Coordinator, the Recruitment Office, and Career,</p>	<p>Additional physical promotional material may be needed & travel resources.</p>	<p>Discussions will begin in July 2026 following the completion of the university's restructuring process.</p>

	<p>senior administrators based in Brampton campus taking advantage of location in city;</p> <p>The possibility of expanding the roles and responsibilities of PLSC staff to include helping develop recruitment relationships while working on placement opportunities in Brampton in particular could help offset the impacts of international student caps. The local context specific nature of these roles is a real strength of the CESD program, and their potential should be fully explored.</p>	<p>International and Experiential Education.</p>		
<p>5.</p>	<p>RECOMMENDATION 5:Work with other programs, potentially in the Faculty of Cross-cultural studies, or even in other affiliated institutions, to develop joint graduate programs that would build on CESD's excellent undergraduate experience.</p> <p>CESD is a great launching pad for graduate studies, but at the same time is not in a position to offer its own graduate program; working with others to develop a community-based learning, social change oriented graduate program, either within the Faculty of</p>	<p>Graduate Program Development Committee The Master's Program committee has been meeting regularly last year with a break over the summer months. Partnerships with other Departments at AU are being explored, community advisory groups are being considered and international partnerships related to the Institute for Peoples, Territories, and Pedagogies for Peace (IPTP) work are already in process. The concept summary is in process with hopes of moving to committees soon.</p>	<p>Assistance of the Quality Assurance Office to support program development and guide on processes. No additional resources are anticipated for the completion of the concept summary. Additional resources for graduate programming will depend on the outcome of the development process.</p> <p>Ability of other departments to collaborate depends on their internal resourcing.</p>	<p>Concept Summary complete by December 2025</p>



	<p>Cross-Cultural Studies or in collaboration with other Development studies programs elsewhere in Ontario, could be highly generative and add another dimension to what the program offers.</p>			
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