

**Final Assessment Report**  
Submitted by SUPR-G to SCAPA

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Date of Site Visit:	October 23–24, 2017	

### **Executive Summary**

Overall, the external reviewers considered that the department has “**maintained a high quality graduate program**” after the previous cyclical review. Strong research publications, high level

#### **1. Significant Strengths of Program:**

- The program has made substantial improvement based on recommendations of the previous review in terms faculty renewal, program and course offerings, and graduate

- Steps the program can or should take for improvement  
Geography has a healthy and vibrant cohort of graduate students, with a high student-faculty ratio (3.5:1). But the reviewers noted that the load of graduate supervision is uneven, with 46% of the primary faculty (11 out of 24) supervising 90% of the students. This is also reflected in the refereed publication unevenness among primary faculty members (from 0 to >10 per year). This situation is expected to improve with the ongoing faculty renewal.
- Improvements that require support or assistance beyond the program

**Faculty renewal** — This is a priority for the Department of Geography, given four retirements in 2017–19, and five other eligible retirements in 2019–24. It seems that the Physical Geography stream will be affected the most by the retirements, and it is hoped that new hires in GIS, with current searches committed/supported by the Faculty of Social Science, will help the situation.

**International graduate student funding** — Geography currently has a strong group of international students, with fully guaranteed university funding. To maintain the current level of international student enrolment under the new funding model, a more flexible funding mechanism may be necessary, such as greater contributions from supervisors’ research grants.

<b>Recommendations required for Program sustainability:</b>	Responsibility	Resources	Timeline
Faculty renewal to maintain overall graduate supervision capacity and the Physical Geography field or consider realignment of fields	Department and Faculty of Social Science	Department and Faculty budget commitment	Ongoing
Develop more evenly distributed graduate supervision	Department and Faculty of Social Science	Hiring of new faculty members with vigorous research programs	Ongoing
Sustainable international graduate student enrolment and funding-level	Department and Faculty of Social Science	Department is already looking into flexible budget model and bringing graduate funding level in line with U15 programs	For new budget cycle starting 2019
Reduction of small-enrolment (including single-student) graduate courses	Department Chair		Ongoing