

**CARLETON UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON
QUALITY ASSURANCE
Cyclical Review of the graduate programs
in Public Policy and Administration
Executive Summary and Final Assessment Report**

This Executive Summary and Final Assessment Report of the cyclical review of Carleton's graduate programs in Public Policy and Administration are provided pursuant to the provincial Quality Assurance Framework and Carleton's Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The graduate programs in Public Policy and Administration reside in the School of Public Policy and Administration, a unit administered by the Faculty of Public Affairs.

As a consequence of the review, the programs were categorized by Carleton University's Senate Quality Assurance and Planning Committee (SQAPC) as being of good quality. (Carleton's IQAP 7.2.13-7.2.14).

The External Reviewers' report offered a very positive assessment of the programs. Within the context of this positive assessment, the report nonetheless made a number of recommendations for the continuing enhancement of the programs. These recommendations were productively addressed by the Director of the School of Public Policy and Administration and the Dean of the Faculty of Public Affairs in response to the External Reviewers' report and Implementation Plan that was submitted to SQAPC on October 12, 2023.

School of Public Policy and Administration
Unit Response to External Reviewers' Report & Implementation Plan
Programs Being Reviewed: Master of Public Policy and Administration, PhD in Public Policy,
Graduate Diploma in Public Policy and Program Evaluation, Graduate Diploma in Indigenous Policy and Administration

Note: This document is forwarded to Senate, the Quality Council and posted on the Vice- Provost's external website.

Introduction & General Comments

The School of Public Policy and Administration is a multidisciplinary unit that offers six different graduate programs including the four programs that are currently under review and two other master degrees. There are currently 20.4 faculty in the school with backgrounds in political science, public administration, and economics who are leading experts in their fields. We provide professionally-relevant education in all our programs and are continuously engaged in assessment of our programs. We appreciate the report from the external referees. It supports many of our ongoing activities and encourages us to further engage in long-term strategic planning and to clearly define our learning objectives. We face increased competition as more universities are creating new programs related to public policy or public administration or both. Maintaining our strong reputation among Canadian policy schools will require us to carefully consider the advice in the report.

For each recommendation **one** of the following responses must be selected:

Agreed to unconditionally: used when the unit agrees to and is able to take action on the recommendation without further consultation with any other parties internal or external to the unit.

Agreed to if additional resources permit: used when the unit agrees with the recommendation, however action can only be taken if additional resources are made available. Units must describe the resources needed to implement the recommendation and provide an explanation demonstrating how they plan to obtain those resources. In these cases, discussions with the Deans will normally be required and therefore identified as an action item.

Agreed to in principle: used when the unit agrees with the recommendation, however action is dependent on something other than resources. Units must describe these dependencies and determine what actions, if any, will be taken.

Not agreed to: used when the unit does not agree with the recommendation and therefore will not be taking further action. A rationale must be provided to indicate why the unit does not agree (no action should be associated with this response).

Calendar Changes

If any of the action items you intend to implement will result in calendar changes, please describe what those changes will be. To submit a formal calendar change, please do so using the Courseleaf system.

Hiring

Where an action item requires additional hiring (faculty or staff) the owner should at minimum include the Dean of the faculty and member of the unit.

UNIT RESPONSE AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN: Public Policy and Administration

Programs Being Reviewed: Graduate programs -Master of Public Policy and Administration, Ph.D. Public Policy, G. Dip. Public Policy and Program Evaluation, and G. Dip in Indigenous Policy and Administration

Prepared by Jennifer Stewart, Director, SPPA, 06-06-2023

External Reviewer Recommendation & Categorization	Unit Response (choose only one for each recommendation): 1- Agreed to unconditionally 2- Agreed to if additional resources permit (describe resources) 3- Agreed to in principle 4- Not agreed to Rationales are required for categories 2, 3 & 4	Action Item	Owner	Timeline	Will the action described require calendar changes? (Y or N)
Master of Public Policy and Administration					
1. Develop an assessment plan for MPPA learning outcomes. To achieve full benefit from the mapping process, engage both faculty and students to initiate a dialogue on program issues	1- Agreed to unconditionally A Curriculum Review committee (CRC) has already been struck to create this plan. Dialogue with students will be added to their mandate.	Committee presented a draft at the April 2023 Management Committee. Returned to CRC to refine based on faculty and student comments. CRC will develop a process to consult students. Proposed plan for regularly collecting faculty and student Learning Outcome Assessments to be presented at September Management Committee.	MPPA Graduate Supervisor and CRC	April-September 2023	N
2. Identify ways in which program delivery can be more flexible in meeting students' needs and more seriously consider the advantages of a hybrid approach to increase enrollment and retention	3- Agreed to in principle A Curriculum Review committee (CRC) has already been struck to create this plan. The reviewers state that students "would like to see more core courses and electives offered in the spring and summer." To ensure quality of core courses and ensure students move through the program in a timely manner, SPPA is committed to only offering core courses in the Fall or Winter semesters. Based on our past	Add at least one on-line elective in each of the Summer and Fall terms to accommodate students on co-op. This addition would create at least 2 on-line electives each academic year. We will have discussions with other units (eg. Sprott) on their experience with on-line programs. We will continue discussions about developing more on-line programming.	MPPA Graduate Supervisor and CRC Director and Graduate Administrator for data gathering	Invited David Hornsby to April 2023 MC. Discussed at Faculty Retreat in May 2023 and Management Committee	Y

	<p>experience, offering core courses in the spring/summer terms tends to delay many students. We will not be considering a change in this commitment. We schedule core courses in the evening so that students who are working can complete their studies.</p> <p>The reviewers also wrote that “Students noted that if they do not finish the program within 2 years, it becomes a serious financial issue because their grants expire.” In Table 15, we show that 86% to 89% of our students complete the program with 2 years. It does not seem that students are unable to complete the program given its current structure.</p>	Gather more detailed information on the students who do not complete the program within 2 years to provide information on potential barriers to completing the program in a timely manner.		<p>September 2023.</p> <p>Spring 2023 to Summer 2024</p>	
4- Address student perceptions regarding sufficient access to faculty (for supervision) and staff	<p>3- Agreed to in principle</p> <p>The Director will inform faculty members that students felt that faculty was not sufficiently responsive.</p> <p>Balance between full-time faculty and CIs depends on faculty leaves and course releases in any given year and is a resource issue. We try to have only full-time faculty teach core courses. For 2022/23, seven sections of core courses were taught by CIs. For 2023/24, only three sections of core courses will be taught by CIs.</p>	Add an agenda item to September 2023 MC to note that students reported that faculty were not as responsive as they expected, and encourage faculty to be more responsive to emails, etc. from students. In addition, efforts to reduce the number of core courses in a revised MPPA program will create room for faculty to teach more electives, which may alleviate demand for supervisory support for specialized research projects	SPPA Director	April 2023 to September 2023	N
4. Continue work to identify ways in which the number of core courses can be reduced to allow students to pursue their special interests	<p>1- Agreed to unconditionally</p> <p>A Curriculum Review committee (CRC) has already been struck to create this plan.</p>	<p>Faculty and student feedback solicited in May.</p> <p>Feedback and options for reducing the core discussed at May retreat. CRC will prepare</p>	MPPA Graduate Supervisor and CRC	Summer 2023 to September 2023	Y

		<p>report with proposals for voting at Management Committee at end of August.</p> <p>Submit calendar changes by September 15th.</p>			
5. Incorporate content into the curriculum that supports and facilitates an informed understanding regarding the perspectives of Indigenous people and other underrepresented populations	<p>1- Agreed to unconditionally</p> <p>Core-course group leaders have been identified.</p>	<p>Core-course group leaders will organize a summer meeting of all instructors to discuss course comparability and inclusion of EDI issues in the curriculum. Group leaders have been asked to report back to Management Committee in September and October.</p>	Core-course group leaders	Summer 2023 to Fall 2023	Y
6. Track student enrollment by implementing system for collecting and reviewing enrollment data on a regular basis.	<p>2- Agree to if additional resources permit</p> <p>This issue would be in OIRP mandate.</p> <p>Preparing the requested data for the reviewers required administrative time that may not be available every year. It is not clear to us what information on the MPPA was not available to reviewers.</p>	Director to discuss with OIRP	SPPA Director and SPPA Administrator	Fall 2023	N
7. To achieve full benefit from the mapping process, engage both faculty and students to initiate a dialogue on program issues (e.g., continuity across courses, expectations at enrollment)	<p>1- Agreed to unconditionally</p> <p>Currently, SPPA engages with students through several activities. There is an active Student Society that brings forward student issues to faculty. There are two student representatives on Management Committee and time is allocated to student issues at every meeting. The Student Society meets with the Director and Administrators at least three times each year. The Director holds a pizza lunch in the Fall and Winter semester to have a casual conversation with students.</p>	<p>Once the learning outcomes assessment plan is approved, the Director will implement the plan. Additional forums for communication will be added if deemed necessary.</p>	Director	Fall 2023 and ongoing	Y

8. Complete outcome mapping which provides the opportunity to address many of the weaknesses and concerns	1- Agreed to unconditionally	The CRC presented an initial report to Management Committee in May 2023 with multiple options. The CRC will take feedback from faculty and present a narrower list of options.	MPPA Graduate Supervisor and CRC	Summer 2023 to Summer 2024	Y
9. Participate in departmental strategic planning to help provide direction for the program	1- Agreed to unconditionally	Add item to Management Committee agenda and add to Retreat agenda, as necessary. We will hold an additional mini-retreat in Fall.	Director	Summer 2023 and ongoing	N

Ph.D. Public Policy

1. Invest energy into increasing enrollment and student retention to ensure program sustainability	2- Agree to if additional resources permit We need more support for graduate recruitment. 2022/23 was the first year we received money from FPA for recruitment activities to enhance recruitment efforts carried out by FGPA. This FPA support is very helpful and needs to continue. To increase retention, we continue to work to create a welcoming environment at SPPA. We now invite PhD students to the lunch after our monthly seminar. This opportunity provides PhD students time to engage informally with faculty and between themselves across different PhD cohorts.	PhD Graduate Supervisor, Director, Graduate Administrator, ODFPA and FGPA graduate recruitment will meet to discuss ideas for recruitment, possible funding for initiatives, and ways to increase retention.	PhD Graduate Supervisor, Director, and ODFPA	Immediately	N
2. Review student reception to assign them a relevant supervisor and provide them with the required guidance to undertake and obtain their diploma	1- Agreed to unconditionally	PhD Supervisor assigns an interim supervisor and will continue to find appropriate matches. In working with new PhD students and their interim advisors, the PhD Supervisor will be more precise in explaining the expectations of the role.	PhD Graduate Supervisor and Director	Immediately and ongoing	N

		<p>During orientation, the PhD Supervisor will review the roles and responsibilities of interim and thesis supervisors and explain the Graduate Supervision policy to students.</p> <p>Director and PhD Graduate Supervisor will present the role of interim supervisor and the Graduate Supervision policy with faculty at an upcoming Management Committee.</p>			
3. Develop an enrollment data collection and review system to be used on a regular basis.	<p>2- Agree to if additional resources permit.</p> <p>This issue would be in OIRP mandate.</p> <p>Preparing the requested data for the reviewers required administrative time that may not be available every year.</p>	Director to discuss with OIRP	SPPA Director and SPPA Administrator	Fall 2023	N
4. Finalize the outcomes planning, which could include reconsidering the contribution of economics.	<p>1- Agreed to unconditionally</p> <p>A PhD Curriculum Review Committee has already been struck.</p>	<p>PhD Curriculum Review Committee (CRC) to establish new learning outcomes and create a learning outcome assessment plan (already completed and approved by Management Committee in March 2023).</p> <p>PhD CRC will continue to review program curriculum.</p> <p>SPPA will hire an RA to assist the PhD CRC. As the reviewers indicated, a comparison to other PhD programs is important. We will focus the comparison to programs that are committed to a multidisciplinary approach to public policy, rather than programs on policy studies run by Political Science departments, the latter not being comparable to our unit.</p>	PhD Supervisor and PhD committee	Winter 2023 to Summer 2024	Y

G. Dip. Public Policy and Program Evaluation

1. Consider renewing the list of contract instructors (CIs)	<p>1- Agreed to unconditionally</p> <p>With a new hire in Evaluation, the introductory course (PADM 5441) will be taught by a new faculty member in 2023/24. DPPE Supervisor has been assigned the final course offering (PADM5446). The new hire will reduce our reliance on CIS.</p>	A supplementary list of CIs will be developed within the constraints of the collective agreement, especially as the current cadre of CIs moves on or into retirements.	DPPE Supervisor and DPPE CRC	2023/24	N
2. Consider renewing the practicum projects	<p>1- Agreed to unconditionally</p> <p>A systematic process for identifying practicum projects has already been initiated with all DPPE instructors. The issue is scoping the projects in a way that better focuses on governmental evaluation.</p>	DPPE CRC to review the DPPE curriculum and formalize a review process for practicum project selection and scoping.	DPPE Supervisor and CRC	Summer 2023 to Summer 2024	Y
3. Consider the option of developing a concentration in the Master of Public Policy and Administration as an alternative scenario	<p>4- Not agreed to.</p> <p>The DPPE curriculum was renewed three years ago (2019-20). The target audience of the DPPE is mid-career professionals looking to upgrade their evaluation competencies and/or to seek the CES credential. To develop a separate concentration in the MPPA would amount to splitting already stretched evaluation faculty between two target audiences. The DPPE is working well under its current configuration and under its own diploma status.</p>				N

G. Dip in Indigenous Policy and Administration

1. Determine whether there is interest and support, both within the Department and at the institutional level, to continue this program	<p>1- Agreed to unconditionally</p> <p>Two major changes have occurred that address this recommendation since the external</p>		Director	Completed	N
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	evaluators' visit. First, administrative support has been hired to support the IPA. A competent administrator will ensure the program is properly administered, increase recruitment activities, and allow the IPA Graduate Supervisor to pursue more community engagement. Second, a faculty member has been appointed as the Graduate Supervisor for the program.				
2. Determine the focus and direction of the program, including its unique contribution to Indigenous programming in this area	1- Agreed to unconditionally	Convene the IPA Curriculum Review Committee to review the IPA curriculum and address concerns raised about the program's direction.	IPA Graduate Supervisor and IPA CRC	Summer 2023 to Summer 2024	Y
Based on recommendations 1 and 2					
3. Identify a senior faculty lead to oversee program development	3- Agreed to in principle	Katherine Minich will be the Graduate Supervisor for the program moving forward once approved by Provost. Katherine is an established teacher and researcher in the field.	SPPA Director in consultation with the Dean FPA	Waiting for approval from Provost	N
4. Conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the program that addresses enrollment, student/faculty feedback, and outcome assessment	1- Agreed to unconditionally	Convene IPA Curriculum Committee to conduct comprehensive program review.	IPA Graduate Supervisor and IPA CRC	Summer 2023 to Summer 2024	Y
5. Achieve the full benefit from mapping process by engaging both faculty and students to initiate a dialogue on program issues	1- Agreed to unconditionally	IPA CRC has planned two focus groups of IPA students after the Summer Institute. One focus group will ask participants to reflect on the Summer Institute and the other group will be asked to reflect on	IPA Graduate Supervisor and committee	Summer 2023 to Summer 2024	Y

		<p>learning outcomes for the Summer Institute.</p> <p>The IPA CRC will create mechanisms for receiving student feedback on the four on-line courses.</p>			
<p>6. Establish an advisory group that includes representation from key groups who have an interest (e.g., community members, faculty, students) to help guide program renewal</p>	<p>1- Agreed to unconditionally</p>	<p>IPA Graduate Supervisor will conduct outreach with possible advisors with plan to establish advisory group for the IPA program.</p>	<p>IPA Graduate Supervisor</p>	<p>Summer 2024</p>	<p>N</p>