

Final Assessment Report & Implementation Plan for the Cyclical Program Review of the Master of Public Administration Programs

In accordance with Queen's University Quality Assurance Processes (QUQAP), this final assessment report provides a synthesis of the external evaluation and the internal response and assessments of the Master of Public Administration (PMPA/MPA) program delivered by the School of Policy Studies. This report identifies the significant strengths of the program, together with opportunities for program improvement and enhancement, and it sets out and prioritizes the recommendations that have been selected for implementation.

The report includes an Implementation Plan that identifies who will be responsible for approving the recommendations set out in the Final Assessment Report; who will be responsible for providing any resources entailed by those recommendations; any changes in organization, policy or governance that will be necessary to meet the recommendations; who will be responsible for acting on those recommendations; and timelines for acting on and monitoring the implementation of those recommendations.

Summary of the Cyclical Program Review of the Master of Public Administration Programs

The School of Policy Studies submitted a self-study to the School of Graduate Studies and the Office of the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) on February 27, 2013. The self-study presented the program descriptions and learning outcomes, an analytical assessment of the academic programs, and program data, including the data collected by the Office of Institutional Research and Planning and the School of Graduate Studies. Appended to the Self-Study were a number of documents, including CVs, for faculty members teaching in the program and the Library Report.

Three arm's-length external reviewers (Dr. Susan Mayer, Professor, Irving B. Harris Graduate School of Public Policy Studies and the College, University of Chicago; Dr. Nancy Olewiler, Professor and Director, School of Policy Studies, Simon Fraser University; and, Dr. Jennifer Medves, Vice-Dean (Health Sciences) and Director of Queen's School of Nursing) were selected by the Deputy Provost in consultation with the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, from nominations submitted by the School of Policy Studies. The Review Team evaluated the self-study documentation and then conducted a site visit to Queen's on May 30-31, 2013. The site-visit included interviews with the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) and the Associate Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and meetings with graduate students, librarians, cognate heads, staff and faculty.

In their report (June 10, 2013), the Review Team provided feedback that describes how the PMPA/MPA programs meet the QUQAP evaluation criteria and are consistent with the University's mission and academic priorities. The Review Team noted that strengths of the programs included its excellent retention and time-to-completion records, its exceptional support staff and qualification of its adjunct appointments most of whom have served at high levels in the federal or provincial governments. The Review Team also highlighted the School of Policy Studies very active Speakers Series that is well attended and has outstanding individuals who are nationally known and respected in their fields.

The Review Team did report on a number of challenges, including the need for: a strategic plan; rethinking of the curriculum to ensure it is aligned with the current policy landscape in Canada, and disengaged students who are seeking a professional degree and have little time or incentive to engage in the intellectual life of the school or university.

The Director of the School of Policy Studies, after consultation with faculty and staff in the PMPA/MPA program, submitted a response to the Review Team Report (August 26, 2013). The Dean of the School of Graduate Studies (September 6, 2013) also submitted its responses to the Office of the Provost. Specific recommendations were discussed, and clarifications and corrections were presented.

Subsequent to receipt of the Review Team Report and the internal responses from the School of Policy Studies and the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, the Senate Cyclical Program Review Committee (SCPRC) dedicated its meeting of December 2, 2013 to this particular discussion.

The SCPRC would like to recognize the following strengths:

- Introduction of innovative elective courses that are current and relevant and cover a wide range of subjects;
- Establishment of the *Indigenous Policy and Governance (IPG)* stream of the PMPA;
- Professional and dedicated staff;
- Fudan and Ghana international exchanges which provide students with enhanced international and global education and serve as a capstone experience;
- Field trips to Ottawa, Toronto and Washington, where students are introduced to policymakers and have the opportunity to network with professionals in the field;
- Highly qualified adjuncts with extensive experience in the federal or provincial governments;
- Excellent retention and completion rates;
- High satisfaction among students and excellent employment rates;
- Expanded internship opportunities in the Ontario Public Service;
- Active Speaker Series that is well attended and attracts outstanding individuals who are nationally known and respected in their field.

The SCPRC would like to encourage the MPA program to explore:

- Engagement in a full curriculum review under the guidance of the Centre for Teaching and Learning to ensure that the program covers the attributes of both public administration and public policy, and that all courses are appropriate for graduate-level education and reflect current research and best practices in the field;
- Explore the possibilities of developing expanded credentials, including collaborations with other Units;
- Continue to build on extensive work already completed on learning outcomes to increase the granularity and specificity;
- Review staffing complement to ensure current levels are appropriate and sustainable;
- Explore alternative modes of delivery, e.g. blended or online delivery;
- Explore expanding enrolment to ensure sustainability;

- Explore the opportunity to align the PMPA and the MPA programs through blended or online delivery modes;
- Explore aligning the program's faculty with undergraduate programs.

Summary of the Reviewer's Recommendations with the Program's and Dean's Responses

Learning Outcomes

1. The Review Team stated that they would expect to see more differentiation between the MPA and the PMPA programs in terms of learning outcomes because the PMPA requires a minimum amount of work experience while the MPA program attracts students who do not have professional work experience and are recent recipients of their undergraduate degrees.

The School responded that it disagrees that the learning outcomes for the PMPA and the MPA programs should be different since both the full- and part-time programs result in the MPA degree, despite the difference in the student's status. The School noted that it has collectively worked on developing its Learning Outcomes with the assistance of an educational developer from the Centre for Teaching and Learning.

The Dean of the School of Graduate Studies responded that there are distinguishing admission requires for the full-time MPA and the part-time PMPA that recognize the relevant work experience of those entering the part-time stream. However, the degree program is the same and therefore it is desirable that the learning outcomes apply to all degree candidates no matter if they are full-time or part-time students.

Innovation

1. The Review Team noted that the policy landscape in Canada has changed and Queen's PMPA/MPA programs are misaligned to the reality of today. They also highlighted the lack of innovation in the program.

The School responded that while the core of the MPA program has remained static over the years, the approach to quantitative methods was recently changed significantly and is considered to be a major innovation. The response went on to describe significant innovations to the program's elective courses which can be developed quickly to reflect major issues and can be aligned with the availability of experts.

The Dean of the School of Graduate Studies noted the omission in the Review Team Report of the Indigenous Policy and Governance stream in the PMPA program. This is a unique initiative, in partnership with the First Nations Technical Institute, which provides a concentration of elective courses integrating traditional knowledge and philosophies in indigenous policy, governance and management.

Implementation Plan:

Recommendation	Proposed Follow-up	Responsibility for Leading Follow-up	Timeline for Addressing Recommendation
1. Undertake a complete curriculum review of the MPA program in consultation with the Centre for Teaching and Learning. The aim of the review should be to create a comprehensive and cohesive curriculum plan that ensures all decisions made about course offerings are informed by evidence-based practice in teaching and learning and aligned with the purpose of the program. The curriculum review should be guided by the program-level learning outcomes mapped to the Degree Level Expectations.	A curriculum mapping of all courses to DLEs, LOs and other indicators of achievement	Associate Dean (School of Graduate Studies), Director of the School of Policy Studies, Faculty Members in the Program and an Educational Developer from the Centre for Teaching and Learning	Dean of School of Graduate Studies' <i>Annual Report</i> to the Provost 2015
2. Explore the development of expanded credentials with an eye to increasing opportunities for experiential and entrepreneurial learning in the areas of Public Administration and Public Policy.	Preparation of a strategic plan that creates a conceptual framework and articulates the program's values and direction	Director, School of Policy Studies, all members of the unit in consultation with the School of Graduate Studies	Dean of the School of Graduate Studies <i>Annual Report</i> to the Provost 2015
3. Explore alternative modes of delivery, including technology-enhanced learning, to determine the benefits of innovative course and program delivery.	Initiate meeting with Director of the Centre for Teaching and Learning	Director of the School of Policy Studies and the Director of the Centre for Teaching and Learning	Dean of the School of Graduate Studies' <i>Annual Report</i> to the Provost 2015

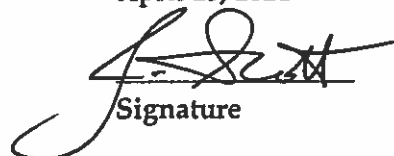
The Vice-Provost and Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the Director of the School of Policy Studies shall be responsible for monitoring the Implementation Plan. The details of progress made will be presented in the Dean's Annual Report and filed in the Office of the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic). Monitoring reports will be posted on the University web site.

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Final Assessment Report & Implementation Plan
Approval Date

April 23, 2014

Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning)


Signature

Dean, School of Graduate Studies


Signature

Final status of PMPA/MPA programs

Approved to Continue

Date of next program review

2020/2021 Academic year

Queen's University
Executive Summary of the Review of the PMPA/MPA Programs in the School of Policy Studies

In accordance with Queen's University Quality Assurance Processes (QUQAP), the School of Policy Studies submitted a self-study in February 2013 to the Office of the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) and the School of Graduate Studies to initiate the cyclical program review of its PMPA/MPA programs. The approved self-study presented program description, learning outcomes, a library report and analyses of data provided by the Office of Institutional Planning and the School of Graduate Studies. Appendices to the self-study contained CVs for each full-time member teaching in the program.

Three arm's-length external reviewers (Dr. Susan Mayer, Professor, Irving B. Harris Graduate School of Public Policy Studies and the College, University of Chicago; Dr. Nancy Olewiler, Professor and Director, School of Policy Studies, Simon Fraser University; and, Dr. Jennifer Medves, Vice-Dean (Health Sciences) and Director of Queen's School of Nursing) examined the materials and conducted a site visit on March 4, 5 & 6, 2013. The site-visit included interviews with the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) and the Associate Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and meetings with graduate students, librarians, cognate heads, staff and faculty.

In their report (June 10, 2013), the Review Team provided feedback that describes how the PMPA/MPA programs meet the QUQAP evaluation criteria and are consistent with the University's mission and academic priorities. The Review Team noted that strengths of the programs included its excellent retention and time-to-completion records, its exceptional support staff and qualification of its adjunct appointments most of whom have served at high levels in the federal or provincial governments. The Review Team also highlighted the School of Policy Studies very active Speakers Series that is well attended and has outstanding individuals who are nationally known and respected in their fields.

The Review Team did report on a number of challenges, including the need for: a strategic plan; rethinking of the curriculum to ensure it is aligned with the current policy landscape in Canada, and disengaged students who are seeking a professional degree and have little time or incentive to engage in the intellectual life of the school or university.

Based on all of the above documentation, a *Final Assessment Report* and an *Implementation Plan* were prepared by the Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning) and approved by the Provost (April 23, 2014).

The PMPA/MPA programs in the School of Policy Studies have been approved to continue and are scheduled for their next review in 2020-2021.

Prepared by the Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning)