



OFFICE OF THE
VICE-PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC

TEL +1 778 782 3925
FAX +1 778 782 5876
sfu.ca/vpacademic

Simon Fraser University
Strand Hall 3100
8888 University Drive
Burnaby BC
Canada V5A 1S6

MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION: Senate

TEL

FROM: Peter Keller, Vice-President, Academic and Provost, and Chair, SCUP

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Peter Keller".

RE: External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the Department of Political Science (SCUP 19-03)

DATE: February 11, 2019

TIME

At its February 6, 2019 meeting, SCUP reviewed the Mid-Cycle Report for the Department of Political Science which resulted from its 2014 external review. The report is attached for the information of Senate.



OFFICE OF THE
VICE-PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC

TEL +1 778 782 4636
FAX +1 778 782 5876
sfu.ca/vpacademic

Simon Fraser University
Strand Hall 3100
8888 University Drive
Burnaby BC
Canada V5A 1S6

MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION: Peter Keller, Chair, SCUP

TEL

FROM: Wade Parkhouse, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President, Academic

RE: External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the Department of Political Science

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "W. Parkhouse".

DATE: January 28, 2019

TIME

The External Review of the Department of Political Science was undertaken in March 2014. As per the Senate guidelines, the Unit is required to submit a mid-cycle report describing its progress in implementing the External Review Action Plan. The mid-cycle report is attached for the information of SCUP.

c: Alex Moens, Chair, Department of Political Science
Jane Pulkingham, Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

External Review Update for the Department of Political Science	
Action	Progress Made
1. Programming	
1.1.1 Undergraduate	
- Strengthen quality of training and educational experience for the Major Program: - New Capstone Honours Program (pilot program starting Fall 2016). - New required course, POL 200- Investigating Politics: Research Design and Qualitative Methods (effective Fall 2016). - Raised the minimum grade to a C for the core lower division courses necessary to declare the major (effective Fall 2016).	These initiatives have all been running since Fall 2016. During this time, we have seen increased interest in the Capstone Honours program, with more students applying and our enrolment numbers up at the upper division level. We are now offering the Capstone Honours Seminar for the third time, co-taught by two permanent faculty each time. We also introduced, in Fall 2017, five learning and career tracks to structure our undergraduate programs: Defence, Diplomacy, & Development; Diversity & Migration; Justice & Law; Public Policy & Democratic Governance; and Research Methods & Analysis. These learning tracks are popular with students, and we are continuing to integrate them into various aspects of our programs, including recommended courses, learning objectives, and co-op opportunities. POL 200 has been offered since 2016. It introduces different aspects of research design in political science, as well as different qualitative research techniques and the epistemological perspectives that inform them. The new Research Methods & Analysis track is particularly important, and is meant to complement the four other substantive tracks. The Department has increased its offerings in both quantitative and qualitative methods, including integrating these methods into substantive courses. We are giving students the necessary skills to compete in today's fast-moving and flexible job market that requires strong analytical, negotiation, data analysis, and communication skills.

	We also have introduced more than 20 new courses over the past three years, and decreased our number of “special topic” course offerings. We also initiated a new experiential learning and engagement intensive course offering called the Canada NATO Field School and Simulation Program, which takes students to several policy community places in Western Canada, and four countries in Europe, as part of an intensive, interactive learning experience. This program, which runs every summer, combines undergraduate and graduate learning, and besides SFU, admits students from other Canadian universities. The enrolment cap is 45 students. Finally, we are piloting a Course Access Program that allows students to reserve spots in select courses up to two years in advance with the specified day and time. This has strong appeal for students, and we expect it will help them to better prepare for their careers after SFU, and to complete their degree in a more timely fashion. In implementing our Access Promise program, we have rationalized and streamlined the offerings of many of our courses, setting days and times in advance so that students can build a multi-year schedule. Overall, our enrolments have increased significantly and our sense is that we are also now attracting higher quality students and better preparing them for success after they leave SFU. As evidenced by the increase in enrolments at all levels, we believe the introduction of a minimum C grade in core lower division courses has helped us. Nonetheless, we are continuing to monitor this.
• Strengthen the appeal of the program and instruction at the lower division: a. Introduced four new thematic based courses at the 100 level: i. POL 141-War, International Cooperation, and Development (effective Fall 2016).	This has been a point of emphasis for the Department, and a big success. 100 level enrolments are up more than 50% over the past two years. We also introduced another new 100 level course, POL 132 – From Dictatorship to Democracy – and we are considering additional offerings in this area. We have also renamed POL 151 to “Justice and Law.”

ii. POL 150-Science, Policy, and Innovation (effective Fall 2016). iii. POL 121-Political Engagement: From the Streets to the Ballot Box (effective Spring 2017). iv. POL 131-Politics of Prosperity and Inequality (effective Spring 2017). b. Less reliance on sessional instructors at lower division with hiring of a new Senior Lecturer and Limited Term Instructor (effective Fall 2016). c. Review of 200 level offerings where enrolments have declined in recent years (Summer/Fall 2016).	We hired a new Senior Lecturer in 2016-17, and we are hiring a second Senior Lecturer for 2019-20. These lecturers are actively engaged in research on teaching, and promoting better pedagogical practices throughout our course offerings. In nearly all five tracks, tenure-stream faculty and lecturers now regularly teach our lower division courses. We rely less on sessional instructors and we think this has been a big reason for the jump in enrolment numbers. 200 level enrolments are now also on the rise. They are up 26.5% year-over-year. Increasingly, we have combined our sessional offerings into clusters of courses that complement our regular offerings, and they are taught by one or two-year term lecturers, improving the quality and consistency of our curriculum for students. In the 2019-20 budget year, we anticipate to have 3 to 4 such LT teaching clusters, indicating how our need for faculty renewal remains a high priority.
• Review of CODE offerings: a. Met with CODE program director, Ranga Venkatachary (May 2016). b. Put short-term moratorium on all CODE course revisions (May 2016). c. Establish an ad hoc committee to review quality and quantity of Department's CODE offerings and work closely with CODE to institute best practices for online instruction (Summer/Fall 2016).	We have significantly cut our number of CODE course offerings over the past three years, from 19 in 2015-16 to 4 in 2018-19. The only remaining CODE offerings are those from tenured faculty members who want to be "grand-parented in." We believe the quality of our program is significantly improved as a result of this reduction in CODE offerings. With our overall numbers up, there is also evidence that this approach is more attractive to students. By reducing our CODE offering and increasing our experiential and engagement teaching in the classroom, we believe Political Science will be well-positioned to assess the new online-teaching models being evaluated by the Office of the VPA. We anticipate developing Online Modules as components of existing courses (eg Pol 484) in which class contact

	remains an essential component of the curriculum with online discussions assisting the classroom teaching.
• Extensive undergraduate curriculum review: a. Student satisfaction and interest survey to be instituted on an annual basis (effective Summer 2016). b. Undergraduate Curriculum Committee to make recommendations for discussion at Department retreat on structured course offerings for areas of concentration (Fall 2016).	As noted above, the Department adopted five new learning and career tracks to structure our undergraduate programs. These tracks reflect student demand (as indicated in the survey of students conducted in Fall 2016). It also reflects faculty research and teaching strengths, and growing areas of demand in Canada. We decided that an annual student satisfaction survey was probably too frequent, given the frequent survey contact with students as part of the Course Access Promise. We anticipate rolling out a new survey in Spring 2019. We are currently reviewing best practices for course and syllabus design, as well as a review of how we structure and frame our learning goals and objectives.
• With respect to Ext. Rev. on subject of collaboration with IS, we have five cross-listed ISPO courses (so far ISPO 431 is the one that has been offered most often).	We only have ISPO 431 and, after the retirement of the faculty member responsible for offering it, the class has not been offered in the last two years. Relations with IS are in many ways more positive than before, but at the same time, opportunities for teaching collaboration seem to be declining. This reflects a growing divide in our overall approaches to student training and program structuring. As noted above, we have actively sought to increase qualitative and quantitative methods training throughout our curriculum, and add more structure into our programs. We took this approach after a thorough review of enrolment trends across FASS and related departments over the past 10 years. We believe we are on the right track, as evidenced by the significant increase in student enrolments at all levels over the past two years (+25%).
1.1.2 Graduate	

<i>Recruitment and Program Changes:</i> As of 2016, we created important improvements in our graduate student recruiting. A systematic set of criteria are used by the GSC to rank our priority applicants, which are then "matched" to prospective supervisors.	Beside attracting students from the rest of Canada and internationally, we are now directly targeting undergraduates through the Honours Capstone program, and through personalized emails to those that qualify for the accelerated BA/MA program. We are becoming more proactive in our recruitment. We are sending out emails to undergraduate students. These emails include a general recruitment message, as well as targeted recruitment with information about specific faculty and projects (with and without funding) that might interest potential applicants. We are also among departments looking to recruit students from minority groups, including in the USA.
- Comprehensive financial support packages to prospective PhD and MA candidates are offered, by priority, early in the season, allowing us to provide applicants with the early options for their graduate careers: - Offered all Ph.D. funding packages, ranging from 101K to 110K for 4 to 5 years. - Offered all MA candidates funding. Most were offered TA-ships. The top ranked applicants were offered TA-ships and a fellowship. - Personalizing our contacts with accepted applicants and follow ups. - We have improved our Information and 'Meet and Greet' Recruitment Session for our Undergraduate students.	We continue to offer PhD funding packages, ranging from 95K to 116K for 4 years, and offer all MA candidates funding. MA candidates are offered between 8K and 21K and often receive additional private awards once in the program. We have received funding from a family foundation of a former student for an annual 10K entrance award for a Political Science PhD student. This will be in place for the next seven years and further improve our competitive acceptance of candidates.
Female graduate admissions: Our earlier scores of 32% women in 2013-14 and 36% in 2014-15 have gone up (see right column).	Our graduate admission numbers, broken down by gender are as follows: 2016- 2017= 15 53% female 2017- 2018= 18 56% female 2018- 2019= 17 41% female

• We Created the Accelerated MA Program (concurrent BA/MA in Political Science). a. Made calendar changes to elevate the course-intensive option to the same status as the project and thesis options. b. Encouraged prospective students to take up the course-intensive option in our offer letters.	Our accelerated MA option enrolled 3 students in the Fall of 2017.
• Organized a total of 4 workshops for the academic year of 2015-16: a. Fellowship applications. b. Careers in government. c. Wellness and time management. d. Conference presentations.	In 2017-18 we offered a series (6 in total) of research methods workshops. In 2018-19 we offer 2 TA training workshops to new TAs per semester.
• Expand Coop placements among our graduate students.	Our MA students continue to take advantage of the Co-op program: from 2016 to 2017, 11 students were placed with various employers.
• Rename and refocus POL 801 in order to clearly distinguish 801, 802 (quantitative methods), & 803 (qualitative methods).	We introduced POL 800 as a required research design course for all MA students. All MA students are encouraged to take this in the first semester, and the course also acts as an introduction to the program. MA students are no longer required to take POL 801, but PhD students are. We introduced POL 804 as an “Intermediate/Advanced Topics in Research Design and Methods” course. It is offered in the summer intersession. It attracts both SFU and UBC PhD students. Continuing discussions are taking place on how best to structure the methods courses in the graduate program.
2. Research and faculty renewal	Research and Faculty renewal progress made:
• In September 2014, our Department identified two priority areas: Political Economy and Public Policy. In addition, the	In 2015, the Department hired two very talented Teaching Faculty, one as Senior Lecturer and one as 3-year Limited Term. In addition,

2013 External Review singled out two issues that we needed to be address: 1. Our gender ratio, which worsened with the retirement of Dr. M. Cohen and the planned departure of Dr. Ayers (we now have only 2.5 FTE CFL). 2. The stress placed on faculty with supervisory responsibilities in International Relations, as many applicants for our MA and Ph.D. programs express a desire to work in this area. • Therefore, we put forward the following description of these three tenure track positions: a. Gender and Politics: Applicants with a record of research and teaching in all approaches relevant to this theme will be considered, including political economy, social policy, democratic representation, and feminist political thought. b. Public Policy: Preference will be given to applicants with an interest in any one of the many approaches relevant to political economy, including comparative economic policy-making; International Political Economy; Canadian political economy; economic approaches to politics. c. International Relations: All subfields of the discipline will be considered: International Political Economy, foreign policy, international organizations, security, etc.	in 2015 through its French Cohort Program, the Department hired a permanent faculty member. In 2017, the Department was successful in its application for a SSHRC Tier 1 Canada Research Chair in policy innovation, public policy and environmental politics, thus addressing the need for further strength in the area of Public Policy. In 2017, the Department requested and received permission to hire a Senior Faculty member in Women and Politics. Laurel Weldon joined the Department in 2018. At the same time, a spousal position in International Relations went forward. In 2018, the Department received permission to hire a Senior Lecturer position. We have found one of the strongest growth areas of interest among our students to be in Justice and Law. Hence, we target the new position in this field. It is our aspiration to hire a female faculty member in this position also, which would bring the total new women faculty to 2 positions and our total to 5 FTE CFL. The Department of Political Science continues to have a strong record of publications in top-ranked refereed journals, both in Canada and the United States, as well as internationally, including the American Journal of Political Science, the British Journal of Political Science, the Canadian Journal of Political Science, and the European Journal of International Relations. At the same time, we continue to publish academic books with university presses, and various government contracted papers and reports. We have strengthened our reputation for advancing theory and improving policy practice at various levels of governance, from local to global. Our research is richly diversified, both in terms of methods and areas of interest, spanning from city to international governance. Our Faculty have been very successful in their research activity, both in terms of total refereed publications and in terms of research
--	---

	grants received. Over the last 5 years, faculty received approximately \$1,155,895 in grants on which the faculty member was a PI and \$2,518,824 in grants on which the faculty member was a coinvestigator or collaborator. That is a total of \$3,674,719 over 5 years.
3. Administration	
The Department looks forward to exploratory discussions on the subject of how to better coordinate and share resources between Political Science, International Studies, Urban Studies, and Public Policy.	In 2018 the Department was able to hire a new full time staff position, responsible for undergraduate advising, recruiting, promotion and planning.
4. Working Environment	
Strongly encourage women to apply for faculty positions in the Department.	See above made progress: our total permanent female faculty component has gone from 2.5 CFL positions in 2013 to 4 in 2018, and is expected to go to 5 or 6 in 2019.
Strongly encourage women to apply for admission in our graduate program.	See above made progress: our previous average of new female students into the graduate program was 34%, and our last three year average is 50%.
- Created 3 annual events for staff, faculty, and graduate students: - Welcome Retreat/Mix & Mingle. - Christmas Party. - Awards Reception. - Held two social events for faculty and graduate students: (1) a pub night to welcome incoming students and 2) an	From 2017 – 2018, the Department has held 4 social events, 3 conferences, 5 faculty and graduate student workshops, and several TA training workshop. Multiple guest speakers have visited for our guest speaker events. Social Events "Mix & Mingle Boat Cruise," Vancouver (each September).

elections night at the pub). A third event is being organized for early September.	"Holiday Social and Lunch," Burnaby. "Christmas/End of Year Celebration of Awards and Achievements." "Political Science Convocation Reception," Burnaby. Conferences "Changing our Vote, Changing our Voice? B.C. Electoral Reform Referendum," Vancouver. "The Trump Backlash? The U.S. Midterm Elections," Vancouver. "Digital Diplomacy at the Frontlines in an Era of Populism," Vancouver. Guest Speakers: "Grounded Feminist theory and methods," Burnaby. "The rhetoric of discontent' and the transatlantic rise of populism," Burnaby. "The puzzle of resilience in relations between the United States and Canada : Interests, Institutions, Identity, and Ideas," Burnaby. "Beyond carbon dividends: The political economy of U.S. and Canadian carbon pricing policies," Burnaby. Faculty & Grad Student Workshops: "Inequality in Natural Resource Distribution: Examples from Field Research in the Mining Sector," Burnaby. "Canada as a Peninsula State: Conceptualizing the Emerging Geopolitical Landscape in the 21st Century," Burnaby.
---	--

	"#BlackLivesMatter and #SayHerName: How Intersectional Solidarity Strengthens Movements for Social Justice," Burnaby. "Oppression Grounded, Injustice Revealed: Insights from Sex Worker Rights Organizations," Burnaby. Student Workshops: "Applying for Government Jobs," Burnaby. TA Training Workshops "Developing your Students' Writing Skills," Burnaby.
--	---

Political Science Educational Goals

January 2019.

The Department of Political Science has initiated a process to formulate educational goals that help us to identify and implement the main skills and abilities we aim our students to achieve during their major and minor studies in Political Science. By means of such a set of skills we will be able to optimize the sequence of contents and the scope of our program offering. The process is led by the Undergraduate Studies Committee and will be reviewed for final approval by the department in 2019. We envision our students to learn how to ask innovative and thought-provoking questions about the political world at various levels, by means of various lenses and methods and to communicate these in effective ways to diverse audiences.

At the end of our program, the students will be able to:

1. read interpretatively
 - Extract meaning from academic texts to find the key concepts, arguments, and themes.
2. think critically
 - Determine reliability of information based on the source, the author's authority, evidence in the argument, and whether the information is supported by others.
 - Explore multiple points of view to develop a more comprehensive, informed opinion.
3. differ respectfully
 - Uncover, be aware, and acknowledge personal biases.
 - Listen, consider, and evaluate differing points of view through an academic lens, rather than a mere emotional or ideological one.
 - Offer differing opinions tactfully, without personal attack, respecting all fact-and-reason based points of view in a mutually respectful atmosphere.
4. apply diverse epistemology
 - Use both theory, practice, and methodology and construct a sound explanation.
 - Examine issues through various lenses to create wider understanding.
5. ask Political Science research questions
 - Develop clear, specific, research questions, and learn how to use research questions to guide research, data collection, and argumentation.
6. use Political Science research methods
 - Demonstrate understanding of research methodology and its variety by choosing appropriate methodology for a particular project and carrying out the research successfully.
7. organize research findings
 - Display research findings clearly, accurately, and effectively, in a way that is easy for the reader and audience to understand and possibly use.
8. support results and conclusions

- Interpret and describe research findings in a way that provides context for the reader; clearly explain how the data relates to the overall argument and research question, and what the data demonstrates.
9. communicate in writing, speech, and other media.
- Clearly and accurately articulate meaning and opinions through speech, writing, and media.
 - Develop a formal writing style that adheres to academic expectations at a post-secondary level.

The Educational Goals above can be grouped into four broad areas of skills, which can be assessed by the following methods:

Skills	Assessment Strategies
1. Studying, absorbing, comprehending	Historical, factual, academic, policy, methodological and statistical, legal materials
2. Gathering, preparing, operationalizing, and testing	Qualitative and quantitative evidence and data, individual and group-based learning, lab-based, experiential/community-based learning
3. Organizing, articulating, and communicating	Papers, studies, reports, simulations, decisions materials
4. Presenting, arguing, and defending in academic and community-based settings	Papers, studies, reports, new media, workshops, decisions materials, the acquired knowledge and professional skills

We plan to use direct and indirect methods by which to assess our goals and outcomes. We plan to design a matrix by which we want to map how each course helps to contribute to our goals and conduct a yearly exit survey of our majors to assess how well the department is doing to reach its goals.