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MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION Senate
FROM Catherine Dauvergne, Vice-President,
Academic and Provost, and Chair, SCUP
RE: External Review Mid-Cycle Report School of Public Policy (SCUP 21-07)

DATE March 01, 2021**PAGES** 1 of 1

A blue ink signature of Catherine Dauvergne, written in a cursive style.

The External Review of the School of Public Policy was conducted in April 2016. As per Senate guidelines, the Unit is required to submit a mid-cycle report describing its progress in implementing the External Review Action Plan. At its February 17th meeting SCUP reviewed the School of Public Policy's mid-cycle report.

The mid-cycle report, the Unit's assessment of its Educational Goals, and SCUTL's Feedback on the Educational Goals are attached for the information of Senate.

C: N. Olewiler



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MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION Catherine Dauvergne, Chair, SCUP
FROM Wade Parkhouse, Vice-Provost and
Associate Vice-President, Academic
RE: External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the School of Public Policy

DATE February 5, 2021
PAGES 1 of 1

The External Review of the School of Public Policy was undertaken in April 2016. 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 and the assessment of its Educational Goals. The update on the Action Plan has been reviewed by the Faculty Dean. The Senate Committee on University Teaching and Learning (SCUTL) has provided feedback to the Unit on the assessment of its Educational Goals. The recommendations from SCUTL will be incorporated into the Unit's self-study report for the next external review.

The following documents are attached for the information of SCUP:

- Update on the Action Plan
- Assessment of Educational Goals
- SCUTL's Feedback on the Educational Goals

c: Nancy Olewiler, Director, School of Public Policy
Jane Pulkingham, Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences



ENGAGING THE WORLD

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Memorandum

To: Jon Driver, Vice-President, Academic
Jane Pulkingham, Dean of FASS
From: Nancy Olewiler, Director
Date: 2 November 2020
Re: SPP's External Review Mid-Cycle Report

Please find attached 2 documents:

- The SPP Mid-Cycle completed template progress report
- Assessment of Educational Goals (with appendix)

On behalf on SPP, I look forward to discussing the report with you and SCUP.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy Olewiler", with a stylized flourish at the end.

External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the School of Public Policy

Action	Progress Made
1. Programming	
1.1.1 Undergraduate	
Exploration of one or more undergraduate course offerings in public policy was initiated in Spring 2016 in consultation with the Dean's office. SPP has secured a TLC grant to undertake a review of public policy course offerings at other universities to examine their scope, pedagogy, and any innovative delivery approaches. SPP will meet with SFU faculty in departments that offer policy-related courses or might be interested in seeing a course developed for their students to help assess demand for the course and ensure the course(s) would serve the university interests. Public policy analysis combines multiple disciplines - e.g., economics, political science, research methods, and will not duplicate any existing courses. As a multi-disciplinary course in the foundations and application of public policy analysis, it will appeal to students from any discipline and will seek designation as a breadth, writing, and numeracy course as all three are integral to policy analysis. The intention is that undergraduate offerings not simply draw students away from other courses or programs. They must meet a real demand on the part of students.	SPP developed a 300-level undergraduate course in Spring 2017 that received approval from the Associate Dean in FASS to offer on an experimental basis in Fall 2017 or Spring 2018. However, the instructor who received a course release to design the course was on an extended leave of absence during the period of intended delivery and was unable to begin offering this course. Work on undergraduate course offerings was in abeyance until Spring and Summer 2020. Working with the FASS Dean's office and other departments in FASS SPP presented to the VPA and Dean a comprehensive proposal for an undergraduate minor in Public Policy Analysis in August 2020. The proposal laid out the vision and scope for this minor. It incorporates a previously proposed minor in Innovation, Society, and Technology Policy and represents significant cooperation and coordination with the Departments of Economics, Philosophy, and Political Science, the School of Criminology, and potentially other departments and faculties. The plan is to continue consultations over this year to refine the proposal with the goal of taking it through the university committees in Spring 2021 and if approved begin phasing in the new public policy core courses for the minor in Fall 2022. A NOI has been prepared and submitted to the University committees. Data SPP has gathered show considerable demand for those who have had training in public policy analysis. The minor could also be a springboard for those seeking post-graduate education and be part of a post-baccalaureate diploma (see below). Efficiency gains in the MPP program plus the opportunity to hire new faculty can provide teaching resources for the minor. The proposed courses are multi-disciplinary as

External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the School of Public Policy

	indicated in our response to the external review.
In consultation with the Dean's office, discussion of a potential post-baccalaureate diploma (the PBD) is also in the beginning stages. The PBD would involve multiple SFU departments, packaging a group of courses including new SPP undergraduate courses that provide those with undergraduate degrees in any discipline an introduction to policy analysis. The degree would help position students for entry level jobs in the private and public sector and not-for-profits as well as help provide courses that better prepare those interested in a graduate degree.	The direction SPP received In consultation with the Dean's office was to offer the undergraduate minor first, get experience with it, build enrollment, then see if the PBD is a logical addition. Once the minor program is running, it may be a simple extension to create the PBD. SPP has also contemplated developing a PBD-type program that would be targeted to international students to provide them with foundational skills in public policy to enable them to undertake the MPP program. That exploration will develop once the School has a sufficient faculty complement and a new Director.
1.1.2 Graduate	
The Review Committee states that for our students the "MPP program provided them with a unique and valuable experience, gave them tremendous interaction with experienced faculty, and offered them a firm grounding that prepared them for a number of different career options". They deem the MPP program a "high-quality educational experience". The Review Committee noted the exceptional accolades from our current students and alumni who expressed their gratitude to their professors and staff and for the preparation the program gave them for their careers. The Committee's recommendations focus on areas to help improve efficiency in program delivery while preserving the high quality of the instruction and outcomes. The major areas include the Capstone project (the major research project required for the degree), offering of elective courses, the size of the intake into each cohort, and remedial instruction. We do not agree with any suggestions to reduce the research and analysis intensity of the program. The analytical capacity of our students is one of our core strengths	The School's initiatives to improve the efficiency of the MPP program include: - Development of a 'project' option for completion of the MPP degree that was approved by the university in Spring 2020 and is now effective. A number of students have opted for the project this year. - Streamlining supervision of the Capstone project and enforcing the page limits. - A further efficiency gain in the form of reducing one required course and doubling the credits for the capstone course has been submitted to the FASSGSC. This will reduce the total number of courses taken for those doing the capstone, but not change the total number of credits required for the degree. To sustain the quality of the program and remain competitive with other public policy graduate programs, no other changes in the number of courses offered for the MPP is contemplated at this time. The MPP is a multi- and interdisciplinary program that requires a minimum depth and breadth of courses and is the norm among comparable programs in Canada and the United States (data available upon request). - An increase in the target size of the MPP program to the maximum

External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the School of Public Policy

and key attractant for prospective students.	capacity of the teaching and learning space at Harbour Centre. The project option (PLCY 835) requires a major public policy-focused paper. The differences with the capstone are that it is more limited in scope and length (maximum length is 8,000 words) and it does not have to include a full-scale policy analysis with primary data collection. There is more flexibility in topics and frameworks for analysis. There is no defense and no submission to the library. The project is ideal for those who begin working before completing their capstone and can use their work experience to help shape their project. The presumption remains that the majority of students will undertake the capstone, particularly those seeking further post-graduate degrees. However, due to the impacts of Covid-19 on our students mental health, finances, deferred co-ops, and other pressures, a number of current students have opted for the project this year. The project is thus serving its purpose. Two students have already completed outstanding projects.
• <i>Capstone project:</i> The Review Committee suggested actions to improve efficiencies that include reducing the length of the capstone, delivering the advanced policy analysis sequence using fewer faculty resources, and offering two ways to complete the research project requirement. The SPP will undertake the following actions to address these recommendations. The capstone will be reduced from 20,000 words down to a maximum of 15,000 words (12,000 words minimum). A review will be undertaken of the teaching approach and supervision to deliver the same learning outcomes and quality and additional modifications will be made accordingly. With the reduction in the length of the capstone and other changes, the SPP will increase slightly the number of students per faculty supervisor, thus freeing up resources for the potential undergraduate courses and other initiatives that the SPP undertakes. As part of the proposed changes, the	In the Spring and Summer of 2019, SPP initiated a major review of our capstone project. Three of our students were hired as research assistants and they undertook an extensive examination of how other public policy programs delivered a research project requirement and enhanced their scan with interviews. That work was guided by Dr. Richards, SPP's Graduate Chair and Dr. Olewiler as Director. The report served as the basis of a department review that culminated in changes to the capstone and the introduction of the project option as discussed above. In the 2019 study and again in 2020, SPP reviewed the delivery of Capstone supervision and how it prepares students to undertake this research. The capstone word limit was reduced to 15,000 words in 2018. Efficiency gains were delayed somewhat by health issues of various faculty members but have been introduced this year with changes to PLCY 808. We have now proposed the elimination of PLCY 808 and doubling the credits for PLCY 809 as the primary capstone course. This will free up students' course requirements and allow further supervisory efficiency gains that will take place in Fall 2021 with the increase in

External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the School of Public Policy

capstone course entitled Advanced Policy Analysis (PLCY 808) will be delivered in a structured lecture and interactive mode whereby the faculty instructors review the core methodological framework for the capstone and address research questions and challenges (such as Ethics approval). This will improve student understanding of the policy research process and help increase consistency in expectations and performance.

The Capstone project meets SFU's requirements for a master's degree. It falls under SFU's GRR 1.7.2 as a project with an external examiner and scheduled defence. The capstone is integral to the research component of our project and is crucial in SPP's designation as a 'research department'. With this designation, our students are eligible for graduate fellowships and SSHRC awards. In addition, a number of students apply for and receive research funding from other agencies and entities. Examples are PICS (Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions) fellowship awards, government agencies (e.g., Environment Canada), research institutes (e.g., St. Paul's HIV-AIDs, ACT, Sustainable Prosperity), NGOs. As well, some of our students have been part of multi-disciplinary research groups (e.g., with SFU's Earth Sciences department, Faculty of Health Sciences) where their capstone research was the policy component of major research grants. The capstone provides students with skills they carry into the workplace and allows those interested to secure admission to PhD programs. Reducing the capstone to a course-based paper would eliminate access to these important sources of funding for our students, diminish their educational experience, and make it extremely challenging, if not impossible, to achieve the SPP's learning goals.

students per faculty supervisor. These efficiency gains enable SPP faculty to teach undergraduate PLCY courses for the minor.

As noted in SPP's response to the 2016 external review, we remain committed to the Capstone projects for all the reasons cited. The project attracts the very best students to our program. It enables them to compete for prestigious scholarships and our top capstones have been consistent winners on national student research prizes. SFU again took the top prize among all policy schools in Canada for the best thesis in a national competition complete with judging and defence of the students' work. Our MPP student received national recognition for his capstone along with a \$1000 prize. The capstones are instrumental in providing our students with the skills needed in the public and private sector and to go on to further education. Employers find our students extremely well qualified to undertake research and assess complex policy issues. Capstones have influenced public policy at the local to national level and received media attention.

External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the School of Public Policy

• <i>Elective courses:</i> The SPP will optimize the delivery of elective courses to ensure that the university's course enrollment objectives for graduate programs are met.	SPP has a core number of elective courses that are offered each year so that prospective and current students know they will be able to take them (subject to faculty leaves). With the addition of 1.5 FTE faculty that are in joint positions, SPP is able to regularize a number of key electives, including Indigenous Policy and Advanced Quantitative Methods. Our new colleagues also enable teaching highly relevant courses such as one on Inequality. We have benefitted from the ability to have public policy experts (with PhDs) as limited term professors teaching high demand courses (Advanced Qualitative Methods, Cost-Benefit Analysis, Environmental Policy). We are however facing challenges with the pending retirement of three more faculty as well as retirement of two of our limited term professors. We have reduced the number of electives offered this year in response to our limited CFL faculty complement. This has led to two outcomes: (1) our elective courses have high enrollments, for example one offering of PLCY 812- Regulation had 27 students in Summer 2020; and (2) we also encourage students to seek permission to take relevant graduate courses in other programs if these courses augment their learning and are in areas where we do not have the capacity to teach. A number of our students are taking electives in other departments and faculties such as REM, Health, Urban Studies, Education, and Communications. Some also take advantage of courses through the Western Deans Agreement in areas that we do not have the capacity to cover. We advertise our electives to graduate students in other departments and faculties and have had enrollment from other units. If the Masters in Management program proceeds, we would offer to accommodate some of their students in relevant electives we offer such as advanced qualitative and quantitative methods, benefit-cost analysis, Indigenous policy, environmental policy assuming we are not at our enrollment limits. We will seek arrangements with other departments, e.g., through Faculty Associates to provide a range of courses where there is sufficient interest and a policy focus.
• <i>Cohort size:</i> Under the provincial framework for graduate funding, the financial benefit to SFU of increasing the intake into	We have a robust number of applications to the program each year, with 2021 looking to have a large number. We have not in any way sacrificed quality for quantity. Our students are outstanding. The target enrollment

External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the School of Public Policy

each cohort is the incremental tuition revenue (i.e., no incremental provincial grant per student as SFU is beyond its maximum allocation). Discussions with the Dean's office to date have noted that the physical constraints at Harbour Centre (classrooms, computer lab) would require two sections of core courses and thus more faculty resources, offsetting tuition revenue gains. Increasing enrollment beyond our current target of 30 students thus does not appear to lead to an increase in net revenue to the university.	is 30 FTE students. SPP has in recent years increased the cohort size to approximately 35 students to accommodate a few part-time students, some of whom are SFU employees or work in policy-related positions and to improve our financial contribution to the university. Each year there are also unexpected withdrawals from the program due to students' health, financial situation, and other factors that may affect enrollment. As noted in our response, going beyond approximately 35 students is inhibited by classroom size and that incremental revenues for the university consist of the tuition, not any increment in the provincial grant. With the target of 30 to 35 SPP has the capacity to teach undergraduate courses.
• <i>Remedial instruction:</i> Applicants with significant deficiencies in the core disciplinary subjects of public policy are typically denied admission to the program and advised to take undergraduate courses in those areas where they are deficient (economics, political science, research methods) before reapplying. For admitted students we will continue to strongly recommend the completion of online courses that address the area where they have less than adequate background.	There have been no changes in the policies and procedures SPP outlined in our response. With the introduction of the undergraduate minor in public policy analysis, there will be an avenue for prospective students to take courses that will help them make up for deficiencies. If SPP ever develops a PBD, that would be another way for those without the CGPA to address their deficiencies. Our strategy has always been to admit students with strong backgrounds regardless of specific fields of undergraduate or previous university-level study and those with exceptional policy-related work experience. This strategy has served us well and allowed us to recruit outstanding students from all disciplines.
• <i>Educational Goals:</i> The SPP has established its program level learning objectives and will map these into course specific goals as per the directives established at SFU. We have established a working group to identify any redundant parts of the curriculum, and any educational goals that are not sufficiently supported through the existing curriculum. More efficient approaches to achieving the specified educational goals will be explored. We attach the latest draft of the educational goals for SPP.	Please see the report on our assessment of our educational goals.
• <i>Program Diversity:</i> A working group has been established to	Our MPP program prepares our graduates to work in any level of

External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the School of Public Policy

study approaches for attracting qualified international students who have the necessary backgrounds, language, and analytical capacity to succeed in the program. A market that has significant potential is the United States. Implications for curriculum development, and promotion, and advertising will be explored. The SPP strongly supports Aboriginal policy analysis with applications in its core courses, an elective in Aboriginal Policy, and the research agendas of a number of our faculty. Through personal contacts, we recruit Aboriginal students and have had enrollment in proportion to the population of Aboriginal students with bachelor (or equivalent) degrees. We welcome and encourage partnerships with FASS units to encourage more Aboriginal students to pursue graduate studies.	government, the private sector, not-for-profits, think tanks, and more. The vast majority of our graduates work in Canada in some form of public service. Our graduates are moving into senior positions and are making a name for SFU across the country. A number of federal departments and local authorities preferentially seek our graduates before turning to other universities. We live in and are funded by Canadian governments and hence our priority has been to contribute to our communities, to provide a high return to Canada on its support for higher education. Our goal is to have a diversity of students that represent Canadian society, demographics, racial, disciplinary, and experiential backgrounds. We have been successful in doing so. We would like to attract more Indigenous students and are working with e.g., SFU's Indigenous Studies department to provide more linkages between our programs, and are working on building a more robust and appealing program for Indigenous students. The undergraduate minor may also help in this regard. We currently enroll Indigenous students in proportion to those with undergraduate degrees but would like to enroll more. SPP continues to work on incorporating Indigenous studies and pedagogy into our core curriculum. While we receive a number of international applicants each year, we find there continues to be a lack of qualified international students that have the necessary backgrounds and skills to succeed in our program. Exceptions are those from countries with educational systems comparable to Canada. Upon the advice of the VPA, SPP is proposing to increase its international student fees so that each student will contribute more to revenues, thus supporting our financial contribution to the university. However, we will not preferentially admit international students at the expense of highly qualified domestic applicants.
• The need to maintain a strong <i>competitive position</i> relative to other programs in Canada is a continuing concern. The reputation of the School continues to develop. Communication strategies to reach prospective students will be given more emphasis. Faculty will be encouraged to maintain a strong presence in the policy community and to emphasize the	All activities to promote the department continue. We have revised our web page, expanded our connections with governments, not-for-profit, and other agencies. The BC Priorities (BCP) projects, undertaken by first-year MPP students as part of their policy analysis core courses in conjunction with an external partner organization, have an ever-growing list of partners. Our partners are impressed with the quality of work with many coming back with new topics in subsequent years and new partners

External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the School of Public Policy

association with the School in professional and academic work. Additional scholarships are needed to make offers to students more competitive; a matter that will receive on-going attention.	seeking to work with our students and faculty. These projects attract high quality students, led to capstone topics, and subsequent employment. On example of how influential the BCP projects can be is that a project on pay equity in 2019-20 provided the research and policy analysis to support a submission to the BC government by our community partner. Others have led to changes in policy at BC Housing, First Nations Health Authority, the City of Vancouver, Board Voice, and other partners. The reports are frequently published on our community partners' web sites. The BCPs are an excellent component of experiential research for our students and SFU's contribution to our external communities.
The renewal of the <i>Advisory Committee</i> will be undertaken following a review of its role and terms of reference.	SPP has not been in a position to consider renewal of the Advisory Committee due to insufficient time and resources. The new Director should have the opportunity to consider and renew the Advisory Committee.
The School will continue with periodic speakers and conferences as part of its <i>engagement strategy</i> as time and resources permit, bridging where possible to FASS and university wide leadership and initiatives.	These continue with our Policy Spotlight series in connection with the Centre for Public Policy Research. SPP has co-sponsored a number of events with the Centre for Dialogue and Public Square as documented in our annual reports for the Centre for Public Policy Research. All our talks have been virtual since Covid-19 including one with a very prestigious UK economist (open to the public). We will continue with a mix of virtual and in-person talks once the latter can resume.
2. Research	
<i>Research strength:</i> Ways to better articulate and communicate the SPP's research capacity and strength to external communities is the focus of a renewed department working group on research. Immediate action is to require faculty to enhance their individual web pages (with the development of a department -designed web template) to describe the depth and breadth of policy and research initiatives. This will include: active research projects and initiatives, grant funding held; awards and professional recognition; knowledge translation and	The working group of faculty and staff redesigned our SPP web page. This includes a template for individual web pages and faculty have been updating their personal pages. Faculty continue to apply for and receive grant funding that enables the School to hire graduate research assistantships. SPP has been active in securing funding with Mitacs and external agencies for policy-related research that supports our students. SFU's Adaptation to Climate Change Team (ACT) resides within the Faculty of Environment. This move happened shortly after the external review, so the conditions present in 2016 no longer apply. Dr. Olewiler

External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the School of Public Policy

policy engagement activities including meetings and presentations; and, where appropriate, downloadable versions of PowerPoint talks, lectures, briefing notes, and reports; other research, academic and policy affiliations including adjunct appointments. A greater emphasis will be placed on communicating the work of the Adaptation to Climate Change Team (ACT) as a research affiliate of SPP. The main web page will provide clear links to the work of faculty and ACT. The SPP will work with the Associate Dean, Research in FASS on these undertakings.	was the co-founder of ACT (along with its Executive Director Deborah Harford), and is a member of their Advisory Board, but ACT is not a part of our research centre. ACT employs MPP students as Research Assistants for its projects when our students' skills align with their research needs.
• <i>Articulation of research strategy and focus for faculty:</i> The SPP working group on research will review and update our document outlining research expectations to ensure it reflects a "balance between traditional academic scholarship in peer reviewed journals, books and other venues and more practitioner focused and 'engaged' research" as recommended by the Review Committee. By fall 2017 a research strategy (action plan) for the School will be completed.	SPP has reviewed our research expectations for renewal, tenure, and promotion and have the appropriate statement about balancing traditional academic scholarship in peer reviewed journals, books and other venues and more practitioner focused and engaged research. Concern has been expressed in SFU's internal review that our research profile is declining and we need better articulation of our research strategy. Three points are offered. (1) We do not agree that adjusted for the number of CFL faculty and their age profile that our productivity has declined. (2) Research productivity and more importantly, research impacts in policy schools are not measured solely by the rankings of academic journals. Our research can and has had direct impact on significant public policies. Examples include colleagues' work on money laundering, carbon policy, basic income research, education, housing policy, Indigenous governance, and more. We acknowledge that we should do a better job of making policy-relevant research more visible and will do so through our web page and the Centre for Public Policy Research. Our research has been cited and highlighted in the media, reports by governments, journals such as <i>Policy Options</i> and now that we have a communications staff person, we can better collate and present this research. (3) The department has been and is going through faculty renewal. With the retirement of senior faculty (where some of whom

External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the School of Public Policy

	have had a reduction in productivity due to health issues) and hiring of new faculty, both traditionally measured research productivity in academic publications plus policy relevant output will rise as will research grants. Our junior faculty are producing significant amounts of research and achieving success in securing grants. It is important that we be given credit for the contributions of our faculty whether the home department of jointly-appointed faculty is in SPP or elsewhere. Our strategy is thus to increase the visibility of the many contributions from all aspects of our research, and to continue to hire and support outstanding new faculty.
3. Administration	
SPP agrees with the Review Committee that the School is under-resourced in terms of administrative staff relative to the workload and that limits our ability to: market the program as extensively as we would like, publicize research and policy activities and impacts, and enable planning for new initiatives such as executive and professional development programs. The Review Committee noted that the SPP has the "smallest staff of any policy school in Canada by a wide margin". The SPP is committed to working with the University to identify means to improve promotion, fund raising, and other engaged activities.	The Dean has provided departments in FASS with an additional fraction of a staff person. Starting in 2020, SPP has the resources of .4 of a staff member for communications (shared with Gerontology and Urban Studies). There have been a number of administrative challenges in dealing with the work load and expectations of each unit, but the department is now seeing some of the benefits of the position with the ability to update our webpage more frequently, organizing speaker series, and now have a Twitter page. With the introduction of the undergraduate minor, SPP will need an additional staff resource as our Manager is our only other staff person and cannot take on more obligations. SPP remains far below any of our competitors in terms of staff resources and this makes it difficult to take on new initiatives in any area, due to the existing high burden on the Manager and Director. SPP will continue to work on fund raising with University Advancement to raise awareness of our School.
The SPP has created a more formal committee structure identifying the roles department members have been doing, in response to the suggestions of the Review Committee. This clarifies service roles within the department for faculty members. Service external to the department is not an issue, as faculty serve and have served on a variety of university	This has been done. The department has the following committees: TPC, Appointments (as needed), Admissions, and Graduate committees with appropriate governance frameworks. There is a Graduate Chair (no teaching release). Faculty serve as representatives for the department as Integrity officers, Library liaison, and on the Canadian Association of Programs in Public Administration (and Policy) Board and its Accreditation

External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the School of Public Policy

committees and are very actively and extensively involved in service to external communities.	Board. Faculty continue to be highly active in service to the external community, chairing expert panels, serving on advisory boards to First Nations, the province, and federal government. Faculty are active media contributors.
4. Working Environment	
The Review Committee complemented the SPP on its exceptional working environment among faculty, staff, and students, and we agree with their suggestions to support collaborations across the University and external communities. SPP acknowledges that it has not publicized adequately the collaborations that faculty members have been engaged in. Section 2 notes the improvements in web pages that will help identify these linkages.	See above. Faculty are actively involved in numerous collaborations and more are in progress. The undergraduate minor will significantly increase cross-university collaboration. With the number of FTE faculty in the School, the burden to do more falls disproportionately on relatively few people. This has been particularly the case recently with parental and health leaves and leaves of absence to take other positions.
Collaborations with Urban Studies will be continued following the very successful regional governance initiative in 2015-16.	SPP collaborated with Urban Studies on hiring two joint CFL appointments: one is a .5 Assistant Professor position in SPP with Urban as the home department that began in Fall 2019, and the other a .75 Associate Professor position with SPP the home department that began in Fall 2020.
Over the next two years a focus will be increased engagement with other units in FASS and the university.	SPP engaged with Indigenous Studies in the hiring of one CFL joint appointment (.75 in Indigenous Studies and .25 in SPP with Indigenous Studies the home department). SPP will also begin to engage much more directly with other FASS units in bringing in the undergraduate minor and seeking Faculty Associates. Joint research is being undertaken with colleagues from other departments and faculties at SFU. For example, one of our BC Priorities projects this year is working jointly with the Faculty of Health Sciences and BC Centre for Disease Control.
5. Development of Professional Programs	
The Review Committee noted that the SPP is at a crossroads where it can stay as a small, high quality graduate program with	While SPP continues to be very interested in developing additional graduate or other training professional programs along the many lines described in this section, we have not been able to do so because of our

External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the School of Public Policy

one main degree - the MPP, or contemplate expansion in the form of undergraduate education (noted in section 1) and additional professional education that could take a variety of forms. The SPP wishes to explore the appetite of SFU to engage in strategic planning for the development of graduate professional programs. Professional programming includes an executive MPP (as outlined in a submission by the Director for an SFU development grant), short-term intensive programs in specific areas of SPP expertise, and cooperating with other graduate programs such as Urban Studies to offer joint degrees and/or graduate diplomas. These initiatives provide revenue as well as increased visibility and influence of the School with external communities. Any form of expansion requires SFU's support and its commitment to program stability, faculty and staff resourcing. The Review Committee concluded that with SFU's support, these investments would be "repaid both financially and in terms of the visibility and stature of the university".	insufficient number of faculty and staff to take on these initiatives. The number of FTE faculty has declined since the external review, increasing the teaching burden on remaining faculty. We remain interested in all these potential avenues and hope that when we have sufficient resources and successful recruiting, the department can explore these potential initiatives. As noted above, SPP's current energy is directed at getting the undergraduate minor running. There is insufficient capacity and resources to take on more at this point.
6. Succession Planning and New Director	
The Review Committee concurred with the SPP that there is urgent need for a viable succession plan for the School, with the recruitment of a new Director the top priority. With four faculty members over the age of 65, no authorized tenure track positions, and two junior faculty in limited term positions, it is crucial that the SPP and senior administration engage immediately in developing a succession plan that allows for the orderly renewal of the department incorporating appointments of a new Director and faculty at both the junior and senior level to ensure continuity of the program and sustains policy relevant	SPP submits faculty renewal plans to the Dean each year and has noted the need to recruit a Director for a number of years. No authorization to search for a new Director was granted until September 2020. In Fall 2019, upon the request of the VPA, SPP began development of a Sustainability Plan. The initial version of the plan did not provide the VPA with sufficient confidence to proceed with a hiring plan. With assistance from the Dean's office, a revised Sustainability Plan was submitted in August 2020 and the VPA has authorized searches for a new Director and Assistant Professor. SPP was able to continue to run the program from 2016 to now because two department members came forward to serve as Acting Directors and Dr. Olewiler began an additional three-year term starting in Fall 2018. The

External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the School of Public Policy

experience. In fulfilling plans to broaden our reach, diversify and expand the programs and networks, it is vital to secure a Director at the senior level who has substantial public policy expertise. The optimal approach is to secure approval in Fall 2016 to commence an external search by the end of that semester. Should that not be successful an internal university search should commence in Spring 2017.

extensions of a limited term appointment enabled the department to teach core political science and research methods courses in the program. Up until 2011, these courses had been taught by a CFL faculty colleague who has since been on a continual series of political leaves. The conditions described in SPP's external review have come to pass and we have been challenged to sustain all teaching, research, and service obligations, let alone develop new programs. While some factors cannot be foreseen (parental leaves, health issues, and unpaid leaves of absence), the demographics are clear.

One faculty member retired in 2019, two more will retire in August 2021 having had modified to retirement arrangements. We greatly appreciate the addition of the 1.5 new CFL faculty, but three more faculty are highly likely to retire within the next three years. Continued sustainability requires those pending retirements to also be renewed. Our limited term faculty have been excellent, but their short-term contracts inhibit plans to broaden into new programs and other forms of outreach. With a small number of core faculty, study leaves, parental leaves, and unpaid leaves place a higher burden on the Director and remaining faculty and make it challenging to plan and undertake new initiatives.

As a multi-disciplinary department, remaining faculty cannot fill the teaching and research roles of those who retire or are on leave unless they are in the same fields as our core courses in the MPP program and those to be offered in the undergraduate minor. The department needs a minimum of two people in each of the areas of economics, political science, and research methodologies. By 2022, SPP will have .75 FTE of an economist. Two years ago, we had 2.5 FTEs in economics. The specific areas of research expertise within the fields of economics and political science are somewhat flexible as long as they are policy relevant in a Canadian context and the person can teach our core courses. Core areas of need in teaching include applied microeconomics (e.g., environment, labour, social policy, regulation) and Canadian macroeconomics, Canadian political science and governance (e.g., federalism, Indigenous

External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the School of Public Policy

	rights and reconciliation, legal/Constitutional), qualitative (e.g., survey design, implementation, and analysis, content analysis) and quantitative research methodologies (applied statistics, regression analysis), and legal scholarship in a policy context. Experience working in the public sector or on major research projects in public policy is also sought. While SPP appreciates the scarcity of university resources, we remain fearful of our ability to sustain the program and without a longer-term commitment to the SPP, it will be challenging to recruit a new Director.
7. Strategic Planning	
The Review Committee recommended and the SPP strongly concurs that in consultation with our Dean, the department develops a five-year strategic plan that: supports the School's educational goals, outlines a sustainable financial model; specifies a staffing model with faculty in appropriate classifications; provides sufficient support staff to be able to implement the action plan, and recruits a new Director.	SPP's sustainability plan that forecasts out to 2023 has been supported by the VPA, subject to showing sufficient progress on the development and implementation of the undergraduate minor and continuing to run the MPP program efficiently. The undergraduate program should enhance our financial contributions to the university. Beyond 2023, as retirements arise, SPP will seek approval to hire sufficient CFL faculty to sustain the unit. A new Director will want an assurance that the program can be sustained.
As part of this, the External Review Committee comments regarding the need to balance costs with programming requirements will be considered.	This has been covered above and are dealt with in our Sustainability Plan submitted to the VPA and Dean in August 2020.

School of Public Policy Mid-Cycle Report: Assessing Educational Goals Process & Progress

November 2, 2020, revised

The School established the following overarching educational goals for our ongoing assessment as part of our preparation for our external review in 2016.

Through their course of study in the MPP program, students will develop skills and competencies to:

1. Apply an understanding of how public policy is framed in terms of institutions, ideas, and interests;
2. Apply theoretical and empirical research to the critical analysis of policy issues based on societal objectives of a modern democratic state;
3. Demonstrate competence and literacy in quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods;
4. Collect, organize, and integrate information from individuals, organizations, government agencies, and communities into policy analysis;
5. Conceptualize, undertake, and complete, with original research, a major policy analysis project;
6. Demonstrate communication skills tailored to a variety of audiences;
7. Undertake collaborative analysis and apply profession and decision making skills in group settings, and;
8. Use practical workplace and networking skills to be adaptive and successful in pursuing diverse opportunities in local, national and international working environments.

Please refer to the document dated June 2016 that lays out SPP's plan for assessing the success of its educational goals. Progress to date and assessment of changes indicated follows.

- *Mapping of educational goals (EGs) into learning outcomes for each course.* This has been accomplished and is updated each time a course is taught by the instructor. Each course taught in the program addresses a number of the educational goals as foundational. These are then articulated and incorporated more fully in terms of the course material, lectures, assignments, and activities and learning outcomes (LOs). Some faculty have LOs per class; others have them for sections or the entire course. All of the core courses: PLCY 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807 (taught in the first year of the program) cover EGs numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6. In goal #3, all courses incorporate forms of mixed methodology, some to varying degrees. For example, PLCY 805 and 806 explicitly cover qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. Each of the other courses incorporate qualitative and quantitative methods as appropriate. Goal #5 is covered in our Capstone projects (PLCY 808 and 809) and discussed below. Goal #7 is addressed in many courses (e.g., PLCY 800 and 807 in its major group project done in collaboration with an external agency – the BC Priorities Project). That project's success is measured in terms of both student feedback and that from the external agencies, many of whom work with the School each year. Goal #8 relates to the mandatory Co-op that is assessed by the Co-op Coordinator, work reports, interviews with employers, etc.
- *Submission of learning outcome plans to the Curriculum Committee annually.* Following the Fall 2016 semester and receipt of a short report from regular faculty on how their learning outcomes (LOs) meet the department's educational goals, the department met as a whole to review the process. It was determined that it would not be necessary to repeat this process each time a course was taught (each of our courses is taught once per year). Rather, faculty would broadly outline their learning

School of Public Policy Mid-Cycle Report: Assessing Educational Goals Process & Progress

November 2, 2020, revised

outcome plans in department meetings held for that purpose. Due to the small size of the department, the Curriculum Committee is a committee of the whole unit. Moreover, we found it highly productive to have a group discussion of how each course addresses the educational goals, what issues each instructor is having, and how to ensure we are addressing and assessing the goals. We have a very inter-disciplinary curriculum. Hence that process upon experience and reflection is appropriate for our department. Faculty thus do not submit individual written plans but rather discuss together the key points those plans cover. An example of the mapping that was undertaken is shown in the Appendix to this report. The other systematic consultation done each semester is what we call the 'Director's Roundtable'. Since 2017, the Director of the School meets with each cohort (separately) to discuss their courses and how we can better meet the students' needs. MPP students are highly engaged in the program, provide excellent feedback, and offer innovative ideas for their courses. This is also one way to assess how well the program is meeting EG #5 where the main outcome is the students' Capstone project. A course evaluation is not applicable to their research project.

- *Reviewing our pedagogy and approach to our Capstone project.* In addition to the Director's Roundtable meetings, SPP undertook an extensive review of the Capstone project in 2018 with a student-faculty committee that examined best practices in cognate departments in Canada and the US. That review culminated in a report to the department and led to some reforms to the Capstone project and the creation of an option for students to complete the research requirement for their degree with a smaller scale project rather than the Capstone. This pathway is designed predominately for students who already have secured a policy job and career path that does not need the more extensive primary research requirements of the capstone. The department is continually examining ways to improve upon the Capstone experience.
- *Assessment of students' achievement of LOs and EGs.* This is part of discussions each semester in department meetings. Faculty and staff share ideas about how to ensure our course requirements: testing, assignments, presentations, etc. align with LOs and revise and augment our courses accordingly. SPP introduced four questions into the new student evaluation process that capture core elements of its EGs and the Director reviews this with each faculty member after the course evaluations are completed. The Director reports on departmental averages in department meetings and discussion ensues if any concerns arise. These questions are as follows:
 1. Course instructor made it clear how the course concepts are directly applicable to current public policy issues.
 2. Course requirements (assignments, readings, in-class activities) enhanced my ability to critically analyse policy issues.
 3. Course lectures enhanced my ability to critically analyse policy issues.
 4. The course enhanced my ability to communicate in formats applicable to public practice (policy briefs, graphics, etc.)
- *Evidence on how well the department is meeting its EGs from course evaluations.* SPP has collated the scores for each question over the past four semesters since aggregate reporting under the SETC

School of Public Policy Mid-Cycle Report: Assessing Educational Goals Process & Progress

November 2, 2020, revised

system has been available. These include Spring and Fall for 2018 and 2019. No evaluations were done in Spring 2020 due to Covid-19. There is also a sample of core courses for both semesters of 2017. The averages for the required courses in the program illustrate overall success in achieving the EGs and are as follows: *Question 1*: 4.44; *Question 2*: 4.28; *Question 3*: 4.27; *Question 4*: 4.32. These averages are also highly stable over time, only varying when we have had, for example, a short-term limited term instructor in one course. Faculty continue to strive for improvement. Recognizing that course evaluations have a number of challenges and critiques, they are however a quantitative indicator of our mapping from LOs to EGs and our students' perception of the success of the instructor and course in meeting some of these objectives.

- *Assessment of student learning.*

In addition to course evaluation scores on the EGs, all instructors do direct assessment of student learning through conventional means such as evaluating performance on written work – tests, assignments, presentations and providing feedback that indicate the extent to which the student is achieving the educational goals. We also use more informal processes such as the “ABCs” in PLCY 800 and roundtables with the Director and each cohort where student discuss their experiences, how well we are doing in helping them achieve the educational goals, peer reviews, and debriefs in department meetings with instructors. The instructors of our core courses meet to align their reading lists to ensure students cover the educational goals through curriculum and evaluation methods. We focus on the types of deliverables that would be used by decision makers in the public (and private sector). These allow students to use their skills and instructors to assess their performance. These deliverables include written materials such as policy briefing memos in each subject, oral presentations of analysis with slide decks, debates, reading reflections, and longer papers. Four examples can illustrate ways we assess student learning. In first year, we have a group project called BC Priorities where teams of students work on a problem/issue identified by a community partner. Examples of partners are BC Housing, First Nations Health Authority, City of Vancouver, BC government ministries, Vancouver Economic Commission, Board Voice, LEAF and many more. The project is a mini-capstone that helps prepare students for their own independent research and policy analysis in the capstone and how to engage with decision makers in the community. Assessment is done through feedback in the course on presentations, writing terms of reference, feedback from the sponsor in meetings and on their written work. The project culminates in a policy ‘white paper’ that receives extensive feedback from the instructor and the sponsor as well as a presentation by the group to the sponsor. The capstone is a much more extensive project again examining a policy issue, this time chosen by the student, and represents the culmination of the learning in their core courses and electives. Evaluation is done by frequent feedback by their supervisor, and their oral defence with external examiner. The third is what we call the Instant Analysis, another group project with the topic chosen by the class. The group has a week to analyse the issue and then presents their findings to the class with their deck. Feedback is provided by their peers and the instructor. The mandatory co-op is the main mechanism by which students get the experience working as a policy analyst. Feedback is from the Co-op coordinator who meets with the student and their employer and the student's own self-assessment of their work and experience at

School of Public Policy Mid-Cycle Report: Assessing Educational Goals Process & Progress

November 2, 2020, revised

the end of the co-op. We will document these assessments more fully in our next review and explore additional means of undertaking and reporting them.

- *Faculty will be encouraged to work with SFU's Learning Support entities.* Due to the demographics in the department, focus has been on junior CFL faculty. One junior CFL faculty member took full advantage of offerings, including parts 1 and 2 of "Decolonizing Teaching". SPP had no new CFL faculty for a number of years and now that it has three newer joint appointments, we will be encouraging those faculty to take advantage of these courses. Several of our most senior and highly experienced colleagues teach core courses and receive consistently excellent evaluations and incorporate new learning modes in their courses that they glean from their research and engagement with colleagues and the policy community.

Going forward, SPP is looking forward to renewal, appointment of a new Director, and assessing and updating its educational goals and learning outcomes with new colleagues. Faculty and staff will continue to meet as a group to discuss how each of our courses delivers on these goals, how to integrate the learning in our inter-disciplinary department and search for innovative ways to deliver our courses and engage our students. We will continue to encourage faculty to take advantage of the teaching and learning opportunities at SFU.

Appendix: (See attached)

- Learning Strategies for Learning Outcomes, PLCY 800 and 807: Introduction to Public Policy Analysis I and II

Learning Objectives and Learning Strategies
PLCY 800 and 807

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	Learning Strategies	
	In Class	Out of Class
1. Craft a policy problem statement	• Lecture on defining policy problem statements • In-Class Exercise: group presentations crafting policy problem statement for illicit drug overdoses • Examples throughout course: Instant analyses presentations (used to illustrate different approaches and strengths and weaknesses)	• Text book readings (before class) • Written assignments 1-3 • Instant Analysis • BCP project
2. Apply societal and government management objectives to analyze policy problems	• In-Class Exercise: Jigsaw • Lecture on societal and government objectives • In-Class Exercise: group presentations, given newspaper article with policy issue, groups identify key objectives and impacts and present to rest of the class • Examples throughout course: Instant analyses presentations (used to illustrate different approaches and strengths and weaknesses)	• Text book readings (before class) • Written assignments 1-3 • Instant Analysis • BCP project
3. Develop and apply criteria and measures to forecast impacts of policy options, using research and data	• Lecture on criteria and measures • In-Class Exercise: group presentations, students assigned an existing written policy analysis project and must present the criteria and measures that were used in that report. Must comment on strengths and weaknesses of approach used. • In-Class Exercise: concept mapping for how they visually see criteria and measures fitting with policy analysis process • Lecture on research methods in policy analysis • Examples throughout course: Instant analyses presentations (used to illustrate different approaches and strengths and weaknesses)	• Text book readings (before class) • Written assignments 2-3 • Instant Analysis • BCP project

Learning Objectives and Learning Strategies
PLCY 800 and 807

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	Learning Strategies	
	In Class	Out of Class
4. Undertake and apply original research to the policy analysis process	- Lecture on ethical conduct of research - Lecture on research methods - Examples of research throughout term	- BCP research plan in Terms of Reference - Research component of BCP
5. Craft policy options appropriate for a specified policy problem	- Lecture on policy options - In-Class Exercise: muddiest point re: crafting policy options - Examples throughout course: Instant analyses presentations (used to illustrate different approaches and strengths and weaknesses)	- Text book reading (before class) - Written assignments 3 - Instant Analysis - BCP project
6. Interpret policy analysis and develop a recommendation	- Lecture on policy options - Examples throughout course: Instant analyses presentations (used to illustrate different approaches and strengths and weaknesses)	- Text book reading (before class) - Written assignments 3 - Instant Analysis - BCP project
7. Write and present the policy analysis and recommendation, tailored to decision-makers	- Lecture on policy briefs - In-Class Exercise: panel discussion based on different elements of a written policy brief - Example: Presentation of an Instant Analysis and BCP from prior year - Examples: Instant analyses presentations throughout course (as examples to identify strengths and weaknesses) - Examples: BCP Presentations	- Examples of policy briefs provided - Apply through written assignment 3 - Instant Analysis (oral) - BCP project and elements along the way (oral and written)
8. Undertake collaborative analysis in group settings	In-Class Exercise: Group problem solving, halfway through first term BCP groups pair up and share challenge they are facing, groups problem solve with each other and report back to class	- Instant Analysis (oral) - BCP project and elements along the way (oral and written)
9. Integrate anti-racism and anti-colonial perspectives in policy analysis	- Into lecture on ARC and public policy analysis - In-Class presentations of ARC material	- Readings - Assignment 4

Mid-Cycle Educational Goals Assessment Report Review

Provided by SCUTL, the Senate Committee on University Teaching and Learning

Unit name: **School of Public Policy**

Date: 12 January 2021

This form provides feedback from members of the SCUTL subcommittee that reviews plans and reports resulting from SFU external reviews. Our aim is to provide formative feedback on the work being undertaken to set and assess educational goals for programs at SFU. As the inclusion of SCUTL in the external review process is new, we would appreciate hearing from the unit regarding whether this feedback is helpful so we can continue to revise and improve our process. Please feel free to contact the Chair of SCUTL, Elizabeth Elle, at any time (avplt@sfu.ca).

We found that in order to provide feedback on mid-cycle reports, we needed to also consider the assessment plan produced at the start of the external review process. This worksheet notes where particular elements are present in the plan or the assessment, if they are aligned with the aims of the unit, and the strengths and weaknesses of both the plan and the mid-cycle assessment. SCUTL is working from these guiding principles: assessment plans should be **feasible**, **context-sensitive**, and **assess the program, not individual instructors or courses**.

Stage	Element	Plan	Report	Other Comments/Suggestions
Plan and Prioritize	Who will work on the assessment and why	Curriculum Committee	Curriculum Committee is committee of whole unit	
	Department context provided		Yes	
	Plan for engaging faculty	Yes – instructors to send plans to committee	Yes, as a whole, discuss how each course aligns with EGs, issues, ensuring SPP addresses and assesses EGs, constructive alignment of course requirements with EGs	Initial plan was to assess all courses each term, but this was changed after reflection (and that was a good decision!).
	Reasonable timeframe			Shift from every course every term to a semesterly discussion makes the expectations more reasonable, though still exceeding expectations.

Define and Refine	EGs are broken down to measurable sub-goals			Not yet articulated
	Revise EGs (if unit deems necessary)		Plan to review and potentially revise with new faculty	
Curriculum Mapping	Identification of key courses that address specific EGs		No – in this small program, all courses have been mapped and are assessed	
	Curriculum mapping plan (e.g. Introduce/Develop/Proficient; instructional strategies; assessments)	Appears that mapping would be done through instructors' reports – they align course LOs to EGs.	Yes – mapping of EGs to course LOs is updated each time instructor teaches course.	
Assess and Discuss	Specific direct, course-based evidence of student learning as linked to particular EGs			Not articulated.
	Feasible plan for collecting additional data (indirect evidence), if needed		Director's roundtable with MPP students Departmental SETC questions	SETC questions address students' perception of attainment of EGs, but don't measure how well they attain the EGs. Other indirect assessments (like the roundtable) are actually more appropriate.
	Rationale for data collection, including alignment with EGs. Analysis plan is clear and feasible.			It appears that the initial plan of written reports wasn't feasible, or wasn't as productive as the discussions in dept meetings.
	Plan to share findings within unit	Yes – Committee to collate instructors' reports and circulate to dept.	Yes, discussion each semester in dept meetings.	
Implement Improvements	(Provisional) Plan for using findings		Yes – used findings to revise capstone (aligns with EG #5)	

Strengths: Clearly take the process very seriously. Have regular department-level conversations about Ed Goals and how to better support student learning through alignment of learning outcomes, learning activities and assessments. Multiple sources of data speaks to department commitment to continuously

improving education. Adapted initial plans in order to better suit department culture. Significant thought was put into pedagogical approaches to ensure learning outcomes are addressed.

Weaknesses: Do not appear to engage in direct assessment of student learning; it may happen but isn't represented in the report. Does the capstone encompass several of the EGs? If so, it may be appropriate for assessing student attainment of EGs. Although using the SETC system is simple, the system was designed as a way for students to provide feedback about individual instructors (as well as courses) and is not the best option for gathering assessment data.

Recommendation: Student achievement in the Capstone project may be a productive place to begin direct assessment of student learning, especially since there are recent changes to the capstone. We encourage the unit to consider including more direct assessment in future reports, and the Specialist, Program Assessment can help to design a discipline-specific way of doing so.

If you would like support for re-imagining direct or indirect assessments, please consider contacting Alice Campbell in CEE, who is in a new role of Specialist, Program Assessment (alice_campbell@sfu.ca)