



Newsletter

Welcome by Nancy Olewiler, Director

Welcome to our inaugural Graduate Public Policy Program newsletter. Our goal is to provide updates of the many activities of our faculty, current students and alumni. Public policy faculty are engaged in a wide range of research, advice to governments, and outreach to communities as exemplified by Doug McArthur's work in Afghanistan discussed below. Our faculty makes an impact in many areas: John Richards continues his research on aboriginal policy and has been in discussion with senior officials in the federal government. Dominique Gross's work on immigration, Kennedy Stewart's on urban governance, Jon Kesselman's on public issues ranging from mandatory retirement to reform of social policy are more examples. Olena Hankivsky is off to Cuba in December to research women's health policies, and I continue my work on ecological goods and services & climate change. We have graduated two cohorts who are working for the federal government at Industry Canada, HRSDC, CIDA and others, BC and Ontario governments, BC health authorities, the cities of Vancouver and Burnaby, NGOs, and the private sector, to name some examples. Our current students, in addition to their hard work on their Capstone research projects and courses and interesting Co-op positions, helped organize our first Learning Forum this September. Erin Harron's Co-op experience was with the Whalley Business Improvement Association on the provision of social services in the community, as highlighted below. Alumni Beth Bastien reports on how her Capstone on matrimonial real property for First Nations on reserves has lead her to a job examining her topic with the objective of making real policy change.

As these features attest, the world of policy analysis is complex, dynamic and with abundant issues to examine: homelessness, governance in areas of conflict, climate change, labour and skills shortages, health care. The policy communities seek analysts who are trained in the core areas our program covers – economics, political science, research methods, and policy analysis. Our program is attracting and training future leaders who have the capacity to think hard about an issue, do the needed research and design creative and viable policy options that lead to real solutions.

Advising in Afghanistan by Doug McArthur

Afghanistan has always been a place of fascination and wonder for me - a place of proud tribal people, fiercely independent, for many years skillfully managing the predations of great powers with colonial aspirations. Then came the Soviets, the Taliban, Bin Laden and the US invasion. We all know the rest. When the invitation came last spring to go to Kabul to advise members of the newly elected Parliament, I knew that I had to go. I was shocked by what I saw. The country is impoverished, its infrastructure is in shambles, the economy is dismal, and governing institutions are barely functioning. In late May, while I was there, an incident in Kabul brought thousands of armed people into the streets, and was suppressed insurgency led by the Taliban, and fueled by discontent, is gathering strength. When I was asked to go back a second time, I could not say no, however little one person can do. The experience has among other things helped clarify my views of Canada's responsibilities. As I see it, it is time for Canada and Canadians to step up, not back, to truly help the Afghani people take back their future.

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Editor: Dominique M. Gross
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Action Learning Forum by Kennedy Stewart

On Monday, September 18, 2006 the Graduate Public Policy Program and the Master's of Public Policy Student Society co-hosted its first Action Learning Forum entitled "Mind the Gap: Inclusion in Multicultural Vancouver".

Pursuing the twin goals of strengthening links between theory and reality and identifying how research future could be conducted, the forum offered two plenary sessions and three working groups to explore how Vancouver-based labour markets and social services can be made more inclusive and civic participation broadened.

A student poster session also showcased the thesis project work of current MPP students.



MPP students partake in the Action Learning Forum "Mind the Gap: Inclusion in Multicultural Vancouver"

Along with students and GPPP faculty, representatives 35 community organizations attended the event including: Citizenship and Immigration Canada; Service Canada; Human Resources and Social Development Canada; Canadian Policy Research Networks; City of Vancouver; Vancouver Olympic Organizing Committee; Kiwassa Neighbourhood House; SUCCESS; MOSAIC; Immigrant Services Society of B.C.; Literacy B.C.; B.C. School Trustees Association; Vancouver Sex Work Project; North Vancouver Museum; Vancouver Public Library; Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC.

Special Guest Lecture Alex Himmelfarb by John Richards

Himmelfarb's general thesis is that the post-WWII consensus paradigm has collapsed, and no one is sure what to put in its place.

The elements of the now-broken paradigm were universal social programs, Keynesian macroeconomics, and active participation in multilateral institutions during the Cold War.

The prerequisite for the paradigm was a certain public deference toward a self-confident Ottawa mandirantate. That deference crumbled, starting with the "equality revolution" of the 1960s. The paradigm came under sustained stress due to rising public debt from the 1970s to 1990s.

Presently, Ottawa pursues policy without a paradigm – amidst great public scepticism toward any form of collective political action.

He summarized four "drivers" of current policy. The first is the crucial importance of market solutions, both in Canada and internationally. Canada must participate in NAFTA, but it faces challenges from the burgeoning market economies of China, India, and Brazil. One consequence is likely to be an increased tolerance of earnings inequality.

The second is demographic. Stationary, aging populations among OECD countries, combined with rapid growth in many developing countries with stagnant economies has created massive immigration pressures. That, in turn, renders difficult but increasingly important Canada's maintenance of its open-border multicultural tradition.

The post-WWII consensus paradigm has collapsed and no one is sure what to put in its place.

Himmelfarb's third "driver" is environmental degradation. "Disputing the science of global warming," concluded Himmelfarb, "is a waste of time. Climate change is the ultimate common property resource problem."

The fourth is the new security threats posed by fragile states and non-state terrorism.

One of his major concerns as Clerk during Paul Martin's premierships was to advance the "unarticulated debate" on Canada's role beyond its borders.

Canada played a major role in drafting Responsibility to Protect; Canada refrained from participation in the war in Iraq, but has undertaken a major military role in Afghanistan; it has undertaken to double development aid.

What do these initiatives mean? The official answer was the International Policy Statement, tabled in Parliament in spring 2005. It was an attempt to synthesize ideas among senior officials in four agencies – CIDA, International Relations, Defence, and International Trade.

Whether it remains a "living document" (as one student put it) is open to question.

Alex Himmelfarb is Canada's Ambassador to Italy and former Clerk of the Privy Council Office. He conducted a wide-ranging seminar with MPP students and faculty in mid-November.

Career in Public Policy by Beth Bastien

Three weeks after I graduated from the MPP program, the federal government announced a national consultation process on matrimonial real property on reserves, which was my capstone topic.

I was hired by the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) to work as their Policy Analyst on this initiative. The work is challenging. We have a very short window to complete community workshops, focus groups and public hearings across Canada. The analysis of this input and development of a consensus approach that will address the concerns of the individuals, First Nations and governments who have participated in the process will require a careful balancing of interests and viewpoints.

Name: Elizabeth Bastien

**Job: Policy Analyst,
MRP, Matrimonial
Real Property
MPP, 2006**

**BA: Psychology/Sociology
BC Open University**

I enjoy this project because I am working with aboriginal women in every region of Canada. Their willingness to share their personal experiences so we can develop alternatives that may improve the lives of First Nations women and children is inspiring.

The MPP program was great preparation for this work, and provided the right mix of skills and knowledge for the 'real world'. I am very pleased to be working on this file, which has enabled me to move my academic research into a practical application.

Coop: Homeless in Surrey by Erin Harron (MPP cohort 2005)

I worked for the Whalley Business Improvement Association, a grass-roots community group working to improve the Whalley area of Surrey. I led two major projects during my internship at the WBIA – a research project dealing with safety issues facing local businesses, and a self-initiated project that examined the geographical balance of social services for persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and/or dealing with substance abuse issues. I also assisted on a number of other projects and participated in various committees over the summer. Through these experiences, I learned a

lot about the role of community stakeholder groups in the policy process. The experience I gained and the networking I was able to do have also proven invaluable for my Capstone project. Overall, I had a great time working at the WBIA this summer – I met some new friends, made great connections with key players in the policy process, and found a great Capstone project.

From Co-op

To Capstone!



Congratulations

- ◆ Prof. Nancy Olewiler, principal investigator with Professors J. Arifovic, J. Friesen and S. Woodcock for winning one of two grants attributed by the **Simon Fraser Trust Endowment Fund** in September, for a multi-year project on **Education Systems and Outcomes in Diverse Communities**.
- ◆ Prof. Nancy Olewiler, in recognition of her outstanding contributions to the field of environmental taxation for being awarded the **Kreiser Award for Environmental Taxation** at the **7th Annual Global Conference on Environmental Taxation** in Ottawa on October 23, 2006.
- ◆ **2006 MPP CAPP Prize:**
 - Mark Campbell: How Can Aboriginal Boys Be Helped To Do Better In School?
 - Alana McCabe: Nutrition And Dining Out: Policy Options To Inform Choice
- ◆ **2006 MPP Capstone Prize:**
 - Sandra Nikolic: Educating The Future: Raising The Quality Of Primary Schooling In Bangladesh
 - Trish McIver: Increasing Trust In Vancouver's Municipal Government

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The Master's in Public Policy is a two-year innovative new graduate program that emphasizes the development of techniques to **undertake** and **manage** public **policy analysis** and planning.

The mandate of the program is to provide a Professional graduate education that yields public policy analysts and managers who can **scrutinize** a problem, **interpret** and **analyze** relevant data, then **evaluate** alternative paths of action.

Graduates find employment in federal, provincial, and municipal governments, non-governmental organizations, crown corporations, and private-sector firms. The program offers expertise in labour markets, environment, social policy, trade policy, immigration, Canadian and international policy, First Nations research, land use, communications, and more.

