

# Political Science Program Review

## College of Arts

### Dean's Summary

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Submitted by:

Dr. Jacqueline Nolte, Dean of the College of Arts

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Accepted by:

Senate in June 2018

Academic Planning and Priorities Committee in May 2018

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## MEMORANDUM

**From:** Jacqueline Nolte, Dean, College of Arts

**Date:** April 2018

**Re:** Deans Summary of Program Review

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The Department of Political Science External Review team visited UFV campus on 14-15 November 2017. The site visit involved meetings with members of the Department of Political Science, with the Dean of the College of Arts, the Associate Deans, the Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President Academic, the AVP Research Engagement & Graduate Studies, the AVP Institutional Research & Planning and Research Analyst. The reviewers also met the Senior Advisor of Indigenous Affairs, the Director of Teaching and Learning, Library Liaison and an Advisor. The visit included a tour of the campus, library and research centres and an opportunity to meet with undergraduate students and the heads of Global Development Studies and Peace and Conflict Studies.

The reviewer's describe the department as follows, "[i]t is a strong teaching and research-oriented department with a well-established reputation both in Canada and abroad. Its faculty members are thoroughly dedicated to teaching and to actively creating an extremely positive learning environment for its students." They note that the Political Science Major was approved in June 2010 and that the department "should be congratulated that in seven years it has been able to provide a structured, well-rounded program, albeit with an ad hoc arrangement to offer courses in comparative politics." They made eleven recommendations in total, to take "an already well-structured Political Science major (in its seventh year of operation) to the next stage." Their two most important sets of recommendations were i) for the department to undertake a curriculum mapping exercise, keeping learning outcomes in the forefront (Recommendations 1-4); and ii) to fill in a significant lacuna in the department faculty complement in the sub-field of Comparative Politics (Recommendations 6, 7,8).

### **Program and Curriculum and Its Alignment with University's Strategic Priorities**

#### Recommendation 1:

That the Department undertake a curriculum mapping exercise to provide a well-rounded political science program and respond to the five goals of the UFV's Education Plan, 2016-20

Action: The department will undertake this exercise at its annual retreat in June 2018

Recommendation 2:

The Department undertake a Learning Outcome exercise to align itself with the learner-centred direction as outlined in the Education Plan

Action: The department will develop learning outcomes by end of June 2018

Recommendation 3:

The curriculum mapping exercise include an attempt to incorporate into the program the Education Plan's experiential learning component including service and community learning, study abroad and other experiential learning opportunities

Action: The department will provide opportunities to increase students' engagement with organizations at the local and international level and will facilitate student-initiated educational opportunities at home and abroad

Recommendation 4:

The Dean provide an external facilitator to the Department in order to carry forward the curriculum mapping exercise and only the on-going members of the department be included in this exercise

Action: The Dean has asked the department head to contact UNBC to make arrangements for an external facilitator at its June 2018 department retreat

### **Undergraduate Enrollment**

Recommendation 5:

- a) The Political Science Department experiment with online and/or hybrid modes of course delivery. POSC 110 would especially be useful
- b) The Political Science Department offer courses during the summer period, possibly in more than one of the sessions (lower and upper level)
- c) The UFV Political Science Department pursue Block Transfer agreements with other BC institutions in order to facilitate easier transfer into and from the UFV Political Science program

Action: The department has resumed offering summer courses this summer 2018. Political Science faculty will explore online training and the possibility of offering online in 2018-19

### **Teaching Faculty and Resources**

Recommendation 6:

The department receive a replacement position in the event there are any retirements or resignations

Action: The department will coordinate with the Dean when it becomes necessary to replace retirements or resignations.

Recommendation 7:

The department be given a new position in Comparative Politics to provide: a) a well-rounded and balanced political science degree, and b) to align the department's course offerings and student learning experience with the University's Educational Goals and Priorities.

Action: After June 2018, the department plans to put a draft job profile together with the plan of hiring by fall 2019; the Dean will work with the department, exploring opportunities for cross appointments with other programs, most notably Global Development Studies

Recommendation 8:

During the transition period (until resources are found for a full-time Comparative Politics position), the Dean provide the Department with a Limited Term Appointment

Action: The Associate Dean of Faculty will work with the department with regard to this recommendation

**Quality of Faculty members**

Recommendation 9:

- a) The university provide increased time release necessary to conduct research and allow the research-oriented members to reduce their teaching workload
- b) The College of Arts take advantage of the dynamic, well-reputed faculty members of the department to pursue its strategic goals – 'be a leader of social, cultural, economic, and environmentally-responsible development in the Fraser Valley'; 'develop local and global citizenship'
- c) The Department take advantage of the opportunity for collaboration with the University's Research Centres to pursue interdisciplinary research
- d) The department continue supporting the graduate initiative and program in Migration and Citizenship

Action: Faculty members will continue to serve on the committees of these programmes and centers. The Dean will continue to support, where possible, travel to international conferences

## **University Resources**

### Recommendation 10:

- a) The UFV Political Science department continue to work collaboratively with the Office of Indigenous Affairs to support Indigenization at UFV
- b) The UFV Political Science faculty develop more significant online presence
- c) The Teaching and Learning Centre make a greater effort to reach out to Political Science faculty to support their teaching and that Political Science faculty make some effort to participate in Teaching and Learning Centre activities
- d) UFV consider including professional as well as peer tutoring in the Academic Success Centre

Action: The department supports this recommendation and will regularly offer the indigenous politics course, POSC 301. The department will collaborate with the Office of Indigenous Affairs to host activities and courses related to indigenous issues. The department will revive its web presence and Facebook account and consider opening a twitter account to reach out to its students and the community. The department will invite Teaching and Learning and Academic Success Center representatives to its meetings with the objective of pursuing workshops and training.

## **Student Experience**

### Recommendation 11:

To ensure students' timely completion, the department ensures that the time-tabling of upper level courses fulfils the needs of graduating students.

Action: The department accepts this recommendation and will post its time tables for the fall, winter, and summer a year ahead. Upper level courses will be scheduled to allow graduating students to enroll in the courses they need to graduate within an academic year. Where necessary, the department will also offer directed independent studies to fulfil students' course requirements for graduation.