

## Academic Standards Curriculum and Pedagogy Committee of Senate Special Sub-Committee on New Faculty Curriculum

### Record of Consultation

Date	Wednesday, June 12, 2019
Unit	School of Public Policy and Administration (SPPA)
Attendees	Alena Kimakova, Director Joanne Magee, Undergraduate Program Director
Sub-Committee Members	Kim Michasiw, Chair of ASCP, Chair Liette Gilbert, Co-Coordinator (FES) Alice Pitt, Vice-Provost Academic Tarmo Remmel, Co-Coordinator (Geography) Robert Everett, Secretary

### Perspectives

The discussion opened with general impressions of the initiative and elements of the draft proposal circulated in April. SPPA is grateful for opportunities to consult on initiatives that touch on aspects of its curriculum and is open to exploring opportunities for collaboration. The School does not have strength in Environmental Policy *per se* but can imagine welcoming students from the new Faculty who wish to round off their education with generalist curriculum or courses in the areas of public administration, public policy and law that would complement interests.

The FES-Geography curriculum working group is currently focusing on five themes – which could be organized around streams or majors. The School's Director and Undergraduate Program Director offered advice based on recent experience. For example, it was noted that it can prove difficult to move from streams to degree programs (due to regulatory and administrative burdens of different degree programs, student retention when changing program v. changing streams within a program). However, it is possible to have streams included on the OUAC application forms for 101s and 105s. Too much choice in degree programs can lead to confusion and reduce retention rates. The ability to profile a suite of diverse streams has proven advantageous.

The SPPA undergraduate program – the Bachelor of Public Administration (BPA) - is structured in ways that encourage students to declare their stream early in order to track progress, but maximizes flexibility by having a common core curriculum for the first two years of study and making changes to the selection of stream easy for students. It was suggested that the new Faculty not have a major GPA, which is currently quite difficult to monitor. PPA courses are constructed on functional lines. Courses fill early but it is possible that space could be reserved for students from the new Faculty. Twenty-four

credit certificates are popular with non-PPA students, and could accommodate students from the new Faculty. There could also be articulation with the thirty-six credit minor in public administration.

On the graduate side, 1-2 students could be accommodated in courses under the GS/PPAL rubric, which is part of the Master of Public Policy, Administration and Law (MPPAL) program.

Participants discussed aspects of the School's expertise in refugee and migration studies and its course offerings. This is a focus in FES and Geography (along with other units and programs) and suggested opportunity for cooperation.

As proponents work on academic standards at the graduate level, the Director and UPD commented that narrative evaluation (i.e. variations on pass/fail grading) would not be appropriate to the MPPAL for reasons specific to the program and as a general proposition.

Undergraduate students benefit greatly from structured networking with graduate students, alumni and professionals who offer practical advice and motivational leadership. Similarly, experiential learning, placements and courses with an explicit professional orientation are rewarding for students and conducive to the School's mission and values.

One successful way of promoting certificate enrolment is to identify and contact students who have selected courses that put them on a path to attain the requirements. Generally speaking, students are more interested in certificates that are different in their subject area foci yet closely relate to their degree programs.

### **Outcomes and Next Steps**

At the meeting's conclusion, the Chair noted that the curriculum working group might make special note of the utility of minors and certificates as they design the overall curriculum schema. Co-ops and experiential education (the latter associated with priorities highlighted in the UAP and Strategic Mandate Agreements) should be built into the new Faculty curriculum. It was noted that Glendon and Health have policy-oriented curriculum. In this light the working group should review offerings there with a view to assessing opportunities

Participants from the School expressed a desire to remain engaged and it was agreed that the Sub-Committee will invite the Director and others to return for further discussion in September at which point curriculum proposals will be further refined.

The record of consultation will be forwarded with the FES-Geography curriculum working group, shared with Professors Kimakova and Magee, and posted on the Sub-Committee's Website.

In a more general vein, discussants observed the following:

- it would be appropriate to review the University's migration and refugee-themed curriculum in a wide context.
- students should be made aware of offerings in other Faculties that complement or extend their interests.