

January 30, 2025

Dear members of the Council Committee on Academic Mission,

Please find attached the Department of Politics and International Studies (PAIS) five-year follow-up report, completed using the provided template format.

We are grateful to the reviewers, Dr. Loleen Berdahl (University of Saskatchewan), Dr. Genevieve Fuji Johnson (Simon Fraser University), and Dr. Lisa Watson (University of Regina), for delivering an academic unit review that captured the strengths of the PAIS department while delivering a thorough and insightful set of suggested improvements. With few exceptions, the Department embraced the reviewers' suggestions, and these have proved to be an excellent road map to improved programming and communication. The review provided guidance to a succession of Department Heads: Dr. Jim Farney (whose term ended in 2021), Dr. Eldon Soifer (2022-2023), and Dr. Simon Granovsky-Larsen (2023-present). The continuity in departmental vision facilitated by the review process is greatly appreciated.

The external review report led to a number of significant changes within the Department, including the hiring of a senior faculty member, a curriculum review of the Political Science program, the redevelopment of all online courses, and the establishment of an ongoing strategic planning process. Our response to the report also produced many initiatives to communicate better about the department's strengths and activities, in particular to current and potential students. In this area, we have completed work such as increasing support for the UR POLIS student society, redesigning the department's website, designing and distributing materials promoting recent graduates and upcoming courses, and engaging with high school students.

An ongoing and significant challenge faced by PAIS comes from the reduction in faculty members within the department in the five years since the unit review. The reviewers wrote that "while PAIS is on a positive trajectory, in our assessment this momentum is fragile. Due to faculty complement issues, the department's sustainability and ability to evolve to meet curricular needs is uncertain." In the five years since the report was issued, the non-renewal of two term positions (Dr. Emily Merson and Dr. Yun Liu) and the departure of two full-time faculty members (Dr. Jim Farney and Dr. Allyson Stevenson) have reduced that already fragile faculty complement by a further three positions—from 10.5 full time members in 2020 (including one member on administrative leave) to 7.5 in 2025 (including one member on administrative leave and another teaching a reduced course load as Associate Dean).

We are fortunate to have hired one full-time member (Dr. Emily Grafton), on recommendation of the unit review, and also to have converted one term position to tenure-track (Dr. Brian McQuinn). Nevertheless, the precarity of the department highlighted in the report has only

deepened over this time. The uncertainty and strain on resources is felt particularly in the International Studies program, which has just two full-time faculty members. While PAIS has worked diligently to implement nearly all of the reviewers' recommendations, work on issues such as gender programming, growth in majors and enrollments, identity building, methodology training, and career skills training would be amplified greatly by hiring additional faculty members.

As we move forward towards the next scheduled unit review five years from now, the 2020 external review report will continue to guide much of the Department's work. Some recommendations that have already been implemented require ongoing work. One final recommendation also remains to be taken up by the Department: setting targets for majors and enrollment growth. Coupled with growth in the faculty complement of the Department, we are confident that PAIS will continue to work towards the vision and goals set out in the external review report.

Sincerely,



Simon Granovsky-Larsen, PhD
Department Head and Associate Professor
Department of Politics and International Studies

	Unit Response to AUR recommendations	18 Month follow-up	Year 5 and final follow-up	Goals & Initiatives for the next three to five years until the next AUR
External Review Report				
Short Term Actions				
R1 Develop and expand gender programming	Accept – in progress	Beside some reworking of the existing course “Women in Politics”, (now renamed “Gender in Canadian Politics”), the Department seeks to add a course entitled “Feminist Political Thought”. The new proposed course on “Indigenous Women and Politics” also seeks to increase the gender programming within the department, but also addresses wider goals of promoting diversity.	Partially implemented. This recommendation implemented in the Political Science program (PSCI), through the revisions detailed in the 18 month follow-up report. The International Studies (IS) program lacks faculty with expertise in gender. A tenure-track hire in Gender and International Development was the top request in the PAIS 2024 Faculty Complement Plan submitted to the Faculty of Arts, and the Department plans to continue making this request in coming years.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Secure a tenure-track position in International Studies with expertise in gender. 2. Establish a gender-focused IS course, when expertise is available. 3. Incorporate gender programming within existing IS courses; identify gaps via the IS curriculum mapping exercise (see R2).
R2 Conduct a curriculum refresh	Accept – in progress	The Department established a working group to examine the curriculum. This working group decided to focus on the Political Science side of the Department, since the International Studies program had undergone an overhaul more recently. The changes	Implemented. The 18 month report referred to the review of the Political Science program, which is complete. Since seven years have passed since the 2018-2019 curriculum review of the International Studies program, the department began a new IS program review in Fall 2024. The department is working with the Centre for Teaching	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete the International Studies curriculum review and submit program changes to APDC in 2025.

		<p>proposed by this committee were approved by the Department in September, 2021, and they have been sent to the Faculty's Academic Program Development Committee for approval. These changes included the deletion of a total of twenty-two (22) courses, and significant changes to the titles and/or descriptions of a further fourteen (14) courses. The committee also recommended the creation of thirteen (13) new courses, largely in support of other recommendations from the External Reviewers. For example, in addressing recommendation 1 (p.8) concerning the expansion of gender programming, beside some reworking of the existing course "Women in Politics", (now renamed "Gender in Canadian Politics"), the Department seeks to add a course entitled "Feminist Political Thought". The new proposed course on "Indigenous Women and Politics" also seeks to increase the gender programming within the department, but also</p>	<p>and Learning on a Curriculum Mapping Exercise (in progress), and we plan to make minor program revisions in order to update course offerings and address any identified hurdles for smooth student completion of the degree program.</p>	
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		addresses wider goals of promoting diversity. Other proposed courses that are expected to further this goal include “The Politics of Diversity in the 21st Century,” “Decolonial, Anticolonial and Postcolonial Thought”, and “Erasure and Resurgence: Indigenous Peoples and Canadian Settler Colonialism”. In addition, a further working group has been established to consider changes to the International Studies program to enhance gender programming. The Department has also had some worthwhile discussions about embedding questions of gender and diversity into existing curriculum (see recommendation 1, p.8).		
R3 Establish ongoing, iterative strategic planning	Accept – implemented	The Department has agreed to engage in ongoing strategic planning. We had one meeting in regard to this in 2021, and have agreed to have another in January, 2022.	Implemented. Strategic planning sessions continue to be held annually.	1. Continue the practice of holding annual strategic planning sessions.
R4 Expand engagement with the Centre for	Accept goal but differ in implementation	The Department has discussed this, but is not ready to proceed with such a commitment at this time. For one thing, the Report notes that the Department had	Implemented. While the initial response and 18 month report from PAIS indicated hesitation, the department has since strengthened its engagement with CCE. All online	1. Maintain existing online programming by redeveloping online courses

<p>Continuing Education</p>		<p>already increased its engagement with CCE (p.9), and we in fact do quite a bit of our teaching through this option (40% of class offerings in Fall, 2021, for example). There is also some uncertainty about whether the intent of this recommendation was primarily about increasing revenue, or about “using this as an opportunity to draw non-majors into taking political science and international studies elective classes” p.9). If the latter, the Department is not convinced this is an effective way to achieve this goal. The Department intends to give this recommendation further consideration, but has not made it a priority in implementing the External Reviewers’ recommendations.</p>	<p>courses have been through redevelopment since the 2020 unit review, and we are beginning to schedule more iterations of the online courses than in previous years. For example, we have proposed to the Faculty of Arts that we begin to offer IS 100 online as a second section, concurrent with its in-person modality, during at least one semester per year.</p>	<p>before their expiry dates. 2. Continue to offer evening courses each semester, across a balance of course levels (100, 200, 300, 400).</p>
<p>R5 Establish departmental committees and appoint an Assistant Department Head</p>	<p>Accept goal but differ in implementation</p>	<p>Coupled with the loss of the Department’s designated support person, the presence of a new and external Head led to a considerable degree of disruption with regard to the Department’s governmental structure, and day-to-day operations. In light of this, and of the fact that the</p>	<p>Partially implemented. The small size of the PAIS department (seven tenured members) makes working as a committee of the whole both efficient and collegial. Instead of establishing standing committees, work has been delegated to ad hoc committees as necessary. Currently, three members form an ad hoc committee to review the IS program curriculum (see</p>	<p>1. Continue to make decisions as a committee of the whole, and to strike ad hoc committees as necessary. 2. Aim for continuity in Department leadership by electing a second</p>

		<p>Department’s small size (only five tenure-track members, plus an external head) makes it often seem more efficient to work as a “committee of the whole”, the Department has not taken concrete action on further reworking the governance structure in this period. However, the Department will give further consideration to taking such action in due course.</p>	<p>Recommendation 2). The Department decided not to add an Assistant Department Head, given the size of the department and the resulting manageable workload for the Head. We note that PAIS has settled into more continuity with its Department Head than was seen over much of the five year review period. Following the departure of Dr. Jim Farney and his temporary replacement by an external Head in Dr. Eldon Soifer, Dr. Simon Granovsky-Larsen began a five year term as Head in July 2023, as a member internal to PAIS. Other PAIS members are now at a mid-career stage where they will be eligible to stand for election as Head in 2028.</p>	<p>consecutive PAIS member as the next Department Head in 2028.</p>
<p>R6 Improve communication with students</p>	<p>Accepted – in progress</p>	<p>The Department accepts this recommendation, and is happy that there has indeed been an improvement in communication since the Report. The Department’s student society, UR POLIS, has been reconstituted, and is running well as a conduit for information. UR POLIS has also organized a number of events in the past year, such as a “Women in Politics” panel, with some very distinguished panelists, a “Drop-in Election Debrief”, and a Panel on “Gender Equity in the 2021</p>	<p>Implemented. The reconstitution of the UR POLIS student society, during the previous five years, has led to ongoing and meaningful communication with students. UR POLIS representatives attend Department meetings, and the society regularly organizes department-based events for students. UR POLIS and the Department share communications with students, as the Department uses its mailing list to circulate UR POLIS events and announcements, and UR POLIS does the same for the Department via its social media accounts. In the last two years, the Department has made an increased effort to communicate</p>	<p>1. Continue support (financial and other) for the UR POLIS student society and maintain good engagement between the Department and the society. 2. Adapt the PAIS Department website as necessary, with an eye to excellent communication with students on departmental affairs.</p>

		Canadian Federal Election”. The Department has also appointed a faculty advisor to UR POLIS to facilitate on-going communications, which are also strengthened by the inclusion of a report from UR POLIS as a standard item on the agenda of Department meetings.	regularly with students about events, awards, and course programming. PAIS recently launched a new website, and prioritized clear communication to students about events, awards, student success, and more. New posters have been developed to advertise PAIS courses in print and digitally.	
Medium Term Actions				
R7 Increase congruence across programs	Further strategic discussion – sees opportunities here but also want to ensure distinctiveness of programs	There has not been consensus within the Department about whether these are ideas to pursue, and it has been noted that congruence is made more difficult by the fact that International Studies is an interdisciplinary program whereas Political Science is not. In any case, the External Reviewers suggested these might be things to consider “once the course offerings have been better rationalized and focused” (p.10), which is a process that is still in progress. Accordingly, the Department will give further consideration to these recommendations in its ongoing strategic planning sessions.	Partially implemented. The Department decided to emphasize the distinct identities of the Political Science and International Studies programs, and we have not made changes to the programs that would aim to bring these together. However, the last three iterations of approved and proposed course schedules (2024-2025 through 2026-2027) included an increased number of courses that are cross-listed between PSCI and IS, typically at the third year level. This has brought students from the two programs together into classes. PAIS also implemented a change to the PSCI BA and Honours BA program that allows PSCI majors to count the Philosophy, Politics, and Economics PPE 200 course towards their program requirements, rather than as an elective. This change is intended to increase interaction	1. Maintain an awareness of the importance of scheduling cross-listed PSCI/IS courses in long-term planning.

			between PSCI and PPE students while also encouraging greater enrollment in PPE 200.	
R8 Develop PAIS cohort classes	Further discussion	There has not been consensus within the Department about whether these are ideas to pursue, and it has been noted that congruence is made more difficult by the fact that International Studies is an interdisciplinary program whereas Political Science is not. In any case, the External Reviewers suggested these might be things to consider “once the course offerings have been better rationalized and focused” (p.10), which is a process that is still in progress. Accordingly, the Department will give further consideration to these recommendations in its ongoing strategic planning sessions.	Not implemented. For the same considerations introduced in response to Recommendation 7, the department decided not to create any cohort classes across PSCI and IS.	No further action required.
R9 Establish multi-year scheduling	Accept – in progress	The Department accepts this as a goal, and has tried developing a rotating two-year schedule, but has found that the small size of the Department makes it vulnerable to disruption of these sorts of plans. It is expected that the faculty complement will be more stable in the next few years	Implemented. Implementation of this recommendation was aided by the university’s move to full-year scheduling. The department, via Faculty of Arts requirements, now submits schedule proposals a year and a half in advance. This encourages the Department Head to think of course scheduling in multi-year terms.	No further action required.

		than it has been in the past few, and that this will make it easier to implement this recommendation. It is worth noting here that it seems likely the Faculty of Arts will also be encouraging Departments to develop such scheduling plans, which will provide the Department with an additional incentive to make this work.		
R10 Create a faculty complement plan	Accept goal but understand as flexible aspect of strategic planning rather than rigid plan		Implemented. In 2023, the Faculty of Arts retired the long-standing practices related to proposals for term and tenure-track hire. Departments are now required to submit annual iterations of an evolving Faculty Complement Plan. PAIS has followed through with two plans, submitted in 2023 and 2024.	No further action required.
R11 Establish both majors and enrolment growth targets	Accept goal but without change in major declaration rules will have little impact	The Department believes that it would have been premature to act on this recommendation in the period since the report was received. In principle, the Department is very willing to set such targets, and to try to expand the numbers of non-majors taking its courses. It is expected that the revisions to the curriculum, and the stabilization of the faculty complement within the Department, will facilitate these goals over the next few	Not implemented. As noted in the 18 month report, the Department deferred setting growth targets while implementing other recommendations, such as curriculum revisions and the stabilization of the faculty complement. With the PSCI curriculum revised and an IS curriculum revision underway, and with a faculty complement that has not changed since 2021, the time is right to establish targets for majors and growth.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Undertake a thorough review of majors and enrollment. 2. Set targets for growth and devise strategy for action. 3. Continue to advocate for additional tenure-track hires, which would allow both the expansion of course offerings and the attraction of

		years. Accordingly, the Department sees this as a recommendation that has not yet been implemented, but which it accepts as a middle term goal.		new students, as we have seen happen with other recent hires in the Department.
R12 Build a sense of identity through events		The Department is in general agreement with these recommendations, though there has been some concern about how to differentiate between “attracting students” and unduly encouraging students to leave other programs. The Department has incorporated discussion of ways in which to promote these goals into the Department’s strategic planning sessions. Despite the hindrance of Covid, some of these ideas have been acted on already (e.g. the organization of events that can help build identity), but the Department intends to take further actions along these lines in the next few years.	Partially implemented. The frequency of PAIS Department-organized events declined during Covid, and has not fully recovered despite an uptick since 2023. However, the UR POLIS student society continues to do impressive work organizing regular events. While the Department should not rely on this student-driven work, it is nevertheless noteworthy that UR POLIS events have contributed to departmental identity building.	1. Set semester targets for the number and type of events to be hosted by the Department.
R13 Invest time in branding	Accept – in progress	The Department is in general agreement with these recommendations, though there has been some concern about how to differentiate between “attracting students” and unduly encouraging	Implemented. As new Department Head, Simon Granovsky-Larsen placed renewed emphasis on Department branding and visibility. Initiatives include the design of new sets of course posters for the 24-25 and 25-26 academic years, a redesign of the	1. This is an ongoing action item. The Department will need to continually refresh and expand its communication and branding

		<p>students to leave other programs. The Department has incorporated discussion of ways in which to promote these goals into the Department’s strategic planning sessions. Despite the hindrance of Covid, some of these ideas have been acted on already (e.g. the organization of events that can help build identity), but the Department intends to take further actions along these lines in the next few years.</p>	<p>departmental website (in line with the university-wide transition, but with a goal of improving Department branding), overhaul of Department bulletin boards and display cases, and participation in province-wide promotional events with high school students. Two PAIS faculty members currently sit on the board of directors of the Canadian Political Science Association (as well as serving on a high profile subcommittee and as a CPSA journal editor). This has increased the profile of the PAIS department nationally.</p>	<p>initiatives. More work is especially needed to communicate the Department’s strengths to audiences beyond Arts undergraduates (eg, across campus and, as researchers, within our communities of peers).</p>
<p>R14 Find ways to attract undeclared students within Arts to PAIS classes and programs</p>	<p>Accept goal but without change in major declaration rules will have little impact</p>	<p>The Department is in general agreement with these recommendations, though there has been some concern about how to differentiate between “attracting students” and unduly encouraging students to leave other programs. The Department has incorporated discussion of ways in which to promote these goals into the Department’s strategic planning sessions. Despite the hindrance of Covid, some of these ideas have been acted on already (e.g. the organization of events that can help build identity), but the Department intends to take</p>	<p>Implemented. The external review report suggested better communication by the Department regarding the career potential that PAIS degrees can offer. In 2024, the Department carried out a small project to interview recent accomplished graduates and create profiles about the students and the degrees and jobs that they have gone on to. A series of profiles are now featured on the new PAIS website, and we plan to update these annually with rounds of new graduates. PAIS has also taken up two invitations recently to speak with high school students and their parents, and at both we emphasized career potential.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update student profiles annually for the PAIS website. 2. Add printed posters of the profiles to the PAIS display cabinet on the first floor of the Classroom Building.

		further actions along these lines in the next few years.		
Long Term Actions				
R15 Expand methodology training	Accept goal but further strategic discussion re implementation	The Department has had some discussion about whether or not to accept these as desirable goals. In any case, these are both put forward as recommendations calling for long term action, so the Department has deferred its decision about whether to take steps to implement these recommendations.	Not implemented. Given the shortage of full time faculty available to teach existing core courses for the two programs, the Department decided that it would not be a wise use of resources to expand into methodology training. Current offerings by the Department of Sociology and Social Studies are more than adequate to meet the demands of PAIS students.	No further action required.
R16 Strategically focus on explicit career skills training in classes	Accept goal but further strategic discussion re implementation	The Department has had some discussion about whether or not to accept these as desirable goals. In any case, these are both put forward as recommendations calling for long term action, so the Department has deferred its decision about whether to take steps to implement these recommendations.	Partially implemented. Some PAIS faculty members have incorporated extensive career skills training in their classes. For example, Dr. Brian McQuinn has developed semester-long projects for CV development, job applications, and mock work in NGOs and intergovernmental organizations. Nevertheless, the Department needs to think systematically about incorporating career skills training and to encourage more instances.	1. Develop a plan to incorporate more career skills training in multiple courses. Discuss at the next strategic planning meeting.
R17 Find ways to attract international students from other Faculties	Further strategic discussion: very open to working with UR International, feel programming	The Department is in general agreement with these recommendations, though there has been some concern about how to differentiate between “attracting students” and unduly encouraging students to leave other	Not implemented. The Department is hesitant to actively recruit students from other units in a zero sum competition, as mentioned in the initial and 18 month reports. Nevertheless, PAIS has seen a significant increase in international student enrollment even in the absence of efforts to attract	No further action required.

	benefits from international students, don't want to engage in zero sum competition with other units	programs. The Department has incorporated discussion of ways in which to promote these goals into the Department's strategic planning sessions. Despite the hindrance of Covid, some of these ideas have been acted on already (e.g. the organization of events that can help build identity), but the Department intends to take further actions along these lines in the next few years.	international students as such. International student enrolment in PAIS classes increased from 98 credit hours in 2020-21 to 221 in 2023-24, with similar increases within both the PSCI and IS programs.	
Recommendations to the Faculty and University				
R18 Hire a senior PAIS female faculty member	In progress	Our Department was in complete agreement with this recommendation, and were pleased that, when the departure of Dr. Jim Farney for a position at the Johnson Shoyama School of Public Policy opened up a position, the Faculty of Arts and the University allowed us to fill it with a targeted call for a senior, female scholar. We are delighted that we were thereby able to hire Dr. Emily Grafton, who became a member of this Department as of July, 2021. Dr. Grafton (formerly the Executive Lead, Indigenization, and	Implemented. The hiring of Dr. Emily Grafton in 2021 (discussed in the 18 month report) satisfied this recommendation. The Department has been extremely pleased with Dr. Grafton's leadership and mentorship, which she has been generous to impart across the university community as well as among PAIS students.	No further action required.

		Indigenous Research Lead at the University of Regina) brings with her a wide array of skills, useful experiences, and an impressive research record, and we believe she will be an excellent person to fill the role, suggested by the External Reviewers, of providing “leadership and mentorship to junior women” (pp.13-14).		
R19 Focus on supports for Indigenous faculty	In progress		This recommendation should be reviewed at the Faculty of Arts and university levels.	
R20 Revisit interpretation of hiring policies	In progress		This recommendation should be reviewed at the university level.	
R21 Reinstate university teaching awards	---		This recommendation should be reviewed at the university level.	
R22 Revisit class cancellation policies	---		This recommendation should be reviewed at the Faculty of Arts level. We note a welcome degree of flexibility in class cancellation policy in recent years.	
R23 Revisit majors policies	In progress		This recommendation should be reviewed at the Faculty of Arts level.	
R24	In progress		This recommendation should be reviewed at the university level.	

Establish clear university policy on certificates				
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