

November 2, 2020

Dear Council Committee on Academic Mission;

Please find attached the Department of Politics and International Studies' (PAIS) initial response to its external review in template form. PAIS came together at the end of August for two half-day facilitated discussions to engage with the recommendations of the report and to begin the work of implementing required changes. PAIS is very enthusiastic about the external reviewer's work: we feel that it captures the Department's collegial values and positive energy well while also providing very useful direction for growth and improvement. As the CCAM template shows, we have implemented or are in the process of implementing all of the short-term recommendations, except for the suggestion that PAIS establish an Assistant Head position, and have made progress on many of the mid- and long- term suggestions. We believe that these measures are bringing PAIS more into alignment with the University's Strategic Plan, insofar as that is possible for a small Departmental unit. PAIS also expresses its support for the recommendations the reviewers made to decision makers at the Faculty and University level.

It is very important to highlight that PAIS has gone through some very significant personnel changes since the reviewer's report was received in April 2020. Over the summer, it lost three academic members and one staff member: Dr. Allyson Stevenson accepted a named chair at the University of Saskatchewan and vacated her CRC Tier II position; Dr. Emily Merson's term contract ended and was not renewed; the Head, Dr. Jim Farney, accepted the position of Regina Director of the Johnson-Shoyama School of Public Policy effective December 1 and is leaving PAIS; and the contract of Ms. Jocelyn Sokalofsky, PAIS's administrative assistant, ended and was not renewed. Unfortunately, the reviewer's finding proved remarkably prescient 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" (2).

Some response to these changes has already been made. PAIS has received permission from the Dean of Arts to advertise for a senior female hire in Gender and Politics and is in the process of seeking an outside head from another Arts department until existing members of the Department are at an appropriate career stage to take on that role. Job sharing of administrative support with Economics and Sociology is currently working well, though there are concerns in PAIS about the sustainability of this model when students return to campus. Dr. Stevenson's teaching in the area of Indigenous Politics has been filled with sessional instructors, but her research activity and academic leadership is sorely missed.

In short, it must be underlined that the external report was written with a view of a unit of 10.5 full time faculty members. PAIS will have 8.5 members at the end of this term (including 2 terms, 1 Champion member, and 1 member on administrative leave). Even with a successful hire in Gender and Politics at the senior level, PAIS will continue to be in a fragile staffing position.

Sincerely,



Jim Farney,  
Associate Professor and Head  
Politics and International Studies University of Regina

**Response and Implementation**

On receipt of the report the members of the unit will meet in committee for discussion. The Dean and the unit head will then meet with CCAM to review the report. Based on the report, comments received from CCAM and any University planning and priority documents, the unit will then prepare a response. The response will address the issues raised and clearly outline priorities and future directions and initiatives for the unit over the next three to five years. As such it should be prepared in close partnership with the Dean. The response will be transmitted to CCAM which may comment on it. The response and any comments from CCAM will inform the faculty’s long-term planning. The Provost or AVP (Academic) will provide a formal written response to the report from the unit.

**Follow-up**

Five years after the review (and mid-way before the next review) CCAM will initiate a follow-up with the unit. The unit will be invited to prepare and submit a brief report in which members of the unit comment on the consequences of the review and initiatives undertaken in response to it and respond to any comments from CCAM. In particular they will be asked to describe initiatives and plans for the coming three to five years until the next review takes place. The follow-up will be reported to Executive of Council and the report and any comments from CCAM will be made available on request.

	Initial Follow-up	18 Months	Year 5	Goal
<b>2020-25 U of R Strategic Plan</b>				
Discovery	External Review identifies strength in teaching and research. Look forward to deepening internationalization efforts and working with Arts as a whole on student success.			
Truth and Reconciliation	Loss of Dr. Stevenson felt keenly but PAIS continues to integrate Indigenous focused material across program, to offer more Indigenous politics courses, and to build relationships w communities (FNU at the present time)			
Well-being and Belonging	Significant discussions around EDI concerned with hiring and culture. Ongoing health research in unit. Mental health not a significant research strength but focus on healthy climate for students			
Environment and Climate Action	Not a major independent focus			
Impact and Identity	Very significant ongoing engagement in public square and with community partners. Ongoing grant programs seek to deepen this in a number of areas. Ongoing strength in Community engaged research			

<b>External Review Report</b>				
Develop and Expand Gender Programming	Accept -- In progress			
Curriculum Refresh	Accept -- In progress			
Strategic Planning	Accept -- Implemented			
CCE Engagement	Accept Goal but differ in Implementation			
Department Committees and Assistant Head	Accept Goal but differ in Implementation			
Communication with Students	Accepted – in progress			
Congruence Across Programs	Further Strategic Discussion – sees opportunities here but also want to insure distinctiveness of programs			
Cohort Classes	Further Discussion			
Multi Year Scheduling	Accept – in progress			
Faculty Complement Plan	Accept Goal but understand as flexible aspect of strategic planning rather than rigid plan			
Majors and Enrolment Growth Planning	Accept goal but w/o change in major declaration rules will have little impact			
Invest in Branding	Accept – in progress			
Attract Undeclared Students in Arts	Accept goal but w/o change in major declaration rules will have little impact			
Methods Training	Accept goal but further strategic discussion re implementation			
Career Skills training in Curriculum	Accept goal but further strategic discussion re implementation			
Attract International Students from Other Faculties	Further strategic discussion: very open to working w UR International, feel programming benefits from int'l students, don't want to engage in zero sum competition w other units			

Recommendations for Faculty of Arts/University of Regina from External Reviewers:

Hire Senior PAIS female faculty member (in progress)

Supports for Indigenous Faculty (in progress)

Interpretation of Hiring Policy re EDI (in progress)

University Teaching Awards

Revisit Class Cancellation Policies

Revisit Major declaration policy (in progress)

Revisit University Policy on certificates (in progress)

