Executive Summary

Graduate Program in Public and International Affairs
Cyclical review year 2015-2016

Approved by the Graduate Program Evaluation Committee
Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
Meeting of December 16, 2015

<table>
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<th>Name of Program Reviewed</th>
<th>Public and International Affairs</th>
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| Degrees                  | • Master of Arts Public and International Affairs  
                          | • Master of Arts Public and International Affairs Specialization in Environmental Sustainability  
                          | • Master of Arts Public and International Affairs Specialization in Science, Society and Policy |
| Responsible academic units | Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, Faculty of Social Sciences |
| Fields                   | None                             |
| Final Evaluation         | Good quality                     |

**Significant Strengths of the Program**

Overall, the MA in Public and International Affairs is judged to be a strong program within a strong School. Taking advantage of its location in the National Capital Region, the program has forged strong relationships with federal agencies; this aligns with the University’s objectives and has contributed to raising its profile both locally and internationally. The co-operative education option and embassy internship program offer rich experiential learning opportunities. The multidisciplinary approach enables students to develop appropriate practical, analytical and methodological competencies.

The curriculum is consistent with the current state and norms of the discipline. The program structure is clear, coherent and well thought out, having a strong core of six courses in the first year that prepare students for specialized electives and experiential learning opportunities, as well as the major research paper. Innovative features include the possibility of participating in collaborative programs in Environmental Sustainability and in Science, Society and Policy. The School is currently examining the possibility of developing a doctoral degree also.

The program is extremely well resourced, having strong and research-active faculty, complemented by over 20 highly committed senior fellows. Together, they provide a rich pool of talent and engage in various forms of teaching and supervision, as well as the mentorship program, all of which are greatly appreciated by students.

**Areas for Improvement and Enhancement**

Although it is judged to be a very good program overall, there is nonetheless room for adjustments, as well as some extension of its features to a wider range of students.

The School has the capacity to admit a greater number of students and would benefit from a more
ambitious promotion and recruitment campaign. Part of this strategy could include integrating international students more fully into its programs (including co-op and internship programs) to further enhance its international profile. Expanding the experiential learning opportunities overall could help to attract a greater number of applicants, as could opening the program to part-time students (though care would need to be taken to build a strong sense of community among part-time students).

Bilingualism is a core feature of the program; however, the current format is not working effectively. The School is encouraged to seek other ways of helping students to achieve the necessary level of second-language skills, such as through immersion courses during the summer semester. Rethinking the format of the bilingualism requirement may also help to increase applications to the program in cases where language skills act as a barrier.

Students expressed a desire to receive a greater level of support for various types of professional development, including scholarship applications, academic writing, and career planning. The program could consider developing some targeted activities, or better promoting central services that could help to address these needs.

**Recommendations**

It is recommended that the graduate program in Public and International Affairs seek to:

1. Develop and implement a more pro-active and effective recruitment strategy, which includes re-examining the program’s language requirement as well as the requirement for full-time registration.
2. Expand opportunities for experiential learning, including options for international students.
3. Augment professional development opportunities for students.
4. Balance support for the burgeoning research elements of the program alongside the existing excellent support for the program’s professional elements.

**Implementation Plan**

**Calendar and Deadlines**

All noted recommendations should be addressed in the next cyclical review, which should be completed within seven years and no later than 2023 - 2024.

**Authorities**

The authorities who are responsible for implementing and monitoring the recommendations include the Supervisor of Graduate Studies and the Director of the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, in collaboration with the Dean and Vice-Dean (Graduate Studies) of the Faculty of Social Sciences.