

**UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR**  
**UNIVERSITY PROGRAM REVIEW (UPR)**  
**REPORT ON: POLITICAL SCIENCE**  
**UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE PROGRAMS**  
 January 2016

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Review Preparation**

In preparing this document, the Program Development Committee reviewed the following: Political Science’s Self-Study (SS) (2014/15), the report of the external reviewers (ER) (May 2015), the response from the Head (June 2015), and the response from the Dean (July 2015) to the above material. The external reviewers were: Dr. Brian Tanguay, Department of Political Science, Wilfrid Laurier University, Dr. Lucian M. Ashworth, Department of Political Science, Memorial University of Newfoundland, and Dr. Christopher Waters, Faculty of Law, University of Windsor.

**Undergraduate and Graduate Programs**

At the undergraduate level, the Department offers a Bachelor of Arts (General) in Political Science, a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Political Science, a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Political Science with Bilingual Specialization, a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Political Science with Law and Politics Specialization, and a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in International Relations and Development Studies. Students also have the option of combining their Honours Political Science major with a major from another discipline. The Department also collaborates with the Centre for Inter-Faculty Programs to offer a Bachelor of Arts (Combined Honours) in Digital Journalism and Political Science.

Degree completion programs, which are programs that provide advanced standing into existing degree programs, are offered as follows: Bachelor of Arts (General) in Political Science for Hebei Law and Politics College Graduates, and Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Political Science for Hebei Law and Politics College Graduates.

The Department offers a Certificate in Public Administration, a Certificate in Law and Politics, a Certificate in North American Studies, a Minor in Political Science, as well as Major and Minor Concentrations for the Bachelor of Arts and Science.

At the graduate level, the Department offers a Master of Arts in Political Science with two fields (international relations and global politics, and Canadian government and politics) and three streams (thesis, major paper, internship). The Department also has an articulation agreement with the University of Michigan (Dearborn campus) which enables students in the Masters program to receive transfer credit for their graduate political science courses towards the University of Michigan’s Master of Public Policy program.

**Enrolments**

**Undergraduate**

	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015
<b>Full-Time</b>	311.8	313.5	290.5	307.5	283.5
<b>Part-Time</b>	79	69	79.58	66.5	61

**Graduate**

	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015
<b>MA Full-Time</b>	36	40	41	31	32
<b>MA Part-Time</b>	4	3	1	0	0

## Human Resources

### Faculty/Instructors

Tenure/tenure-track faculty	12 (including Head) + 1 vacancy
Faculty members involved in graduate program delivery	12

### Full-time Staff

Secretaries	2
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## FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT (with Implementation Plan)

### Significant Strengths of the Programs

The commitment to teaching and learning, the strong research record, and its “strong sense of community and regional identity that permeates both the department and the university” (ER, p. 2) are all significant strengths of the Department and contribute to the success of its programs and students. Specifically, the mentorship program embedded in the first-year course (45-100), consisting of “break-out groups and semester-long debate projects led by [upper-year] student mentors” (ER, p. 8), the commitment to the teaching of first-year courses by tenured or tenure-track faculty, the establishment of a Help Centre, the opportunities “to pursue interdisciplinary modes of inquiry in any one of the several undergraduate degree programs” (bilingual specialization, law and politics, digital journalism and political science) (ER, p. 3), and the “formal internship options at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, which allow students to gain practical professional experience with community organizations”(ER, p.4), are evidence of the Department’s commitment to the student experience and to delivering high quality, innovative undergraduate and graduate programs. As noted by the reviewers, “relative to other comparable programs in Canada the Political Science Department shows high levels of creativity and initiative in the delivery of its curriculum.” (ER, p. 7)

### Opportunities for Program Improvement/Enhancements

With regard to recruitment, while there are several innovative program options, enrolment patterns between the programs differ significantly. There is opportunity for growth in several of the undergraduate programs and the Department would benefit from enhancing its marketing and recruitment activities for the smaller programs. Growing the undergraduate and graduate internship opportunities, which are very attractive to students, to areas outside the local region should also be considered. In terms of retention, the Department has made significant strides with its first-year mentorship program and the establishment of the help centre, and is encouraged to continue to closely review its retention initiatives and to introduce new ones, as needed. (SS, p. 118)

One opportunity for program enhancement to which the reviewers drew specific attention is the synergies and opportunities for collaboration with the Cross-Border Institute. The reviewers noted that “a variety of transnational themed research is already taking place within the department” and encouraged it to “explore ways to engage with the border theme more directly, either through the vehicle of the Cross-Border Institute or through other mechanisms coordinated with the Institute, [...bringing] together specialists in Canadian Politics, International Relations scholars and students to consider the border through different lenses.” (ER, p. 15) Further opportunities for program improvements are captured in the recommendations listed below.

## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

### Recommendations (in priority order)

*(Final recommendations arrived at by the Program Development Committee, following a review and assessment of the External Reviewers report, the Head's response and the Dean's response.)*

#### **Recommendation 1:** That the Department

- a. explore ways of expanding the mentorship program (break-out groups and semester-long debate project led by student mentors in the first-year *Introduction to Canadian Politics* course) to additional courses in the first year.
- b. through its student mentors and first year instructors, encourage students to use the Help Centre on a regular basis.

**Agents:** Department Head, AAU Council

**Completion by:** Fall 2019

#### Graduate Curriculum Review:

**Recommendation 2a:** Partly to accommodate student needs and partly to reflect the growing need to prepare graduate students for careers outside of the academy, that the Department:

- a. consider devising additional means of assessing MA student learning at the end of their programs; and
- b. consider creating a course-based MA. Policy briefs or policy evaluation exercises (30 to 40 pages in length) could also constitute challenging final projects for MA students after completing seven courses.

**Agents:** Department Head, AAU Council

**Completion by:** Fall 2019

**Recommendation 2b:** That the Department pay closer attention to the lengths of theses and major research papers, with perhaps the introduction of fixed word limits being considered in order to limit the tendency to go well beyond their recommended lengths and that consideration be given to requiring a much shorter paper (20-25 pages maximum) in the internship stream, in place of the current requirement to write a 40-page paper, that could be integrated into the culminating poster presentations at the end of the internship course.

**Agents:** Department Head, AAU Council

**Completion by:** Fall 2019

#### Internships and Career Training

#### **Recommendation 3:** That the Department

- a. market the MA-Internship as a separate program.
- b. explore the possibility of expanding opportunities for undergraduate and graduate internship positions outside of the Windsor-Essex region, perhaps to the GTA or even Ottawa. At the same time, for prospective students in the Bilingual Specialization, the Department could seek to establish internship positions with Radio-Canada in Windsor and Toronto or with TFO in Toronto as a way of increasing the attractiveness of this specialized BA.
- c. submit a request to the Dean of FAHSS for an Internship Officer – compensated either monetarily or through teaching release – to manage and oversee internship placements.

**Agents:** Department Head, Dean of FAHSS

**Completion by:** Fall 2017

**Recommendation 4:** That the Department engage more fully in the provision of professional and career training for students in both the undergraduate and graduate programs through, for instances, the scheduling of regular career workshops.

**Agents:** Department Head, AAU faculty members

**Completion by:** Fall 2017

**Recommendation 5:** That the Department submit learning outcomes and assessment methods for each of its undergraduate and graduate courses that clearly correspond to the University's stated "Characteristics of a University of Windsor Graduate".

*[PDC notes that learning outcomes for its undergraduate and graduate programs and for several, but not all, undergraduate and graduate courses are provided in the Self Study, appendix 3]*

**Agents:** Department Council, Head, CTL, Vice-Provost, Teaching and Learning

**Completion by:** Fall 2017

**Recommendation 6:** That the Department identify options for offering a wider range of courses to graduate students. (For example, the Department could cycle third-year courses less frequently in order to mount more fourth year courses, and fourth year courses could then be twinned with MA courses.)

**Agents:** Department Head, AAU Council

**Completion by:** Fall 2017

**Recommendation 7:** That the Department explore ways to engage with the border theme more directly, either through the vehicle of the Cross-Border Institute or through other mechanisms coordinated with the Institute. One possibility in this regard is a capstone course, which might bring together specialists in Canadian Politics, International Relations scholars and students to consider the border through different lenses.

**Agents:** Department Head, AAU Council

**Completion by:** Fall 2019

**Recommendation 8:** That the Department continue to consider the creation of a small, internship-based PhD program, subject to additional faculty resources (including a hire in International Relations Theory in order to anchor the IR specialization in the Department) and subject to the ability to make firm commitments to adequately fund doctoral students.

**Agents:** Department Head, AAU Council, Dean of FAHSS

**Completion by:** Fall 2019

**Recommendation 9:** That any future hire be someone who is able and willing to teach in the political theory subfield, regardless of his or her principal area of specialization.

**Agents:** Department Head, AAU Council, Dean of FAHSS

**Completion by:** Fall 2019

**Recommendation 10:** That the Department:

- a. continue its efforts to track its graduates to determine the pedagogical and professional outcomes of its various programs.
- b. working with the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, conduct trial entrance and exit surveys of students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels in order to gauge their expectations and level of satisfaction with their programs.

**Agents:** Department Head, Dean of FAHSS, Dean of Graduate Studies

**Completion by:** Annual Review

**Recommendation 11:** That the Department consider devoting more resources to updating its web page as a recruitment tool, since this is the principal means of doing comparative research for most young people who are considering their post-secondary options. Perhaps the Department could highlight the internship opportunities at both the BA and MA levels, or devote more space to career options in political science.

**Agents:** Department Head, AAU Council

**Completion by:** Fall 2017