



## **Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan**

Periodic Program Review (PPR)

### **Public Policy & Administration (MA)**

Last Updated: February 11, 2020

In accordance with the University Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), this final assessment report provides a synthesis of the external evaluation and the internal response and assessments of the graduate program in Public Policy & Administration (MA). This report identifies the peer review identified strengths of the program, together with opportunities for program improvement and enhancement, and it sets out and prioritizes the recommendations that have been selected for implementation.

The report also includes an Implementation Plan that identifies who will be responsible for approving the recommendations set out in the final assessment report; who will be responsible for providing any resources entailed by those recommendations; any changes in organization, policy or governance that will be necessary to meet the recommendations and who will be responsible for acting on those recommendations; and timelines for acting on and monitoring the implementation of those recommendations.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Ryerson's Masters in Public Policy and Administration (MA) is a high quality academic program that provides a diverse group of full and part-time students with public policy and public administration knowledge and skills that allow them to pursue or advance public service careers or further their academic studies. The program was established in 2005 building on the long-standing program and

faculty expertise in Ryerson's Department of Politics and Public Administration. In the past 10 years, the program has evolved its curriculum to reflect societal and professional needs and the evolving demands of the field. The program has enhanced its focus on experiential learning, fostered partnerships, and engaged practitioners to ensure the program delivers leading-edge curriculum that current students, recent alumni, and public service employers regard highly. This program review provides a detailed review of all aspects of the program; outlines the development, strengths and achievements of the program; but also identifies several opportunities to strengthen the program over the next 7 years.

### **Periodic Program Review and Peer Review Team**

The graduate program in Public Policy & Administration (MA), Faculty of Arts, submitted a Self-Study Report to the Yeates School of Graduate Studies that outlined program descriptions and learning outcomes, an analytical assessment of the program, program data including data from student surveys and the standard data packages. Course outlines and CVs for full-time faculty members were also appended.

Two external and one internal arm's-length reviewers were selected from a set of proposed candidates. The Peer Review Team (PRT) for the Periodic Program Review (PPR) of the graduate program in Public Policy & Administration (MA), consisted of Dr. Patrizia Albanese (Ryerson University), Dr. Joan Grace (University of Winnipeg), and Dr. David Siegel (Brock University).

The appraisal committee spent two days at Ryerson. The visit included interviews with the University and Faculty Administration including the Provost and Vice-President, Michael Benarroch; the Vice-Provost and Dean of the Yeates School of Graduate Studies, Cory Searcy; the Dean of Arts, Pamela Sugiman; Vice-Provost, Academic, Kelly MacKay; and Associate Dean of Arts, Kathleen Kellett, Carolyn Johns, Graduate Program Director of the Graduate Program, and meetings with Faculty, a group of current students, and support staff.

The PRT site visit was conducted on May 8 and 9, 2019. The PRT report was communicated to the Associate Dean, YSGS on May 30, 2019, and the response to the report from MPPA and the Faculty of Arts was communicated on December 2, 2019.

## **PROGRAM STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, AND OPPORTUNITIES**

The Peer Review Team identified program strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for program improvement and enhancement, outlined below.

### **Strengths**

In particular, the PRT found commendable several innovations which contributed to academic excellence in conjunction with experiential learning, building crucial skills for the contemporary public service and which bode well for strong intake and recruitment. Specifically, we refer to:

- The use of expert practitioners via the Distinguished Visiting Professor and the Public Servant in Residence. Most similar programs try to recruit former professionals as adjuncts; the Ryerson program stands out for the mechanisms it uses to integrate these people into its program in ways that benefit all students on a continuing basis. To our knowledge, these talents are typically not used as effectively in other graduate programs in public administration; and
- The Policy Enrichment Stream, a series of workshops voluntarily taken by many of the MPPA students, generally run by the Public Servant in Residence with support from the Distinguished Visiting Professor, is an intensive professionalizing experience for the students, out of which they build specific work-based, practical skills.

### **Weaknesses and Opportunities**

While we did not uncover glaring weaknesses, a few aspects to consider for the future are enhancing the profile of the program by looking to international partnerships.

## **PRT RECOMMENDATIONS**

The PRT made a total of 13 recommendations: 6 Academic and 7 Administrative and Financial Recommendations.

### **Academic Recommendations**

1. The PRT recommends that the MPPA keep the current three options and the one-year course-based program.
2. The PRT recommends that the current 'Public Sector Budgeting and Financial Management' course become a required course for all students who have not already taken a comparable course.

3. The PRT recommends that the program develop a course on Human Resource Management in the Public Sector that would be required for all students who have not already taken a comparable course.
4. The PRT recommends that the program develop a course in Administrative Law that would be required for all students who have not already taken a comparable course.
5. The PRT recommends that the methods course offer more content on data analysis.
6. The PRT recommends that the program and faculty consider aligning, or finding congruence, in course content and delivery for multiple sections of core courses.

#### **Administrative and Financial Recommendations**

7. Given pending retirements and possible new curriculum development, the PRT recommends that the Faculty Dean consult with the GPD and department Chair about medium term staffing needs.
8. The PRT recommends multi-year funding for the Public Servant in Residence at a remuneration level that will attract and maintain a public administrator of high caliber and who has had a distinguished career in the public sector.
9. The PRT recommends that a small to medium size room space be made available for MPPA student especially given that a substantial portion of their course assignments requires group work, and which provides appropriate space for, among other things, the annual case competition preparation.
10. The PRT recommends maintaining, and if possible enhancing, the program's current extra-curricular components and expanding public sector placements to the municipal and federal levels of government.
11. The PRT recommends the continued enhancement of the teaching and study of Indigenous public administration, the strengthening of existing partnerships with the First Nations Technical Institute and the Yellowhead Institute, and the continuation and expansion of scholarship opportunities through venues such as the Hydro One program.
12. The PRT recommends enhancing the profile of the MPPA by looking to partnerships with institutions outside of Canada and the admission of international students.
13. The PRT recommends enhancing scholarship funding to attract top tier applicants and to fill funding gaps for all applicants to the program.

Summary of PRT Recommendations with Graduate Program, Faculty Dean, and YSGS Responses + Program Implementation Plan

ACADEMIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	MPPA Response	Faculty Arts Response	PRT Noted Action by: (Program additions in <b>BOLD</b> )	Action items	Timeline	YSGS Response
1. The PRT recommends that the MPPA keep the current three options and the one-year course-based program.	The program fully agrees with this recommendation. Students and alumni expressed high levels of satisfaction with the one-year program and the program having three paths, while additionally having the option for an internship/co-op placement.	We support this recommendation and the program's response.	MPPA Program <b>Council</b> , Department <b>GPD</b>	This recommendation was reviewed and approved at Program Council meeting in Fall 2019.	Completed September 2019.	YSGS supports the Program and Faculty responses.
2. The PRT recommends that the current 'Public Sector Budgeting and Financial Management' course become a required course for all students who have not already taken a comparable course.	The program has already had some preliminary discussions about this course being a required course in the program based on student, alumni and employer feedback. This would require 2 sections of this course being offered if it changed from an elective to a required course. This recommendation will be brought forward at Program Council meeting in Fall 2019 and discussed with the current faculty member who teaches the current section of this course.	We support the decision to engage in further discussions with the Program Council and faculty member(s).	Graduate Program Director, in concert with Chair of the Department of Politics and Public Administration, and Faculty	Curriculum Committee was established at Fall Program Council meeting September 2019.  Discussed with relevant faculty member.	Short term: Curriculum Committee tabled several options related to this recommendation in November 2019. On the Agenda for February 2020 Council Meeting and supported option will be implemented in accordance with Policy 127 in for 2021-22.	YSGS supports the Program and Faculty responses.  YSGS notes that any curriculum modifications need to be carried out in accordance with Ryerson University Policy 127. YSGS encourages the Program to contact the Associate Dean, Programs in YSGS to discuss the process.

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<p>3. The PRT recommends that the program develop a course on Human Resource Management in the Public Sector that would be required for all students who have not already taken a comparable course.</p>	<p>The program agrees public sector HR management is a critical body of knowledge. HR management is currently covered in the required PA8100 Public Administration and Governance course: leadership, all HR functional areas, performance management, etc. are introduced. HR mgmt. is also covered in Equity and Diversity course and PS Union-Management Relations course. The program agrees HR management is critical subject matter and will review this recommendation at Program Council meeting in Fall 2019.</p>	<p>Our office supports a thorough review and consultation prior to implementing this change.</p>	<p>Graduate Program Director, in concert with Chair of the Department of Politics and Public Administration, and Faculty</p>	<p>Curriculum Committee was established at Fall Program Council meeting September 2019.</p> <p>Consultation and consideration underway.</p>	<p>This is a medium term priority as the program currently covers HR related topics in several courses.</p>	<p>YSGS supports the Program and Faculty responses.</p> <p>As noted above, if the Program chooses to move forward with a curriculum modification, it will need to be carried out in accordance with Ryerson University Policy 127.</p>
<p>4. The PRT recommends that the program develop a course in Administrative Law that would be required for all students who have not already taken a comparable course.</p>	<p>The program currently covers admin law and administrative tribunals in the required PA8100 Public Admin and Governance course through assigned readings. The program will table this recommendation as another possible required course but notes that only one other MPPA program in Canada has this as a required course: the York MPPAL (Masters in Public Policy, Administration and Law). The program will explore the possibility of this as an elective or cross-listed course.</p>	<p>We support the program's response noting the value of further discussion and consultation on this matter.</p>	<p>Graduate Program Director, in concert with Chair of the Department of Politics and Public Administration, and Faculty</p>	<p>Curriculum Committee was established at Fall Program Council meeting September 2019.</p>	<p>Short-term: Consultation with new Law School to see if this is a possible course that could be cross listed.</p>	<p>YSGS supports the Program and Faculty responses.</p> <p>As noted above, if the Program chooses to move forward with a curriculum modification, it will need to be carried out in accordance with Ryerson University Policy 127.</p>

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<p>5. The PRT recommends that the methods course offer more content on data analysis.</p>	<p>The program agrees that data analysis and data analytics are critical curriculum requirements. The current Research Methods course does have an emphasis on data analysis in the lab component of the course and assignments. The program will bring forward this recommendation at the Program Council meeting in Fall 2019 and consult with the instructor(s) currently teaching this course. The GPD will also follow up with the PRT to request more elaboration on what specific content on data analysis they feel needs to be covered more in this required course.</p>	<p>We support the program's response, identifying the need for further clarification and discussion prior to implementing any changes related to this recommendation.</p>	<p>Graduate Program Director, and Faculty teaching methods course(s) and <b>MPPA Program Council</b></p>	<p>Curriculum Committee was established at Fall Program Council meeting September 2019.</p> <p>GPD to email PRT to find out what specific content on data analysis they feel needs to be covered more in this course.</p> <p>Current faculty members reviewing existing course outline to implement this recommendation in 2020-21.</p>	<p>Implementation 2020-21.</p>	<p>YSGS supports the Program and Faculty responses.</p>
<p>6. The PRT recommends that the program and faculty consider aligning, or finding congruence, in course content and delivery for multiple sections of core courses.</p>	<p>Agree. Students have brought this to the attention of the GPD particularly related to the required Policy Analysis required course (PA8101). Although the learning outcomes are similar in the two sections of PA8101 and the instructors use the same text book, the outlines for PA8101 and all core courses will be reviewed for congruence and consistency and learning outcomes in Fall 2019.</p>	<p>We agree with the importance of reviewing course sections for congruence and consistency.</p>	<p>Graduate Program Director, and relevant Faculty teaching those courses <b>MPPA Program Council</b></p>	<p>Curriculum Committee established in September 2019.</p> <p>Two course instructors met in Fall 2019 to discuss and coordinate.</p> <p>GPD to follow up.</p>	<p>Partially implemented Winter 2020.</p> <p>Complete implementation in 2020-21.</p>	<p>YSGS supports the Program and Faculty responses.</p>

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	MPPA Response	Faculty Arts Response	PRT Noted Action by: (Program additions in <b>BOLD</b> )	Action Items	Timeline	YSGS Response
<p>7. Given pending retirements and possible new curriculum development, the PRT recommends that the Faculty Dean consult with the GPD and department Chair about medium term staffing needs.</p>	<p>Agree. The program will be affected by retirements in the next few years including retirements of faculty who teach required courses in the program. New curriculum recommended by the PRT may also require new faculty and practitioner instructors. The program is very pleased a new faculty member is joining the Dept. this Fall and will be teaching one of the required courses however the faculty complement is an issue that will need to be addressed over the next 2-5 years. The GPD will work with the Dean of Arts, Dept. Chair and DHC on succession planning related to this recommendation.</p>	<p>We welcome further discussion of the department's medium-term staffing needs.</p>	<p>Department Chair (<b>and DHC</b>), GPD, Dean of Arts, Provost, Vice Provost Academic</p>	<p>The recommendations indicate clear needs particularly related to public sector finance and economics. There is also a need related to Indigenous governance and TRC review project in 2019-20.</p> <p>GPD met with faculty member in Economics with public sector economics expertise.</p>	<p>Short-term: Will submit hiring needs for MPPA to Chair, DHC and Dean in 2020 for short term and medium term hiring needs related to pending retirements.</p>	<p>The hiring of new RFA faculty is outside of YSGS's purview. YSGS encourages the Program to continue to work with the Faculty of Arts on issues related to its faculty complement.</p>
<p>8. The PRT recommends multi-year funding for the Public Servant in Residence (PSIR) at a remuneration level that will attract and maintain a public administrator of high caliber and who has had a distinguished career in the public sector.</p>	<p>The Program fully supports this recommendation and has been asking for multi-year support and stability related to the PSIR role which has become a critical role in the MPPA program. We fully support the recommendation to retain and attract the highest calibre PSIR possible for the program.</p>	<p>We recognize the importance of a multi-year commitment to hire a high calibre PSIR, however such discussions and decisions depend on budgetary review and assessment of the plan's economic feasibility.</p>	<p>VP Academic, Dean of Arts <b>Associate Dean of Arts, Research and Graduate Studies</b> <b>Dean of YSGS</b></p>	<p>PSIR submits annual report to Dean.</p> <p>MPPA Program Council to make formal request for multi-year commitment to this critical position for our program to Deans.</p>	<p>Short-term: would like to secure multi-year commitment by April 2020.</p> <p>Medium-term: succession planning for PSIR</p>	<p>YSGS supports the Program and Faculty responses.</p>



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<p>9. The PRT recommends that a small to medium size room space be made available for MPPA student especially given that a substantial portion of their course assignments requires group work, and which provides appropriate space for, among other things, the annual case competition preparation.</p>	<p>The program fully supports this recommendation</p>	<p>We support this, however are restricted by significant challenges when it comes to securing space on campus.</p>	<p>Dean of Arts, Library, GPD, Vice Provost Academic, <b>Dean of YSGS</b></p>	<p>Program has identified possible space and hopes to develop proposal.</p> <p>GPD to have discussions with the Dean of YSGS and Dean of Arts in hopes of tabling a proposal for graduate space for MPPA students.</p>	<p>Medium term, next 3-5 years.</p>	<p>YSGS will continue to lobby for additional space for graduate students on campus.</p> <p>YSGS further notes, however, that decisions on space allocations are outside of its purview.</p>
<p>10. The PRT recommends maintaining, and if possible enhancing, the program's current extra-curricular components and expanding public sector placements to the municipal and federal levels of government.</p>	<p>Expanding extra-curricular components and expanding placements are priorities articulated in our implementation plan in the self-study report. While the program already places students with the municipal and federal levels, the GPD and PSIR had plans to begin work on targeting the municipal sector in 2019-20 and the federal government in 2020-21 however, this is contingent on support for the PSIR and may have to be moved to a medium or long-term implementation priority, particularly given the DVP role has been eliminated.</p>	<p>We recognize the value of these components and support exploring new options contingent upon budgetary limits and other constraints.</p>	<p><b>GPD and PSIR</b></p>	<p>GPD and PSIR working on this as much as possible given current workload of annual placements.</p>	<p>Short-medium term: expand placement efforts depending on level of support for PSIR.</p>	<p>YSGS supports the Program and Faculty responses.</p>

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<p>11. The PRT recommends the continued enhancement of the teaching and study of Indigenous public administration, the strengthening of existing partnerships with undergraduate Dept program with the First Nations Technical Institute (FNTI), the Yellowhead Institute, and the continuation and expansion of scholarship opportunities through venues such as the Hydro One program.</p>	<p>The program fully supports this recommendation. The program has a course on Indigenous Law and Policy taught by an Indigenous faculty member since 2010 and the Hydro One scholarship to attract Indigenous students since 2006. The TRC Calls to Action were released while the program review self-study was underway. As mentioned during the PRT site visit the GPD and Indigenous faculty member applied for a grant from the Aboriginal Education Council in February 2019 and were successful at getting some funding to undertake a curriculum review related to the TRC Calls to Action and assist with the implementation of this recommendation. An incoming Indigenous student and Indigenous graduates of the program will be engaged in this curriculum review in 2019-20. The Yellowhead Institute will also be consulted during this review. Hiring more faculty members with expertise in Indigenous governance would greatly benefit the MPPA program and students.</p>	<p>As you know, the Dean of Arts is committed to supporting this recommendation and to exploring possibilities of hiring additional Indigenous faculty and supporting Indigenous students. We welcome further discussions on this matter.</p>	<p>Department, Dean of Arts, Dean of Yeates School of Graduate Studies, Provost/VP Academic <b>GPD and Indigenous program faculty, students and grads</b></p>	<p>In May 2019 GPD and Pam Palmater (Indigenous faculty member in MPPA program) applied for curriculum review grant from Ryerson Aboriginal Education Council.</p> <p>Combined with funding from our operating budget, we hired our Hydro One Indigenous student on comprehensive TRC review and outreach to our 10 Indigenous grads.</p> <p>We have a full project on this in 2019-20 involving a group of faculty, current Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and Indigenous grads.</p> <p>We expect to have a report with recommendations in April 2020 and engage FNTI and Yellowhead Institute.</p>	<p>Started implementing this in May 2019.</p> <p>High priority for the program. Already implemented several recommendations from our TRC Committee and will be implementing several more following the report in 2020-21.</p> <p>Priority for short, medium and long-term.</p>	<p>YSGS supports the Program and Faculty responses. YSGS further notes that it will be releasing a new website and framework for Indigenous graduate education in the coming months.</p>

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<p>12. The PRT recommends enhancing the profile of the MPPA by looking to partnerships with institutions outside of Canada and the admission of international students.</p>	<p>The program agrees with this recommendation. Currently the program receives 60-80 international applications each year but has no funded spots to accept international students due to the very high demand from domestic students. As a result, only 1-2 fully funded international students have been admitted to the program each year. This has also resulted in the program not having an outward orientation in terms of partnerships and international students. This issue will be tabled at the Program Council meeting in Fall 2019.</p>	<p>We are aware of the challenges of funding and supporting international students; however are committed to exploring innovative ideas for the development of creative partnerships aimed at internationalization.</p>	<p>GPD, Dean of Yeates School of Graduate Studies, Dean of Arts</p> <p><b>Department Chair Ryerson International PSIR</b></p>	<p>GPD submitted proposal for Ryerson International Global Learning Program Abroad open to students from several programs at Ryerson. Grant has allowed for 3 MPPA students to take this course in Spring 2020.</p>	<p>Medium term - explore resources for more international experiential learning abroad opportunities and placements.</p> <p>Medium term – explore possibility of having 1-2 funded spots for international students with YSGS</p>	<p>YSGS supports the Program and Faculty responses.</p> <p>YSGS will continue to advocate and work towards improved funding and support for international graduate students.</p> <p>YSGS further notes that it supports partnerships with institutions outside of Canada. If the Program is interested, YSGS will help facilitate conversations on those issues with representatives from Ryerson International.</p>
<p>13. The PRT recommends enhancing scholarship funding to attract top tier applicants and to fill funding gaps for all applicants to the program.</p>	<p>The program fully agrees with this recommendation. While the program attracts many top tier applicants, many of the A range applicants decline our offers of admission. In the last admissions cycle we lost the highest level of A range applicants since the program started (more than 60%). The level of support Ryerson provides is not competitive with what other universities with similar programs are offering and the program is conducting a follow-up survey of A applicants who declined</p>	<p>We support and welcome the program's efforts to explore donor-funded scholarships.</p>	<p>Dean of YSGS; Dean of Arts, Provost/VP Academic</p> <p><b>University Advancement</b></p>	<p>Conducted a survey of all A/A+ applicants who declined offers in 2019. Submitted report to Admissions committee.</p> <p>Met with alumni association (RUPPAAA) to improve alumni funded scholarships and awards</p>	<p>Developed strategy for first round offers. Completed.</p> <p>Short-term: working with RUPPAAA and Faculty of Arts Advancement to opportunities for donor and alumni funded scholarships related to 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary event in September 2020.</p>	<p>YSGS supports and commends the Program's and Faculty's efforts to pursue options for improved funding packages for all students.</p> <p>YSGS will support the Program's efforts to explore donor-funded scholarships. YSGS encourages the Program to contact the Vice-Provost and Dean of YSGS to discuss this issue.</p> <p>YSGS further notes that the university recently invested substantial funds in graduate scholarships through the creation of the Ryerson Graduate</p>

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	<p>our offers to collect more information on this issue. The program is also looking at changing the distribution of current funding across the 40 FTEs admitted each year. The program also has some donor-funded scholarships and will continue to work on this with University Advancement and Alumni. The program fully supports this recommendation and also agree with the PRT that this is particularly important given the high levels of graduate tuition in Ontario and high cost of living in Toronto.</p>			<p>GPD worked with Associate Dean of Arts and Dean of Grad Studies to receive notification of scholarship funding well in advance.</p>	<p>Short-term: Associate Dean of Arts provided some early funding information allowing us to strengthen first round offers for Fall 2020.</p>	<p>Scholarships and the distribution of YSGS carry-forward funds in June 2019. YSGS will continue to advocate for increased funding for graduate students.</p>

A report on the progress of these initiatives will be provided in the Follow-up Report which will be due in one year from the date of Senate approval.