

# **REPORT BY THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW COMMITTEE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE**

**APRIL 2007**

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## **Introduction**

This is the first time the Department of Political Science has undergone the Academic Review Process in its 40-year history. Consequently, we do not have the benchmarks of a previous report for evaluating the progress which the department has made in recent years. We have concluded that the department is functioning well in some respects, but there is clearly room for improvement on several fronts. On the positive side the department has:

- Been able to provide good quality, comprehensive undergraduate education in Political Science despite a shortage of faculty.
- Increased undergraduate enrolment over the past five years. This includes both an increase in overall undergraduate enrolment and an increase in students majoring in Political Science.
- Been able to continue functioning despite unexpected developments, which have undermined the stability and continuity of the department, and with a reduced faculty complement.

- Maintained a reasonable level of scholarly activity by a number of faculty members.

Thus there are many reasons to be optimistic about the future. The department is in a good position to ask the Faculty of Arts for more resources. However, we also hope that the Academic Review Process encourages the department to develop a plan for moving forward and meeting the challenges of renewing its vision.

We would like to thank the Academic Program Coordinator, Robyn Saunders, for her efficient help throughout the review process. The Review Panel met senior administrators on the evening of March 14, 2007, including the Vice-President (Academic), Dr. H. E. A. Campbell; and the Dean of Graduate Studies, Dr. Chet Jablonski. During the following two days we met individually with several members of the department and with Dr. Reeta Tremblay, Dean of Arts. Our other interviews were with the department Head, Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, Graduate Committee, contractual faculty, per-course instructors, support staff, and some graduate and undergraduate students. On two occasions there were discussions with the entire department.

We did not meet privately with the Dean of Graduate Studies. Nor did we meet the relevant collections librarian. Such meetings are usually part of Academic Program Reviews. The Panel also had very limited contact with undergraduate students. We met with only a handful of undergraduates who are apparently members of the Political Science student association. There was no opportunity to meet with students in any undergraduate class, although this is a recommended aspect of the review process. Nor were undergraduate Political Science students surveyed by either the Centre for

Institutional Analysis and Planning (CIAP) or, perhaps more informally, by members of the Department of Political Science.

At the time of this Academic Program Review (March 2007), the Department of Political Science had, on paper, a faculty complement of thirteen. Of this number, however, three do not teach in the department,<sup>1</sup> and Dr. Peter Boswell as Interim Head, has a reduced teaching load and is about to take his long-postponed retirement. Two new faculty members will join the department later this year, and a competition is in progress for a new department Head. By September 2007, therefore, the *effective* faculty complement should be twelve. The department also makes use of adjunct, contractual and per-course instructors, though not to the same extent as some other departments in the Faculty.

These resources have enabled the department, though not without difficulty, to maintain very healthy, and until this year increasing enrolments in its B.A. and M.A. programs. Indeed, the department has managed to maintain its position as a strong teaching department in spite of inadequate resources. In addition, there have been internal problems resulting from the department's inability to find a permanent Head when Dr. Steven B. Wolinetz became Interim Dean of Arts, and from the unfortunate death of a newly-appointed faculty member. In these circumstances, the department deserves credit for performing as well as it has. The Panel also noted that while faculty research output is uneven, it appears to be improving. Indeed, the department has definite strengths on which it can build.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Bornstein is the Director of the Centre for Applied Health Research, Dr. Tremblay is the Dean of Arts, and Dr. Summers is on long-term leave.

The department is clearly in transition, as older faculty members move towards the end of their academic careers – though the abolition of mandatory retirement has introduced a wild card – and a new cohort of junior members arrives. It is therefore time for the department to begin a serious examination of its future. The department has begun a curriculum review, but the Panel was struck by the inconclusiveness of the recent curriculum report (which has not yet been discussed by the department as a whole), and by a generally hesitant attitude towards change. The Self-study contains such statements as “any changes should be small steps” (18), and “until the hiring process is complete, it would be difficult to make such important, but still incremental decisions.” (20)

The Panel thinks that a bolder approach is in order, and that the apparent intention to allow future hirings to define the department is mistaken. In our view, the department should first agree on what it wants to achieve over the next five years, and what sort of department it wants to become, taking into account the University’s mission statement. Such a “vision” would then condition all aspects of the department’s academic life, including new hirings and curriculum reform. This process should begin as soon as possible, which, in practical terms, probably means during the Fall semester 2007, once the new department Head has settled in.

There is a certain urgency about implementing this renewal process. The department is starting late compared to other departments across the country, and this puts it at a competitive disadvantage in attracting students nationally and internationally, and in placing students in graduate programs elsewhere. Moreover, the market for Political Science faculty has become highly competitive, and the department must modernize and renew in order to attract and retain high quality faculty members.

It seems that the department has always placed a high value on collegiality, and on consensual decision making. Admirable as this is, the renewal process will inevitably raise important and controversial issues, and consensus may not always be possible. The department must face this reality if the renewal process is to be effective and efficient.

**Recommendation 1:** The department should begin a collegial renewal process as soon as possible, beginning with the development of a statement of its aims and objectives, and continuing with curriculum revision and the definition of new appointments.

## **Faculty and Staff**

### *Departmental Structure and Functioning*

The department appears to have had a long history of informal collegiality that is comfortable for interpersonal relations. However, the degree of informality and the lack of structure may not have served the department well in other respects. It was our sense that the unit does not function well as a department. Indicative of this are problems that have occurred over the appointing of a new Head, the lack of department meetings (even for discussions around the Academic Program Review) and a lack of effective committee structure. Even though the department is small, it needs a clear administrative structure. On the other hand, we wondered why such a small department required an Executive Committee. It was not clear to us whether the members of that Committee actually advise the Head and why this advising was not a function of the full department in regular meetings. Having regular department meetings would allow discussion of policy and allow the department to address issues that arise which should engage all members. Such

meetings can help to develop a departmental culture around common problems and departmental challenges.

**Recommendation 2:** The department should re-examine its committee structure and re-visit departmental procedures to make sure they function well.

**Recommendation 3:** The department should meet regularly: at least once every two months.

### *Workload*

From discussion with faculty members and examining the written materials supplied to us, it was our impression that too much of the administrative work in the department is shouldered by junior faculty members. Senior faculty should be doing more of the administrative work, given their knowledge of the university, their broader experience in the discipline and because they do not face the requirements of tenure. The inability to find even an acting Head this past year from within the department is indicative of a reluctance on the part of senior department members to volunteer for administrative work.

In terms of teaching assignments, it was our impression that here as well workloads may not be equitable, especially for newly-hired faculty members. The assignment of high-enrolment first- and second-year courses, which require extra hours of out-of-class contact as well as substantial marking loads, should be examined carefully for issues of equity. In addition, while the number of courses taught by part-time and limited contract instructors is not exceptionally large in comparison to other universities,

the number of students taught by them appears to be especially high, given the number of courses they teach.

Factors which complicate the assignment of courses and the use of limited contract instructors are buyouts (research and administrative) and sabbatical leaves. The department appears to have few buyouts at this point, although it may in the future with research buyouts from grants. With respect to sabbatical leaves, we were surprised to find that notwithstanding the small faculty complement, three people were on sabbatical leave during the Fall and Winter terms this academic year. This represented one-third of the continuing teaching faculty who teach for the department.

**Recommendation 4:** The department should carefully review workloads both for administrative responsibilities and teaching assignments to ensure that they are equitable across the department.

**Recommendation 5:** Efforts should be made to spread out sabbatical leaves and to balance buyouts in order that the regular faculty teaching complement is not seriously depleted.

### *Hiring*

We recommend below that the department be allocated more full-time faculty appointments in order to meet its teaching responsibilities. One question the APR Panel was asked to answer is how successful the unit has been in implementing university employment equity policies. It is our impression that the Department of Political Science has not been very successful in this respect. This is also true of most departments throughout the Faculty of Arts. While two women faculty are formally members of the

department, one is on long-term disability and has not been able to teach for a number of years. The other is the newly-appointed Dean of Arts and not a member of the regular teaching staff. The lack of women members in the department is highly unusual, and problematic for students and the image of the department. Other departments in the Faculty of Arts have certainly hired more women.

There are presently no non-white males in tenure-stream positions in the department. Non-white males are under-represented throughout the Faculty of Arts at Memorial University. In view of the plans of university administrators to expand enrolment by attracting more students from outside Canada, this is a liability for the department and inconsistent with the goals of the equity policies of the university. We also note with regret that the courses African Politics (PS 3340) and Asian Politics (PS 3420) are listed in the Calendar as inactive courses. They have not been taught for at least five years.

Finally, we noted with surprise that there are no Newfoundlanders who are permanent faculty members teaching in the Department of Political Science. Other departments in the Faculty of Arts have been more successful in hiring Newfoundlanders.

**Recommendation 6:** The department should place a priority on hiring full-time women and non-white males.

### *Junior Faculty*

In all departments across the Faculty, new, junior faculty members face special pressures. They have to offer new courses, learn new administrative procedures, develop research agendas and, of course, publish. The research demands on them are greater than



those faced by senior faculty when they first joined their departments, and the tenure requirements are higher. In order to help them meet these demands and become successful academics, it is important that departments mentor junior faculty, assisting them with grant applications, providing help and support for teaching issues, and explaining the standards and procedures for reappointment and for tenure. The Political Science department has lost newly-hired members in the past and should be concerned about problems and issues related to retaining newly-appointed faculty. This is particularly critical now because there are many new positions in Political Science departments across the country, and it is difficult to find specialists in some areas. It is a seller's market and there is much "poaching" of new faculty occurring across the country. In this context, mentoring new faculty, providing them with extra support in their early years, giving them a lighter administrative load than is allocated to senior faculty, and making sure that their teaching assignments are equitable (or even lighter in their early years) are important for retention.

**Recommendation 7:** The department should focus on mentoring new faculty and develop workload policies and procedures designed to retain new members.

### *Staff*

The department is happy with the high quality of its administrative staff, but sees the need for a second full-time secretary. Currently, a second secretary works just part-time. We agree that the department needs a second full-time secretary. With an increasing number of applications to the graduate program, a substantial increase in undergraduate student numbers over the last five years, and increased research funding expected in the

future, two full-time staff are needed to do the extra work entailed. When only one staff person is available, the reception function takes time away from other, necessary jobs done by the senior administrative secretary. Having a full-time second secretary will also help the department keep its web page updated on a monthly basis, and could assist in posting course information for students. The web is increasingly the interface between the department, students, potential students and the general public; it is critical that the department's webpage be kept up to date.

**Recommendation 8:** The department should have a second full-time secretary.

### **Undergraduate Program**

In the delivery of its undergraduate program the department has performed well in the face of high student demand and limited resources. It has offered a reasonable breadth of courses given the small size of the faculty complement, and students have, in recent years, been interested in taking Political Science courses. Undergraduate enrolments have increased by 41 percent from 2001 to 2006, the number of full-time equivalent majors has increased by 51 percent from 2001 to 2006, and the student/faculty ratio of the department is one of the highest in the Faculty of Arts. As well, the quality of teaching appears to be good. Course evaluation data available to us indicated that the average score on the "quality of instruction" question in student course evaluations exceeded the University mean, although it was slightly below the Faculty average.

Still, notwithstanding its record in these areas, in terms of future demands and opportunities for the undergraduate program, the department faces challenges. First, much of the undergraduate enrolment is concentrated in the first-year and second-year courses, after which many fewer students take Political Science courses. Second,

universities in general are facing the prospect of declining student enrolments, and the demographic situation in Newfoundland may exacerbate this problem for Memorial University. Current enrolments are healthy, but in order to maintain student interest and maintain high enrolments, the department should consider refreshing its curriculum, which has not been updated for more than a decade in spite of the changes in both the political world and the discipline. The Calendar descriptions need particular attention. The dated character of some of the course descriptions (including, for example, references to the USSR and “great powers”), and the inaccuracy of the “inactive” designation need to be addressed immediately.

In the process of curriculum review, the department could address issues of course overlap, update its course offerings, and think about new kinds of courses that students will find of interest. The students we met told us that courses in areas such as women and politics, American foreign policy, Aboriginal politics, and Labrador politics would be of special interest. In addition, courses on aspects of globalization, development and environmental politics have been very successful in attracting students in other Political Science departments across the country.

However, expanding its course offerings would pose serious challenges. The department is stretched in terms of resources to deliver its existing curriculum, even with the use of per-course appointments. Increased staffing would help with renewal, and would allow the department to offer a broader range of courses while retaining many of its core offerings. Course offerings could also be broadened by developing cross-listings and interdisciplinary courses with other departments.

While curriculum renewal could benefit the undergraduate program, we think the department must also be sure to retain its offerings in the politics of Newfoundland and Labrador and Atlantic Canada. It is important for the university and the community that the department maintain strength in these areas.

**Recommendation 9:** The department should undertake a process of serious curriculum review that examines issues of overlap, considers student interests in new subjects and reflects contemporary topics and directions in the discipline.

**Recommendation 10:** Additional faculty appointments should be made in order to allow the department to meet its teaching responsibilities. Returning the department's staffing numbers to the level it had in the early 1990s (i.e., 15 faculty) would be a desirable objective.

**Recommendation 11:** Calendar descriptions should be revised as soon as possible and kept updated to reflect the content of course offerings and whether or not they are active.

**Recommendation 12:** The department should explore the potential for cross-listing courses and for developing interdisciplinary courses with other departments.

**Recommendation 13:** The department should maintain strength in its curriculum in the politics of Newfoundland and Labrador and Atlantic Canada.

#### *First- and Second-Year Courses*

Course descriptions, and comments, both written and in meetings with us, suggest that there is considerable overlap between courses at the 1000 and 2000 level. For example, the Introduction to Politics course (Political Science 1000) introduces students

to basic concepts in Political Science with an emphasis on the Canadian system of government. Political Science 1010 also focuses on the Canadian system of government, this time through examining policy problems, while at the second-year level there are two more courses that are introductions to Canadian government and politics 2710 (Introduction to Canadian Politics I) and 2711 (Introduction to Canadian Politics II). Given that first-year courses are recommended for students wishing to major in Political Science *and* that students majoring in Political Science are required to take both Political Science 2710 and Political Science 2711, overlaps here may be especially discouraging for potential majors. Similarly, we have been told about real and potential overlap in the international politics courses – Political Science 1020 *World Political Problems* and Political Science 2200 *Introduction to International Politics*.

The potential for overlap is exacerbated when per-course and per-term appointees deliver sections of these various courses. The department has not established a means of rationalizing and coordinating instruction at this level, and students told us that some of the drop-off in enrolments after the second year may reflect the duplication of topics at the first and second years.

Although most students in first- and second-year courses are not Political Science majors, we were not given enough information to understand fully how the department responds to the requirements of service teaching. For instance, students in the Bachelor of Nursing Program are required to complete 12 hours of elective courses. Recommended disciplines include Political Science. Thus quite a few nursing students chose the course Political Science 1000. Some faculty members did report that this poses problems

because nursing students have interests which are quite distinct from those of the rest of the class.

An important aspect of retaining students and recruiting majors is their experience with introductory courses. High-quality teaching and smaller classes are two ways in which departments can make these experiences positive for students. With respect to providing high-quality teaching at this level, explicit strategies can be developed for assigning instructors to introductory courses. These should take into consideration both experience and past records for effective teaching. The department currently appears to assign some especially large sections of its introductory courses to per-course and per-term instructors. Having temporary appointees deliver an important part of the curriculum is an issue the department should discuss.

While having small classes at the introductory level is a luxury many departments cannot afford, the impersonality of large classes can be tempered by having tutorials. It is the norm across Canadian Political Science departments that introductory courses include tutorials taught by graduate student teaching assistants. These students can also provide marking assistance, which could limit the need to have multiple-choice exams instead of those that require more writing.

**Recommendation 14:** The department should devote attention to the problem of overlap to ensure it is minimized, and teaching is carried out in a coordinated manner. Overlap may be addressed through curriculum review and/or through having faculty teaching courses at this level meet regularly to plan courses and assign texts.

**Recommendation 15:** The department should discuss strategies for assigning introductory courses and consider the appropriate role for per-course and per-term appointees in the delivery of the core curriculum at the introductory level.

**Recommendation 16:** The department should consider introducing tutorials for its large first-year courses, and using graduate students to conduct the tutorials.

**Recommendation 17:** As more faculty resources become available, the department should consider creating a section of PS 1000 specifically for nursing students, although open to all students interested in learning about Political Science.

#### *Fourth-Year Courses*

Fourth-year courses are supposed to be smaller seminar-type courses addressing advanced topics in the discipline. However, there are no prerequisites for enrolment in these courses, and no limits on enrolments. In some cases, the fourth-year courses have been delivered as lecture courses because of class size. We have also heard about the pedagogical problems faced by instructors when students, who have little or no Political Science or topical background in the subject, are combined with students who have substantial background in the topic or the discipline. This problem is exacerbated when fourth-year courses are used as crossover courses for graduate students.

**Recommendation 18:** Fourth-year courses should have a maximum enrolment of 15 to 20 students.

**Recommendation 19:** Fourth-year courses should have prerequisites. These may be either subject-specific requirements, or a minimum number of credit hours in Political Science.

## *Majors*

Requirements for majors are primarily in terms of total credit hours in Political Science and minimum required credits at the 3000 and 4000 level, with few course or subject area requirements. The course requirements that do exist emphasize Canadian politics – students are required to take both 2000-level courses in Canadian politics. The other requirement is that students must take one of either the Comparative Politics or the International Politics courses at the 2000 level. Students are not required to take a political theory course nor a research methods course. In most other Political Science departments, students are required to take at least one course in political theory and/or a research methods course. Typically, they are not required to take more than one Canadian Politics course.

Given the lack of prerequisites, majors are often unclear about the appropriate sequencing of courses and how courses fit together. They may not understand the value of taking more introductory courses in a field before they enroll in advanced courses in that area. A series of example modules and their sequencing could be developed so that students could see how courses might fit together. This could be a task undertaken by the Undergraduate Studies Committee, which should also take the initiative for providing more advising to majors and honours students.

Students told us they have very little information about forthcoming course offerings until shortly before they have to register. They also indicated that they have very little prior information about course content. Calendar descriptions tend to be very terse, and may not accurately describe the course content. Students would appreciate



getting (even tentative) information about upcoming course offerings well in advance of registration, and they would also like more information on the content of future course offerings. Such information about (tentative) forthcoming courses, including a one-paragraph description of the content of each course with their evaluation schemes, could be posted on the departmental website.

**Recommendation 20:** The department should consider the possibility of requiring a political theory and/or a research methods course of all majors.

**Recommendation 21:** The department should consider developing examples of combinations of courses and their sequencing to provide “Wayfinders” for their majors.

**Recommendation 22:** The department should attempt to make the list of course offerings available to students much earlier than is the current practice and should consider developing descriptions of upcoming courses for posting on the departmental website prior to registration.

### *Honours*

An effective honours program can provide a cadre of enthusiastic students who function as advertisers for the discipline. While the honours students with whom we talked were enthusiastic about many of the Political Science courses they had taken, they told us they need more guidance from the department, and more help in finding supervisors. There appears to be no clear line of responsibility for the honours program and it has fallen to the Head to provide information and advice to students. The Undergraduate Studies Committee would seem to be the appropriate body to take responsibility for the program, including revising the honours guidelines, as was

recommended by the students we met. That committee could also designate a particular person to advise honours students who could then either assist students in finding supervisors, or could assign appropriate supervisors.

Although the Head reported that there was little discussion about improving the honours program, we would encourage the department to explore how it compares with those in other departments in the Faculty and with those of other Political Science departments across the country. An alternative structure for the program, including a dedicated honours seminar, might help with the problem of distributing the supervisory load, and with helping guide the students in developing topics, writing proposals and drafting theses.

**Recommendation 23:** The Undergraduate Studies Committee should be responsible for the honours program and should designate a faculty member to advise honours students.

**Recommendation 24:** The department should look at the structure of its honours program in comparison with those in other departments in the Faculty of Arts, and in other Political Science departments.

#### *Library and Computing Resources*

We cannot comment on the adequacy of library and computing resources because we were given no information on these issues. We do not know if an introduction to library resources is part of first-year courses. It is, however, a practice we recommend highly.

### *Distance Courses*

We were given no specific information about distance courses and their availability and popularity. We assume, however, that the department has a range of offerings through distance education. We recommend the department have an active distance program, and develop one if it does not. Distance courses provide an important service for the community and students.

### **Graduate Program**

The M.A. program in the Department of Political Science has considerable potential. Most particularly, it has developed a reputation for the internship option which has attracted a good number of applications. This stream of the department's M.A. program has built on the university's comparative advantage of being located in a provincial capital and having good links into the provincial civil service. When this emphasis on the internship stream at the M.A. level is combined with the department's growing expertise in Public Policy, then it is clear that the department has the makings of a distinctive program that could attract high-caliber applicants. It may also be possible with input from the Dean's Office to place students not only in the provincial civil service but also in the national civil service.

The growing expertise in the area of public policy is a positive development that the department can build on at the M.A. level. There would also appear to be considerable expertise in areas of public policy within other departments of the Faculty of Arts. The department needs to take the initiative in coordinating a Political Science Department-based program that would give Memorial considerable visibility and make it

attractive for prospective M.A. students. In a similar vein the department could build on its growing expertise in Canadian Politics either tied into the internship aspect of the M.A. or as a stand-alone field within the M.A. This again would allow the department some visibility among the many M.A. programs that are advertised across the country.

However, the panel has a number of concerns about the graduate program which need to be addressed before the department can fulfill its potential. First, the M.A. program needs to provide students with more structure, and the information to navigate their way through their year in the program. It is important that students be fully briefed about the year ahead at the beginning of the Fall semester. Many departments have a welcoming party, either just before classes start or in the first week of classes, at which all students and faculty are introduced to each other, and the people who are responsible for particular aspects of the M.A. program are clearly identified.

It would also be very helpful if the department developed a document – an M.A. “Wayfinder” – that laid out all the requirements at the M.A. level, and the deadlines for both M.A. students and the department, and held an orientation session for students in the first week of classes during which the document is explained and questions from the students can be answered. In addition, if the Chair of the Graduate Committee is likely to be away during the year, it is important that he or she has a designated deputy on site to whom students can go for guidance.

Second, the overall completion rate for the M.A. program is poor. It appears to be reasonably good for the internship stream, in part because there is more structure to this option. However, it would be helpful if students had a clearer idea how the assignment of internships takes place, and when they might expect to start. The Panel appreciates that

the department is dependent on hearing from the Treasury Board as to where the internships might be and when they are likely to start. However, it would alleviate student anxiety if they were kept abreast of developments. The thesis stream has major problems with completion. No thesis student should be accepted into the program without a designated supervisor who will retain responsibility for the student throughout her or his program.

The thesis stream appears to be almost impossible to complete in one year, yet it is still advertised as a one-year program. This is essentially false advertising. Three possible changes to the M.A. thesis stream can be delineated. (1) Advertise the current program as a two-year degree. (2) Cut the number of courses from 6 to 4 plus the thesis. (3) Reduce the number of courses to five and replace the thesis with major research paper of 10,000-12,000 words, i.e., approximately 40 pages. The third option outlined is likely to produce the best completion rates while giving the students a chance to write a sustained analysis of a topic that interests them.

Third, if clear and reasonable prerequisites are put in place to ensure that the 4000-level seminar courses include only students with a solid background in a specific number of Political Science courses, then it will be possible to “cross-list” or “piggy-back” graduate courses and 4000-level undergraduate courses. However, if this is done, it is imperative that instructors also include augmented requirements for graduate students and meet the students to discuss any specific concerns about the course that they might have. There should continue to be a number of graduate-only courses.

Fourth, graduate students could have their experience in the M.A. program enriched by acting as teaching assistants (TAs) at the 1000 level. Certainly M.A. students

present a resource that could be used to greater effect at the 1000 and 2000 levels. Many departments across the country use M.A. students as TAs who lead tutorials and mark papers and/or exams under close supervision. The key here is to ensure the TAs are given adequate training and are closely monitored. In other universities across the country, training is usually undertaken both at the university/faculty level and at the departmental level and occurs early in the Autumn term. The Department of Political Science would need to set up a training day and outline objectives, requirements and ethical behaviour expected of TAs. Many graduate students find that acting as a TA can be an enormously rewarding educational experience. If handled well, it can be a real benefit for both faculty members teaching at the first-year level and for graduate students.

Finally, the department needs the resources to be able to continue to upgrade its graduate program. For example, internship programs are notoriously labour intensive and it is important that a faculty member be prepared to oversee the department's internship stream. Professor Close has been crucial to the promotion of the internship M.A. stream and it is clearly important that his work is augmented and in the long term perpetuated by one or more of the department's new appointments. In addition, building up the M.A. program in distinctive areas such as Public Policy and Canadian Politics will need an increased faculty complement.

**Recommendation 25:** The department should continue to emphasize the internship option within the M.A. program and link it to an emphasis on Public Policy and on Canadian Politics. The Public Policy specialty M.A. should be linked to resources in other units of the Faculty of Arts.

**Recommendation 26:** The department should create a more formal structure for advising graduate students which includes a document setting out the rules and regulations and an orientation session in the first week of classes.

**Recommendation 27:** Students in the M.A. thesis/major research paper stream should have a supervisor throughout their program, including from the time they are admitted, although they should be allowed to change supervisors to reflect their thesis/paper topics. The Chair of the Graduate Committee or his/her deputy should be available on site throughout the year to provide guidance to students.

**Recommendation 28:** The requirement for the one-year thesis stream should be revised, preferably by reducing the number of courses and substituting a major research paper for the thesis.

**Recommendation 29:** The department should consider using M.A. students as teaching assistants as long as the requisite training is undertaken.

### *Faculty Research and Scholarship*

A number of faculty members have maintained good publication records despite the heavy teaching loads that the department has had to shoulder in recent years. There is also ample evidence that individual members of the department have contributed to the University's research centres and interdisciplinary groups. Members of the department have co-authored, co-edited or contributed to textbooks and edited books in a range of subject areas.

However, it is crucial that new appointees be given the opportunity to build up their research agendas and programs. The panel was concerned that new faculty were

assigned heavy teaching and administrative loads, especially when there is a Faculty of Arts policy of reduced teaching loads for newly-hired faculty. The policy of reduced teaching loads helps to get the research projects of new faculty underway. It eases the path to tenure and promotion for new faculty, helps in the recruitment of top-class candidates and serves to increase the likelihood of retaining new faculty. The review panel understands that there is provision in the MUN-MUNFA Collective Agreement that indicates that there should be equitable work loads across members of a department. This should serve to ensure that new hires are not overly burdened with large classes.

We note that the table concerning research on pages 31-33 of the Self-study overstates the amount of funded research obtained by members of the department. This table is not restricted to principal investigators, as is claimed; and it includes youth internships, a source of funding which should not be considered as research. The amount of funded research obtained by members of the Department of Political Science seems low to us in comparison to equivalent departments of Political Science at other universities. It is important that new hires be encouraged to apply for SSHRC research grants. The panel accepts that for members in smaller departments without a Ph.D. program, applying to SSHRC for research grants as principal investigators may appear daunting. Some mentoring in this respect from the senior members would be helpful. Certainly, in order to be successful they will have to publish in refereed journals. Senior members of the department should encourage new members to submit papers to journals, and give them the opportunity to contribute to edited books that senior members may be developing.



**Recommendation 30:** The department should ensure that teaching and administrative loads for new hires are reduced in accordance with Faculty of Arts policies.

**Recommendation 31:** New faculty should be encouraged to publish in refereed journals and to apply for SSHRC research grants.

**Recommendation 32:** Senior members of the department should mentor new members as they develop their research programs by, for example, giving them opportunities to contribute to edited collections being developed within the department.

*The Faculty's University and Community Service*

Department members with specializations in Canadian and/or Newfoundland and Labrador politics are frequently interviewed by local newspapers, and by radio and television stations. Some members have also served on panels at local conferences, and have made keynote speeches and other presentations. Research has been carried out for royal commissions and government departments. Professor Boswell has been particularly active in this regard, working closely with the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Municipalities and the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Municipal Administrators. The department's public profile is therefore quite strong, and it has excellent links with provincial government departments. It is important that this level of community involvement be maintained in the future.

The APR Committee could assess the university-wide service of permanent faculty members only from the information on their CV's. Some of these provide adequate information; others are sketchy. For instance, one faculty member simply

included “University Service various dates” and listed the committees (including departmental committees) on which he had served. Even when detailed information was provided, it was difficult to assess the amount of time such committee work required.

Our impression is that some members of the department have provided sterling service to the University. For instance, Professor Wolinetz has served as interim Dean, as a member of the Senate, as a member of the Steering Committee for the Strategic Planning Process, and on numerous other committees over the years. Similarly, Professor Boswell has been very active at the Faculty and University levels. The records of other department members are not as strong, particularly for recent years, and it seems that some senior members are less involved at the University level than they were in the past.

Over the years, however, members have served on the executive of the Memorial University of Newfoundland Faculty Association (MUNFA), on the boards of the Institute of Social and Economic Research and the Smallwood Foundation, the Faculty Research Committee, the Admissions Committee for the Medical School, the Vice-President’s Grants Committee, the Advisory Board of the Public Research Centre and various Senate committees. Others have helped organize exchange programs for students at Canadian and European universities and served on Headship search committees.

It is clearly important that the department should be adequately represented at all levels of university and faculty governance. We therefore urge all members of the department – especially senior members – to play an active role in this area.

**Recommendation 33:** The department should ensure that it is properly represented at all levels of university governance.

## **University Support**

As indicated elsewhere in this report, the department needs more faculty, and a second full-time staff person. According to information provided to us by CIAP for the academic year 2005-06, the Expenditures per Lecture Registrations in Political Science are the lowest in the Faculty of Arts. The average for the Faculty is \$552. The figure for Political Science is \$345. The statistics for Net Expenditures per Degrees Awarded also show the department to be highly disadvantaged. The Faculty average is \$31,762 while the figure for Political Science is a mere \$18,769. Finally, Political Science has the worst statistics for Undergraduate Registration per Regular Full-time Faculty. The Faculty average is 238.1 In Political Science the comparable figure is 483.7.

In addition, the department does not have enough space. If the department grows, it will need more offices, and there is an urgent need for common areas. The MA students share a small room, but there is no place for undergraduates to meet, other than in the corridor which separates offices from classrooms. A shortage of space affects most departments in the Faculty, of course, and we are glad to note that the University's Strategic Plan recognizes the need for the refurbishment of existing buildings, and the erection of new ones. We hope that the Faculty of Arts and its students will not be overlooked as this process unfolds.

There was no comment on Political Science library collection either in the Self-study or by those to whom we spoke. A meeting with the relevant collections librarian was not on our schedule, which was unfortunate. However, we take the lack of comment to mean that library sources are at least adequate.

## **Summary and Conclusion**

This report's central theme is that the Department of Political Science needs to reinvent itself, building on its evident strengths, but taking into account changes in the University, in the discipline, and in the personnel of the department itself.

The curriculum needs to be broadened, modernized and given more structure. At the same time, the department must decide on the areas to which it will give priority. At the MA level, Public Policy seems to be an appropriate specialization. At the undergraduate level, it is essential (given the University's mission statement and Strategic Research Plan) that the department maintain and possibly further develop its strength in Newfoundland, Labrador and Atlantic Canadian politics. The Panel noted the popularity of law-related courses, which are all taught by contractual faculty. We suggest that the department might consider developing strength in the law and politics of the sea, and of resource management in general. Gender and women's issues are also very important, and we emphasize again that the gender imbalance in the department must be corrected.

At the same time, the department must develop a clear and effective internal structure in which all members, senior and junior, fully participate. We recommend that the department revisit its "Rules and Procedures" document and consider whether the committee structure described there can be streamlined. Committees and coordinators should be provided with more detailed terms of reference, including a requirement to submit regular reports for discussion in department meetings. Students, both graduate and undergraduate, must know where to go for advice and information. The apparent absence of such a structure was mentioned by various interviewees, and we were struck by the

department's problems in finding an internal Head when Dr. Wolinetz became Interim Dean.

In our view, it is crucial that the department find a new Head who can enable it to develop a sense of direction and purpose, and establish goals to be achieved over the next five years. The arrival of new faculty at a time when older members are still active makes this an ideal time to begin such a process. Any such planning document should address faculty research and scholarship as well as degree programs, and find ways to enhance academic productivity in all senses.

The members of the APR Committee would like to thank all those who met us and provided information.