



## **Program Review Quality Assurance Plan**

### **Quality Assurance Plan for: POST (Policy Studies)**

**Date submitted to SSCPR:** July 2018

**Date Self-Study Report approved by SSCPR:** November 8, 2017

**Date of External Review:** February 23, 2018; approved by SSCPR April 25, 2018

## **SUMMARY**

### **OVERVIEW**

With a strong emphasis on social democratic and public policy solutions to sustainability challenges, Policy Studies introduces students to a variety of analytical methods drawn from philosophy, political science, economics, psychology and environmental science. Students thus develop an interdisciplinary skillset, supplemented by applied learning courses including applied communications and applied policy seminars. The combined theoretical and applied curriculum enables graduates to work in a range of social justice, social change, environmental justice and emerging sustainability fields.

Policy Studies currently has a 0.5 faculty member who is also the Program Chair. The POST program offers six POST-acronymed courses per academic year, five of which are cross-listed with other departments. The degree courses designated by the acronym 'POST' expose students to the core disciplines of Philosophy, Political Science, Environmental Protection, Economics and Psychology. Two upper-level Applied Policy Seminars provide applied, experiential learning seminars in which students engage directly with community partners to produce professional deliverables. The remaining courses required for the POST Major are delivered by other departments and include lower and upper-level Philosophy and Political Science courses, Geography and the Environment, Applied Communications, and Economics.

An Internal POST Steering Committee includes representatives from all the core disciplines (PHIL, POLI, ENVI, PSYC, ECON), as well as Geography and the Environment (GEOG). Our external Advisory Committee, currently on hold while we undergo program review, has approximately eight members drawn from local government, industry and alumni representatives and meets 1-2 times per year to provide input into program direction.

### **KEY PROGRAM STRENGTHS**

The B.A. Policy Studies Major is one of the only public policy-based undergraduate degrees in Canada and the only Canadian undergraduate degree with a focus on both public policy and sustainability. Almost one-third of our student survey respondents stated that they had come to KPU to pursue the Policy Studies degree.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> KPU IAP. "Policy Studies Student and Alumni Data (Cleaned)." 2017, p. 2.

Strengths include:

- Unique program that fills a critical niche in undergraduate education in the province;
- Committed, engaged students; excellent, passionate Instructors; strong connections between faculty and students;
- Inter-disciplinarity, and cross-listed courses that build enrolment;
- Strong relationships with other departments;
- Applied policy seminars provide experiential learning with community partners; and,
- Strong industry support, demonstrated by number of external respondents, long-standing Advisory Committee, and long-standing relationship with the City of Surrey Sustainability Office.

## Key Program Challenges

Key challenges have been identified by the Steering Committee, Advisory Committee, through feedback in the student and faculty surveys, and from the External Program Review Committee Report. They include:

- Visibility and identity: currently, the program name does not match the program's full intent; we have had some historic challenges with course enrolment;
- We have identified two weak core competencies: research methods/data analysis and decolonization/reconciliation. In addition, the External Review Committee strongly emphasized the need for a much stronger focus on climate change;
- Some Major requirements are outdated or have not been funded (i.e. co-op) leading to administrative difficulties for students to graduate, and chronic course substitutions; and,
- Lack of access to pedagogically-appropriate classrooms (e.g. design and workshop-style with movable tables, chairs and adequate whiteboard space for group work)
- Small program with limited Faculty resources

How do we best define our unique differentiator? As a program focused on Sustainability, yet called Policy Studies, there are challenges with our visibility at KPU and beyond. A name change to Public Policy and Sustainability will aid in clarifying our unique program, as will clearer external articulation of our program's core competencies through our core courses, and revisions to our Major and Minor requirements. The External Review Committee supports the name change and strongly supports the program's relevance and currency.

The program has faced some struggles with enrollment. While there is demand for both public policy and environmental studies programs in the province of BC., seat fill rates in the program could be improved. Stronger and strategic program promotion will aid enrollment, including attracting non-KPU students to the program. Student feedback also shows that the number of sections offered – a difficulty for small programs in general – can be challenging for degree completion. Students would like more POST courses, including ones that provide additional experience. The addition of new courses to our Major, such as the ARTS Practicum, an ARTS methods course, and revised Major/Minor requirements that take advantage of the many sustainability courses now offered by various Arts Departments, are opportunities that can help strengthen the program.

While our core competencies and essential Arts skills are on the whole well met within the learning outcomes of our current courses, we could strengthen our analytical/methods competency, and we are

very weak in reconciliation and decolonization. The External Review Committee strongly recommended continuing to work on decolonizing our curriculum, adding a methods course, and also recommended that we emphasize the challenge posed by climate change in our program identity, materials and curriculum.

## Key Program Opportunities

Several opportunities present themselves at this time:

- Become a destination degree by strengthening our unique position in sustainability and public policy; attract mature and indigenous learners from the City of Surrey;
- Other departments' recently developed sustainability courses could be used to expand our Major/Minor requirements and make the program accessible to more students. Potential impact: increase enrolment as more students take POST as a Minor and more students see the value of the Major;
- Partnership with likely funding commitment from City of Surrey for a CoLAB (Collaborative Lab) or City Studio program (now branded as Surrey CityLAB);
- Potential budget opportunity to fund additional sections and offer our Special Topics courses;
- Strong KPU support services, including: Librarian support for an open online journal, which can broaden public reach and promote the program, and strong marketing department with capability improve our online presence including promotional videos;
- Reconciliation work underway amongst faculty and the institution means that some supports are in place for faculty to begin/continue their reconciliation journey (a first step in decolonizing); and,
- Strong industry support.

There is some evidence that the program is meeting one of its goals, to become a destination degree attracting students to KPU. In the program review student and alumni survey, **30.8% of all the respondents strongly agreed with the statement “I came to KPU because of the Policy Studies program” (n=26).**<sup>2</sup> 67% of respondents who graduated with a POST Major, are majoring in Policy Studies, or plan to major in Policy Studies, answered the question affirmatively. We have an opportunity to strengthen the POST Major and Minor as a destination degree through the addition of unique course offerings, the development of the Arts Practicum and improved community partnership opportunities such as with the City of Surrey.

The self-study review process provided an opportunity to develop and examine our core competencies, and consider our Major/Minor requirements. We now have an opportunity to review and revise our curriculum and degree requirements in response to industry, student and external review feedback, particularly as other ARTS departments have developed an excellent set of sustainability-related courses since our program was launched.

We are also part of the KPU team, which includes an outstanding Dean's office, excellent Departmental Assistants, the Teaching and Learning Commons, the Library, and student services such as Advising. With strong internal partnerships with other departments, the Dean's office and KPU support services, we have an opportunity to build unique offerings such as a student-led open online Public Policy journal. The

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<sup>2</sup> KPU IAP. “Policy Studies Student and Alumni Data (Cleaned).” 2017, p. 2.

Marketing Department is supporting us in improving our online presence, including development of promotional videos.

Last, we have strong industry support for the program. More than 80 professionals drawn from a range of sustainability and policy-related professions responded to our external survey, providing their wisdom in the sustainability field and insights for sustainability education. We have an opportunity to build on this collective knowledge base, renew our external Advisory Committee, and develop a strong professional network with industry and our Alumni.

## **Key Program Threats**

Threats are external developments that could negatively impact the POST program, and include:

- Competition from newer sustainability programs, such as SFU’s Environment degree and UVic’s Environmental Studies program;
- Future change in institutional status (e.g. deficit situation, decrease in overall enrolment);
- Backlash against “expertise” and evidence-based public policy; and,
- Changes in the 21<sup>st</sup> century workplace, requiring additional flexibility and continuous learning of those working in the industry.

SFU and UVic now both offer environmental studies’ programs. Positioning ourselves as a public policy and sustainability program, with a definition of sustainability as economic, social and environmental, should help us continue and strengthen our unique undergraduate program. The applied learning in our program also differentiates us.

Our external survey respondents also identified emerging trends that pose potential threats to our program. These include a backlash against “expertise,” which challenges the field of public policy overall, and changes to the 21<sup>st</sup> century workplace, such as the move from stable employees to self-employed consultants. Students will need a strong range of academic and professional skills and competencies to succeed in the changing world of work. The External Reviewers agreed with the recommendation to create an Arts Practicum course given the benefits of having workplace-based experience for future employability of students.

## QUALITY ASSURANCE GOALS

List the program's Quality Assurance Goals (broad statements about what the program intends to accomplish to ensure program quality). Identify the Recommendation(s) – drawn from the **Self-Study Report and External Review Report** - each Goal addresses. Provide a brief Rationale for each Goal.

### GOAL 1: Align Degree Identity with Degree Content and Intent

RATIONALE FOR THIS GOAL: To have the name and promotional materials better reflect the content of the program, i.e. our focus on public policy and sustainability.

Recommendation(s) this Goal Addresses	Report (page number)
"The review team agrees with the recommendation to support a program name change."	External Review Page 3
"The program has great potential because it fills a major gap in the offerings of other post-secondary institutions in BC due to its unique focus linking sustainability with public policy."	External Review Page 1
The program name should better reflect the program intent and student demand.	Self-Study Action Item 3.1

### GOAL 2: Promote Program as a Destination Degree

RATIONALE FOR THIS GOAL: Uniqueness and currency of the program provides a recruitment opportunity that can increase enrolment in the POST program and ARTS in general.

Recommendation(s) this Goal Addresses	Report (page number)
"This program feels like it is on the brink of becoming a highly sought after or destination program..."	External Review Page 8
(Connect) with FSO to ensure that our unique interdisciplinary program is understood, with targeted recruitment.	Self-Study Action Item 3.3

### GOAL 3: Integrate Decolonization and Reconciliation into Curriculum to Meet a Critical Core Competency

RATIONALE FOR THIS GOAL: In light of TRC recommendations, recent Supreme Court decisions (e.g. Tsilhqot'in), and KPU's commitments to indigenization, this core competency was added, reviewed and found lacking. New curriculum will need to be developed within POST courses.

Recommendation(s) this Goal Addresses	Report (page number)
"The review team acknowledges this (Decolonization and Reconciliation) important competency and encourages the faculty to continue their work in this area."	External Review Page 4
"Add Indigenization and transformative outcomes where applicable."	Self Study Action Item 4.1

### GOAL 4: Update and Align Major and Minor Requirements

RATIONALE FOR THIS GOAL: Major and Minor requirements should be reviewed and updated to improve program quality, student experience, and enrolment/retention, based on the following: core competencies for the program have been refined; other departments now offer additional sustainability courses; some of the originally-intended courses (e.g. co-op) have not been implemented; and, additional courses such as an ARTS methods course have been developed.

Recommendation(s) this Goal Addresses	Report (page number)
"Core competencies for the program have been developed. They appear comprehensive and ... support appropriate levelling throughout the program" such that the program is now in a position to review and revise program requirements.	External Review Page 4
"A methods course would strengthen the curriculum for the program... The Program Chair is aware of this gap... Hopefully this change will be implemented in the near future."	External Review Page 4
Review Major and Minor Requirements to ensure that we are meeting our core competencies and providing opportunities for our students and other KPU students to benefit from disciplines with similar and complimentary learning outcomes.	Self-Study Action Item 4.2

## GOAL 5: Revise Existing Course Outlines

RATIONALE FOR THIS GOAL: To ensure that learning outcomes promote the refined core competencies and key sustainability areas (particularly climate change) and are appropriately scaffolded from lower-level to upper-level years.

Recommendation(s) this Goal Addresses	Report (page number)
"Climate change ... should be incorporated [and] course content modified to reflect this aspect of sustainability."	External Review Page 3
"The review team is supportive of faculty's desire to create evolving case studies within POST courses."	External Review Page 5
Review POST course outlines and review as needed. Explore developing or acquiring sustainability case studies for use across POST courses.	External Review Page 3  Self-Study Action Item 4.1 Self-Study Action Item 5.3

## RECOMMENDATIONS THE QUALITY ASSURANCE PLAN DOES NOT ADDRESS

List the Recommendations from the Self-Study and External Review this Plan does not address. Provide a brief rationale for why these Recommendations cannot be addressed. Add or remove rows as necessary.

Recommendations	Report (page number)	Rationale
Ensuring that classrooms are pedagogically appropriate  "Given that most POST courses utilize seminar discussions, teamwork projects and small group work, the review team recommends that classrooms assigned to POST courses be conducive to this type of learning i.e. contain moveable tables and chairs."	Self-Study Action 7.9 External Review Page 7	Not within the Program's control
Additional institutional resources for indigenization	Self-Study Action 5.7	Not within the Program's control
Address student concerns about number of sections offered.	Self-Study Action 6.1	Not within the Program's control
Reducing Course Caps	Self-Study Action 5.4	Not within the Program's control

## QUALITY ASSURANCE FIVE-YEAR ACTION PLAN

*Describe the Quality Assurance Strategies (specific plans of action) the program must achieve to attain its Goal over the next five year. Detail the **steps** the program will take to achieve each Strategy. Add or remove Strategies and tables as necessary.*

MONTH/YEAR WHEN THE FIVE-YEAR ACTION PLAN BEGINS: September 2018

### STRATEGY 1: Change the program name to Public Policy and Sustainability (POST) or Policy Studies in Sustainability (POST)

GOAL(S) THIS STRATEGY SUPPORTS: Goal #1 and Goal #2

Step(s) Required to Achieve this Strategy	To be Led by	To Begin on (M/YY)	To be Completed By (M/YY)	Notes
1. Provide rationale to Dean's office for program name change.	EP	July 2018	August 2018	The name change does not involve any curricular changes and has no additional budget implications.
2. Depending on the response from AEST, continue with name change.	SC	August 2018	September 2018	Name change will not proceed should a full program submission be required, as we do not have capacity at this time.
3. Develop transition and communications plan for students/Alumni, website, and other promotional materials.	EP/Dept. Assistant	September 2018	February 2019	Students and Alumni are affected by this change and a transition plan needs to be in place to allay concerns and build support.
4. Complete administrative process for name change.	EP	September 2018	(tbd)	Process length and complexity will depend on AEST requirements.
5. Coordinate with administration and the execution of strategy to achieve goal #2.	EP/HH	September 2018	June 2019	Coordinate name change with program promotion.

Resource Implications (if applicable)
What are the resources required to achieve this Strategy? Administrative Support from the Dean's office
When are these resources required? 09/2018 and as needed depending on the process
What Faculty and/or Institutional support is required? Program Chair, Departmental Assistant, Associate Dean, ARTS Marketing



**STRATEGY 2: Develop a stronger online presence with a website update and an online journal to showcase student work and case studies.** GOAL(S) THIS STRATEGY SUPPORTS: Goal #1 and Goal #2

Step(s) Required to Achieve this Strategy	To be Led by	To Begin on (M/YY)	To be Completed By (M/YY)	Notes
1. Revise website structure.	EP	In process	September 2018	Website revision has been discussed with Marketing.
2. Review and revise website copy.	EP	In process	September 2018	Considerable work has been completed by POST work study student, Spring 2018.
3. Edit existing experiential learning video to reflect the POST program for POST landing page.	EP	July 2018	December 2018	With support from ARTS marketing/events coordinator.
4. Review and revise website as needed following name change and/or Major/Minor requirements changes	EP	May 2019; May 2020	September 2020	Timeline dependent on other actions.
5. Utilize existing video footage and shoot additional footage for a second promotional video.	TBD	September 2019	February 2020	With support from ARTS marketing/events coordinator and KPU marketing.
6. Apply for FAEAF grant to pilot student-led online journal, including sustainability case studies.	EP/HH	In process	October 2019	Grant awarded.
7. Hire and supervise student coordinator and editors for online journal.	EP/HH	Spring 2018	September 2019	
8. Publish journal with launch event and promotion; include hyperlink on POST website.	EP/HH	Summer 2019	September 2019	
9. Review online journal pilot and make recommendations for future issues.	POST SC	Spring 2019	TBD	
10. Continue existing promotional channels (e.g. ARTS 1100 presentations, POST course visits, Open Houses, etc).	EP	In process	On-going	

Resource Implications (if applicable)
What are the resources required to achieve this Strategy? Marketing website and video support; FAEAF Grant (awarded) and library/IT support; ARTS Marketing support.
When are these resources required? Summer 2018 through Spring 2019
What Faculty and/or Institutional support is required? Marketing (web and video); ARTS marketing (Desiree McLeod); Library assistance (Karen Meijer-Kline); IT (update Open Online Journal for enhanced functionality).

### STRATEGY 3: Build Relationships with External Partners

GOAL(S) THIS STRATEGY SUPPORTS: Goal #1 and Goal #2; option for Goal #3

Step(s) Required to Achieve this Strategy	To be Led by	To Begin on (M/YY)	To be Completed By (M/YY)	Notes
1. Continue to develop strong partnership with City of Surrey's Sustainability Office, with the POST 3110 course, and through the CityLAB proposal (see also Strategy #5).	EP/TBD	In Process	On-going	Coordination in addition to POST 3110 requires additional support (e.g. CityLAB Faculty coordinator Note, now funded with a 1-section release for 2018-2019).
2. Develop relationships with additional community partners for Applied Seminars, including exploring options for working with Indigenous community partners.	EP	January 2019	12/2019	For example, Tsawwassen First Nation Senior Planner has expressed interest in having POST students work on community issues.
3. Renew Advisory Committee: build relationships with new and additional members, considering Indigenous and diversity representation; define ToR; hold a meet and greet with students.	EP/HH	January 2019	September 2019	Current POST budget insufficient to host more than one AC meeting per year.
4. Build external network for the ARTS Practicum course placements, including with appropriate First Nations and Indigenous organizations; first section to be offered Summer 2019.	TBD	September 2018	On-going	The aim is to build relationships with up to five potential internship/practicum "employers" for POST students who choose to take the new ARTS Practicum course.
5. Provide support for a Sustainability Alumni Chapter.	Alumni Office & POST Chair	May 2020	On-going	Opportunity to build our external network and promote the program, particularly as our number of grads continues to rise.

Resource Implications (if applicable)
What are the resources required to achieve this Strategy? Time Release for Faculty coordinator for City of Surrey partnership (beyond existing POST 3110); additional POST budget to support AC meetings.
When are these resources required? As soon as possible
What Faculty and/or Institutional support is required? Dean of Arts office: ToR for AC

#### STRATEGY 4: Build our Potential as a Destination Program

GOAL(S) THIS STRATEGY SUPPORTS: Goal #2

Step(s) Required to Achieve this Strategy	To be Led by	To Begin on (M/YY)	To be Completed By (M/YY)	Notes
1. Develop additional unique course and program offerings, with a focus on applied learning (ARTS Practicum, City of Surrey CityLAB, etc, see Strategy #3).	EP, TBD	In process	On-going	ARTS Practicum has been developed (ARTS 4800) and will be offered in partnership with other departments; other opportunities are funding dependent.
2. Develop unique learning opportunities for students, such as the online journal (see Strategy #2).	EP/HH	August 2018	April 2019	FAEAF grant in support of this work has been awarded.
3. Explore MOU with Capilano University Associate Degree in Global Stewardship.	TBD	June 2019	December 2019	Support required from ARTS Admin on this process.
4. Explore getting representation on BCCAT Articulation Committee	EP	January 2019	June 2019	Due to the inter-disciplinarity of POST, it is difficult to find a good fit with an articulation committee. The best may be the Environmental Studies Cttee, which did not meet in 2018.
5. Begin process of transfer re-assessment (self-study action 8.5)	TBD	June 2020	TBD	

Resource Implications (if applicable)
What are the resources required to achieve this Strategy? CityLAB coordinator (e.g. 2 section release)
When are these resources required? Starting Fall 2018
What Faculty and/or Institutional support is required? Support from ARTS office for relationships with other universities and administrative actions such as transfer re-assessments.

**STRATEGY 5: Decolonize our Curriculum** GOAL(S) THIS STRATEGY SUPPORTS: Goal #3

Step(s) Required to Achieve this Strategy	To be Led by	To Begin on (M/YY)	To be Completed By (M/YY)	Notes
1. Support Faculty in personal exploration of decolonization, indigenization and reconciliation.	Dean	In process	On-going	For example, through the ARTS Faculty decolonization group; encouraging participation in UBC MOOC on decolonization; participation in relevant ARTS activities.
2. Encourage POST Faculty to complete the three online Indigenous Awareness modules.	EP	October 2018	May 2019	While introductory, provide a good starting point for internal discussion.
3. Prepare decolonization materials (briefs) for internal discussion	EP	June 2019	September 2019	Set of concise materials for internal discussion.
4. Internal discussion on meaning and intent of decolonization, indigenization	SC	September 2019	On-going	
5. Bring Lekeyten in to speak to SC, and/or other elders	EP	October 2019	October 2019	Additional budget required.
6. Review/revise/try new teaching practices	SC	October 2019	On-going	
7. Review/revise course outlines to reflect decolonization (preliminary)	SC	September 2019	December 2019	Done as part of full course outline revisions, see Strategy 6.
8. Bring learnings from other departments to the SC	SC	January 2020	April 2020	
9. Bring elders into courses in an on-going manner	SC	January 2020	On-going	Additional budget required.
10. Review/revise course outlines to reflect decolonization (second stage)	EP	July 2022	December 2022	Additional changes incorporated as our learning deepens.

Resource Implications (if applicable)
What are the resources required to achieve this Strategy? Institutional support for decolonization (PD, discussion materials, etc); budget to bring Lekeyten and/or other elders in to meet with SC.
When are these resources required? Starting Fall 2018
What Faculty and/or Institutional support is required? Elder-in-residence time for classroom visits; decolonization work by larger institution.

## STRATEGY 6: Filling the Gaps in Core Competencies, Streamlining the POST Major and Minor


GOAL(S) THIS STRATEGY SUPPORTS: Goal #4 and Goal #5

Step(s) Required to Achieve this Strategy	To be Led by	To Begin on (M/YY)	To be Completed By (M/YY)	Notes
1. Support on SOCI course revision to meet methods course needs.	EP	In process	September 2018	With SOCI Faculty and Chair.
2. Review and edit core POST course outlines (scaffold core competencies; preliminary decolonization; add climate change explicitly).	EP	May 2019	August 2019	This action to be undertaken by the Steering Committee; preliminary work began at our first retreat, December 2018.
3. Explore the option of cross-listing ENVI 1121 with a new introductory POST course to introduce more students to the POST program (ENVI 1121 is a Q requirement with at least three sections taught each year at three different campuses).	EP/PR	January 2019	August 2019	ENVI 1121 is currently a program requirement; cross-listing would increase visibility for POST.
4. Review other departments' courses for newly developed, relevant offerings.	EP	January 2019	August 2019	E.g. Geography and the Environment, History
5. Revise Major and Minor requirements to remove extraneous courses and add new cross-disciplinary offerings.	HH	June 2019	August 2019	To be done in consultation with the POST SC and the ARTS Advisors.
6. Take program revisions (curriculum, Major/Minor requirements) through governance process.	EP	Sept 2019	May 2020	
7. Update Calendar to reflect POST program changes (program description, Major/Minor descriptor pages).	EP	May 2020	May 2020	With Dean's office support (ARTS Advisors)
8. Communicate changes to POST students.	EP	May 2020	September 2020	With Dean's office support (ARTS Advisors)

Resource Implications (if applicable)
What are the resources required to achieve this Strategy? Dean's office support for administrative process
When are these resources required? Spring 2019
What Faculty and/or Institutional support is required? This strategy depends on POST SC Faculty, with input from ARTS Advisors.

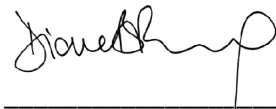
PLAN SUPPORTED BY:

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October 29, 2018  
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Dean's Signature

October 26, 2018  
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Date