

**J O H N S O N  
S H O Y A M A**



**GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY**

**U R E G I N A   ▼   U S A S K**

Response to External Reviewers' Report

Prepared by:

Kathleen McNutt, Executive Director and Jeremy Rayner, Director

August 5, 2016

## *Acknowledgments*

On behalf of the Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy (JSGS) we wish to thank the University of Regina (U of R) Provost and the University of Saskatchewan (U of S) Provost, along with Institutional Planning and Assessment (U of S) and the Office of Resource Planning (U of R) for their support and guidance throughout the process. We are deeply appreciative of the thoughtful and valuable feedback provided by the external review team composed of Ms. Penny Ballantyne (Secretary to Cabinet, Government of the Northwest Territories), Prof. Leslie A. Pal (School of Public Policy and Administration, Carleton University), and Prof. Mark Rom (McCourt School of Public Policy, Georgetown University). The advice and insight in the *External Review Report* will further enhance the long term success of the faculty, the students and the staff at JSGS. Finally, we are very grateful to the two internal reviewers, Bram Noble and Gina Grandy, who served as ambassadors for each campus visit.

## *Response to External Reviewers' Report*

The *JSGS External Reviewers' Report* received on June 23, 2016 provides 31 recommendations across five themes including mission and vision, organization and governance, academic and educational activities, research activities, and partnerships. As the report states: "the review is strongly positive. There are no major areas of critical failure or glaring risks. The School's Strategic Plan 2016-20 is ambitious and can build on the solid foundations established in its first period of growth and development." The report praises the School for a steady growth in students across all programs, for a rich array of program offering, for the JSGS CAPPa accreditation, for the activities in Executive Education, for our internship program and for our high level of research productivity. The reviewers highlight JSGS's strong stakeholder relations suggesting that "both within and outside the university, we found that the School is universally respected and valued. Indeed, both universities consider it a standard of successful inter-institutional cooperation, unique to the province" <sup>(6)</sup>. As such, the reviewers' recommendations focus along the "frontier of the School's aspirations where it is already good, but could be better. We largely accept the School's Strategic Plan... and our recommendations are intended to sharpen, focus and improve its initiatives."

The *JSGS External Reviewers' Report* does however outline a number of potential tensions that if not carefully considered and managed might impede our capacity to reach our goals and ambitions.

As the review team describes it

The School is at an inflexion point in its history where it has to think carefully about balancing consolidation with development, stewardship with growth, and prudence with entrepreneurship, while maintaining excellence in its programs and research.... three sets of questions should guide the School's strategic decisions in the next five years:

1. Just because something is framed as a "need" or as "strategic," is it actually core or fundamental to the School's strategy, and commensurate with its resources?

2. For a given activity or program, is it at appropriate scale and configuration? If not, what is an appropriate target? If yes, how can it be incrementally improved?
3. Are there complementarities across strategic objectives, or ways of leveraging activities and programs so that they have broader collective benefit – for example, combining the local and the international?

While strongly believing that the School must continue to lead innovation in professional education and collaborative research, our response to the reviewers is guided and informed by these three critical questions.

### *Response to Reviewers' Recommendations*

#### MISSION AND VISION

1. Develop a joint degree structure for the School's programs (though see recommendation #2 under Academic and Educational Activities).

*Response:* This is a very high priority for the School and we have just received permission for both universities to proceed with a proposal over the next year. In 2014, the motion carried by the joint council of JSGS stated, "Be it resolved that: Johnson Shoyama Graduate School request that the University of Regina and the University of Saskatchewan approve the recognition of a joint degree for the Master of Public Administration (MPA), Master of Public Policy (MPP), and the Doctor of Philosophy in Public Policy (PhD), including a joint parchment to recognize the identity of the programs, content and requirements." There will be an extensive effort required to achieve a joint degree and we predict it will be a yearlong process. Key activities will include the development of a strong rationale, extensive consultation with students, alumni, faculty and other stakeholder groups, the creation of a Notice of Intent for Council and Executive of Council, and support from both senates and boards.

2. Develop a single admissions process to the JSGS.

*Response:* We agree that this would be ideal for the School and we are committed to moving into discussion with the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGSR) and the College of Graduate Studies and Research (CGSR). The practicalities of a single admissions process may be challenging but would streamline admissions, create a numerical balance of students across the two campuses, produce efficiencies in student recruitment and support the one school, two campus model. We view this as a medium-term goal as there is no immediate risk presented by the status quo and our relationships with FGSR and CGSR are very collaborative and collegial across both campuses. Work on achieving a single admissions process logically follows the achievement of the joint degree structure.

3. Draft a focused plan to have research published in leading international journals.

*Response:* The three research clusters ((1) Innovation, Science and Technology Policy; (2) Social Policy and Inequality; and (3) Governance) will each be producing a strategic plan concerning activities, collaboration, publications and possible funding opportunities. Each group will be meeting in the fall of 2016 to begin plans for the next year. We would also like to note that we are very supportive of faculty doing impact research including publishing *JSGS Policy Briefs*, the JSGS University of Toronto book series, publishing in open source journals and using social media channels. While we recognize the importance of publishing in international journals we also place extensive value on research translation, applied policy advice, and community-based knowledge exchanges.

4. Develop a strong relationship with a sister school (possibly in Australia) around student exchanges and study abroad options.

*Response:* We have already started these discussions in connection with our strategic goal of raising our international profile and contributing to internationalization at both campuses. Preliminary feedback indicates that it will be difficult to establish student exchange and study abroad options in our professional programs (except in connection with the internship) because these programs (including our own) tend to have a highly prescriptive structure. We will focus on exchanges through our research degrees, with the added benefit of developing the relationship through collaborative research and scholarship involving faculty as well as students. We are moving towards agreements with universities in the United Kingdom and France in connection with the science and technology policy research cluster and will certainly consider Australian options. While this is a high priority area, the development of a relationship of this kind with a “sister school” will likely emerge over the life of the Strategic Plan rather than in the immediate future.

5. Re-focus or reframe some of the School’s research around the theme of “social license”.

*Response:* The Joint Faculty Council (JFC) engaged in extensive collegial discussions to identify our three strategic research clusters, and concluded that to change or add another dimension is not practical at this time. The faculty has worked hard to bring our research clusters alive and the three clusters are critical to the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan with resources being expended to support this direction. If the clusters decide to go in this direction, we think this best occurs as an organic process in which the issue itself emerges from the work of the clusters rather than being imposed upon it. We are however aware that there is a role for leadership and a great deal of interest in this particular subject. We will be responding to this by hosting a JSGS Deputy Minister Panel on social license in the fall and publishing several *JSGS Policy Briefs* in the area. We will ensure a discussion on this recommendation does occur in the fall JFC meeting and at the upcoming meeting of the governance research cluster in order to explore the possibilities of a “cross-cluster” initiative on this issue.

## Organization and Governance

1. Establish an advisory council, as envisaged in the original MOU for the JSGS.

*Response:* This has been done and the first advisory council meeting will occur in fall 2016.

2. Prioritize the objectives identified in the most recent Strategic Plan 2016-2020, assign leads and set milestones. Undertake regular reviews of progress.

*Response:* This is a high priority and work on this has already begun. The External Review Report has been extremely helpful in identifying priorities. Milestones will require metrics (see next recommendation), which will be available by the end of the year. The first annual report toward progress will be presented to the JFC in April 2017.

3. Establish metrics to measure performance of at least the most important strategic plan objectives (priorities), where possible and appropriate.

*Response:* Work on this had begun and metrics should be finalized by December 2016.

4. Review current organizational structure and administrative budgets to ensure staff and resources are aligned with strategic priorities.

*Response:* This is a medium term goal with work currently underway at both campuses. While some staff restructuring has occurred we continue to work towards aligning administrative budgets with the JSGS 2016-2020 strategic plan. In addition, work on the Executive Education organizational structure will be on-going for the next several years as we are set targets and measure performance. Work on aligning the staff roles at the centres with the School is ongoing at the U of S campus with support from the U of S “people planning” initiative.

5. Establish and communicate a Student/Alumni Engagement Strategy to ensure effective, two-way communication and feedback.

*Response:* The Student Experience Officer, Communications and Marketing Specialist, and the Community Engagement Coordinator will be tasked with this at the beginning of the 2016-2017 academic year.

6. Establish formal mentorship opportunities between junior and senior faculty (this complements recommendation #2 below under Research).

*Response:* While informal mentoring at the School is an established practice, this recommendation has a great deal of value and we will consider designing and implementing a mentorship program over the short term and in consultation with the faculty.

## Academic and Educational Activities

1. Identify the academic and educational activities that are essential to the School’s continued success; and those that might be trimmed or eliminated.

*Response:* On the academic side, over the last several years the School has been symmetrically evaluating all of its academic programs with the MPA/MPP/PhD reviews completed and the MIT/MHA scheduled for this coming academic year. The completed reviews have resulted in significant curriculum changes that further enhanced the high quality of these programs. Once the MHA and MIT reviews are done we will be able to better evaluate the appropriate actions, which will be a longer term process.

The two most significant priorities over the next year involve offering the JSGS suite of Master Certificates (MCerts) at both campuses and putting core MPA courses online. MCerts have proven to be an important mid-career entry option and attract public servants to the MPA program. The courses that comprise the MCerts are all core to the MPA program, thus students are able to ladder from the Certificates right into the MPA. In tandem with introducing MCert programs at the U of S campus, offering the MPA (and thereby all of the MCerts) online will open up our markets both nationally and internationally. With trends in online education showing significant growth combined with our existing experiences in offering the MHA program online, expanding the MPA delivery method will provide existing new opportunities for growing our student numbers, increasing tuition revenue and further building our reputational capital.

On educational activities, the Student Experience Officer will be developing a schedule of more focused events that complement the core attributes and competencies for JSGS students. We are also sponsoring thesis-based students to attend national conferences, expand volunteer opportunities, and create an international student society to provide peer-to-peer mentoring.

2. In the absence of pursuing a joint degree (see #1 above in Mission and Vision) consolidate programming by campus in either the U of R or the U of S. Or, in line with observed programmatic preferences, ensure that each program has a suitable balance across degrees.

*Response:* As noted above we intend to pursue the joint degree option as a high priority so this recommendation is moot. However, we note that program consolidation along the lines suggested would violate the first principle of the JSGS Principles document on *Program Consistency and Integrity*, which states: “The School’s two campuses will offer the same core programs with the same content and requirements. Initially, these core programs are as follows: Master of Public Administration (MPA), Master of Public Policy (MPP), and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). Other programs, that may be specific to one or the other campus, will be agreed to by the entire School.” The JFC has voiced support for balance across the MPA, MPP and PhD programs and works is occurring through the Grad Chairs and the Joint Admissions and Scholarships Committee (JASC) on achieving this medium-term goal.

3. Expand enrollment in the MPA, MPP, Ph.D., MHA, and MIT programs only to the extent that there is a comparable expansion in faculty resources.

*Response:* We agree. The 2015-2020 Strategic Enrolment Plan provides some guidance on our enrolment numbers and potential areas for recruitment; however, more effective indicators and

reporting are required for effective enrolment management. This year the Grad Chairs and the JASC will develop a plan to create benchmarks for the enrolment plan and targets for the JSGS Strategic Plan. These benchmarks and targets will be aligned with university enrolment plans and will provide the basis for staffing rationales.

4. Explore accreditation by NASPAA at the earliest feasible opportunity.

*Response:* This is certainly a medium-term priority for the School closely linked to our goal of increasing our international profile and faculty members have been involved in these discussions over the past several years. In 2017-18, in consultation with the JFC, we will create a working group to begin exploring the NASPAA accreditation.

5. Expand the internship program to the extent that is consistent with maintaining high quality placements and applicants.

*Response:* The School is continually focused on balancing the growth of the internship program with the quality of placements. Last year was the largest placement of interns in the program's history but despite this some students were not placed. However, our partners' expectation of the quality of the interns is critical to the program's success and needs to be carefully balanced against the goal of program expansion. While incremental growth may occur over time, the focus on simple growth in numbers is not a priority. Our focus will be on expanding the range and diversity of opportunities, especially for international internships.

6. Match advertised degree completion times to actual completion times.

*Response:* Agreed. We recognize that transparency about reasonable completion time is an important component of the integrity of our programs. We also accept that the expectation for completion times in our research degrees has been over-optimistic and we will adjust them at once. However, we note that advertised completion times for the MPA remain valid and that we will continue to strive to move students through to graduation as quickly as is feasible given the structure and educational objectives of their program.

7. Review the MIT program in terms of the School's mission, vision, goals and resources.

*Response:* A full MIT program review is being conducted in the winter 2017 semester and will provide a report and recommendations to JFC in April 2017.

8. Ensure that O&T programs fulfill their joint goals of educating/training, while also producing revenue for broader JSGS purposes.

*Response:* Executive Education is currently being restructured with an investment in new policy workshops for Indigenous community members, board governance training, and new Executive Leadership content.

## RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

1. Assess and monitor imbalances in research activities between the two institutions, and to the extent possible, take measures to ensure greater equity.

*Response:* Equity across the whole School is a fundamental principle of JSGS and, we believe, a critical component of the success of the School recognized by the reviewers. The challenge in this instance, as noted in the Report <sup>[20]</sup>, stems from the current imbalance between the proportions of senior and junior faculty at the U of R and the U of S. Senior faculty are more likely to be principal investigators on research grants, more likely to be asked to collaborate on major research initiatives, and more likely to have teaching loads that accommodate more intensive research and scholarly activity. In the short term, a greater emphasis on mentoring, on providing appropriate teaching loads for junior faculty who demonstrate a commitment to research excellence, and the use of the research clusters to encourage research collaboration between faculty members across the School are vehicles to improve equity. In the longer term, however, the basic structural imbalance of age and seniority needs to be addressed. If it is not, the inequity will simply flip over in about a decade or so, with faculty at the U of S being overwhelmingly junior and those at the U of R more senior. In this respect, the very welcome decision at the U of R to award the School a Tier1 CRC in energy policy and the new hirings at the U of S, created by the research affiliations with the Fedoruk Centre and Global Institute on Food Security, are both helpful. In light of our strategic priority of pursuing research collaborations with other research centres and in connection with major national research initiatives, we recognize the need to develop a School faculty renewal plan in consultation with the faculty and HR at both campuses. The plan will include criteria for allocating new hirings in an equitable way. While it is a high priority, given the current success at attracting new funding for positions, this is a medium to long term initiative.

2. Develop a more formal research mentoring program between senior and junior faculty.

*Response:* See Governance and Organization recommendation #6.

3. Establish “mini-strategic plans” for each of the research clusters to publish research results in at least three of the top ten journals.

*Response:* See response to Mission and Vision recommendation #3.

4. Cultivate the international dimension of what might appear as “local” policy issues, such as indigenous policy and some science-based areas.

*Response:* Given our focus on developing and supporting the research clusters, this suggestion will go forward to the clusters leads for consideration.

5. Consider a “horizontal” policy focus that might cut across the three research clusters: social license

*Response:* See Mission and Vision recommendation #5.

## **PARTNERSHIPS**

1. Prioritize the recruitment and placement of indigenous students in internships.

*Response:* There are two parts to this recommendation and we will deal with each in turn. The first is prioritizing the recruitment and placement of Indigenous student internships – generally. The other is prioritizing the recruitment and placement of Indigenous student internships in the Government of Saskatchewan. Both are critical. Indigenous students in the School tend to have three main aspirations: academic, federal government and most significantly working in their communities. Currently the challenge is that we lack internship placements in Indigenous communities, so this is a placement issue, as opposed to a recruitment issue. To address this, the School, along with interested communities, will be putting together donor packages to seek external funding over the next year.

On the flip side, the recruitment of Indigenous JSGS students interested in provincial government placements has been low, particularly among First Nations students. To address this lack of interest the School, in partnership with the Saskatchewan Public Service Commission, will be piloting an Indigenous Internship program this year. The program will be resourced from JSGS Executive Education revenues, with the Government of Saskatchewan willing to invest in 15 internship placements (\$375,000) across ministries. The program will be open to all Indigenous Master students from across the colleges and faculties of both Universities.

2. Increase the number of high quality internship placements for its students.

*Response:* See Academic and Educational Activities Recommendation #5.

3. Continue to enhance relations with the Government of Saskatchewan through faculty-practitioner exchanges.

*Response:* Our relationship with the Government of Saskatchewan is one of our most important partnerships and we will continue the long standing faculty-practitioner model adopted in executive and governance training

4. Continue indigenization efforts, especially at the University of Saskatchewan [campus].

*Response:* Indigenization is a major priority of both the University of Regina and the University of Saskatchewan and is an overarching goal in the JSGS Strategic Plan 2016-2020. Indigenization will be a long term goal and will require considerable time spent building relationships and learning. Beyond the institutional necessities including the recruitment of indigenous faculty and staff, attracting high quality indigenous students, the indigenization of curriculum, the training of existing faculty, and the indigenization of space, one of the most significant aspects of the process will be the community-based co-design of further program offerings. The School is currently engaged in this partnership development through our governance program offerings

and a new executive education series. In addition, renewing our relationship with the International Centre for Northern Governance and Development and the new affiliation with the Indigenous Peoples Health Research Centre (IPHRC) will provide greater mentoring and supervisory capacity, along with new community-based research opportunities. This new affiliation will also provide the School with a great opportunity to build relationships with indigenous faculty members from across both campuses and the First Nations University of Canada.

We will be making a concerted effort to increase the number of community engagement activities at the JSGS U of S campus including a Living Heritage Event focused on reconciliation through storytelling, an indigenous science panel, and targeted indigenous faculty recruitment. In addition, the new IPHRC capacity at the U of S campus will also help to build greater campus collaboration with U of S colleagues. Still, these are only actions toward the larger goals described above.

A special working committee has been established for the 2016-2017 academic year to develop a JSGS Indigenization Plan. The committee will be chaired by the Executive Director with representation from the faculty, students and staff.

5. Make targeted efforts to develop additional ties with international institutions, particularly in central research areas.

*Response:* This is a high priority of the School and overarching goals of our Strategic Plan 2016-2020. Work with international partners is in the early stages of development and we have a long way to go. The internationalization of JSGS, which is a major cross-cutting strategic direction, is a long-term goal that will develop incrementally through the JSGS faculty's collaborative research relationships, students' preference and ambitions, and through the creation of school to school partnerships. Preliminary work is occurring with the United Kingdom, France, Mexico, China and the United States (see also response to Mission and Vision recommendation # 4).

6. Establish an alumni board.

*Response:* An alumni association has been established and the group will be working on terms of reference, a number of alumni events, and a scholarship fund. The inaugural president of the JSGS Alumni Association will be Laura Willcocks (JSGS Alumni 2013). Over the next year, the association will be working with the Student Experience Officer to reach out to the various informal alumni chapters in Calgary, Ottawa, Victoria, Edmonton and Vancouver.

7. Establish an advisory council.

*Response:* See response to Organization and Governance recommendation #1

<i>Implementation Plan 2016-2020</i>						
<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Complexity</b>			<b>Timelines</b>		
	Low	Medium	High	Short-term	Mid Term	Long Term
<b>Mission and Vision</b>						
1. Develop a joint degree structure for the School's programs (see recommendation #2 under Academic and Educational Activities).			✓		✓	
2. Develop a single admissions process to the JSGS.			✓		✓	
3. Draft a focused plan to have research published in leading international journals.	✓			✓		
4. Develop a strong relationship with a sister school (possibly in Australia) around student exchanges and study abroad options, buttressed with a joint interest across the two institutions in indigenous issues.			✓			✓
5. Re-focus or reframe some of the School's research around the theme of "social license". The public understanding of science, and the challenges of public engagement around science-based policies, might be a key niche for JSGS that would serve both the province and the nation, but also be relevant to an international audience of researchers and practitioners wrestling with the same generic challenges, whatever the location or the specific technology in question.		x			x	
<b>Organization and Governance</b>						
1. Establish an advisory council, as envisaged in the original MOU for JSGS, to provide external perspectives to help support achievement of strategic priorities (this complements recommendation #7 below under Partnerships).	✓			✓		
2. Prioritize the objectives identified in the most recent Strategic Plan 2016-2020, assign leads and set milestones. Undertake regular reviews of progress.		✓		✓		
3. Establish metrics to measure performance of at least the most important strategic plan objectives (priorities), where possible and appropriate.		✓		✓		
4. Review current organizational structure and administrative budgets to ensure staff		✓			✓	

and resources are aligned with strategic priorities.						
5. Establish and communicate a Student/Alumni engagement strategy to ensure effective, two-way communication and feedback.	✓			✓		
6. Establish formal mentorship opportunities between junior and senior faculty (this complements recommendation #2 below under Research Activities).	✓			✓		
<b>Academic and Educational Activities</b>						
1. Identify the academic and educational activities that are essential to the School's continued success, and those that might be trimmed or eliminated (or, alternatively, how new human and financial resources might be identified to maintain and enhance them).		✓			✓	
2. In the absence of pursuing a joint degree (see #1 above in Mission and Vision), then if JSGS is interested in maximizing the quality of its degree programs, it might consider consolidating each program in either the U of R or the U of S. Or, in line with observed programmatic preferences, ensure that each program has a suitable balance across degrees.			x			x
3. Expand enrollment in the MPA, MPP, Ph.D., MHA, and MIT (but see #7 immediately below) programs only to the extent that there is a comparable expansion in faculty resources.		✓				✓
4. Explore accreditation by NASPAA at the earliest feasible opportunity.				✓		✓
5. Expand the internship program to the extent this is consistent with maintaining high quality placements and applicants.				✓		✓
6. Match advertised degree completion times to actual completion times.	✓				✓	
7. Review the MIT program in terms of the School's mission, vision, goals and resources.	✓				✓	
8. Ensure that Outreach and Training programs fulfill their joint goals of educating/training public and private individuals and institutions, while also producing revenue for broader JSGS purposes.				✓		✓
<b>Research Activities</b>						
1. Asses and monitor imbalances in research activities between the two institutions, and to the extent possible, take measures to	✓					✓

ensure greater equity.						
2. Develop a more formal research mentoring program between senior and junior faculty (this complements recommendation #6 above under Organization and Governance).		✓			✓	
3. Establish “mini-strategic plans” for each of the research clusters to publish research results in at least three of the top ten journals.	✓			✓		
4. Cultivate the international dimension of what might appear as “local” policy issues, such as indigenous policy and some science-based areas.		✓				✓
5. Consider a “horizontal” policy focus that might cut across the three research clusters: social license and the challenges of public engagement in “wicked” problems. Given the state of the world, this is definitely a growth industry.	✓				✓	
<b>Partnerships</b>						
1. Prioritize the recruitment and placement of indigenous students in internships.			✓		✓	
2. Increase the number of high quality internship placements for its students.			✓			✓
3. Continue to enhance relations with the Government of Saskatchewan through faculty-practitioner exchanges.	✓			✓		
4. Continue indigenization efforts, especially at the University of Saskatchewan.			✓			✓
5. Make targeted efforts to develop additional ties with international institutions, particularly in central research areas.			✓			✓
6. Establish an alumni board.	✓			✓		
7. Establish an advisory council (this complements recommendation #1 under Organization and Governance).	✓			✓		