

## 2016 Academic Program Review Summary

### Department of Political Science

The Department of Political Science underwent an external review in 2016. Three reviewers conducted a site visit on March 10 - 11. The reviewers found an extraordinary quantity and quality of research for a department of its size. They commended the passion and commitment to excellence in teaching and supervision that infuses the Department as evidenced by teaching awards and statements from both graduate and undergraduate students. The reviewers found the Department to be well governed, with efficient, supportive staff and administration. They noted that departmental research strengths in critical political theory, Canadian politics, and comparative public policy have grown to include European, Indigenous, and transnational/global south politics.

The reviewers identified four challenges, to which the Department has responded.

1. First, and overarching, the Department is at a “crossroads between the uniqueness and traditions of the Department versus change, diversity and plurality of the broader discipline.”
2. Second, that the undergraduate academic curriculum should be reviewed, adding a methods course, allowing greater specialization and rethinking the introductory Poli 103. They support the Department plan to create two streams for the honours program.
3. Third, to enhance support of graduate students by making improvements to the website, improving comprehensive exam logistics and increasing the competitiveness of offers. They recommended a two stream MA program and were supportive of the development of a well-planned MA in Global Studies. They expressed concern about declines and gender imbalances in graduate enrolment applications, however the latter is not reflected in the most recent pool of applicants.
4. The final challenge was to measure and communicate not just the quantity and quality of their research but also the impact on both the field of Political Science and community engagement. The Department will explore such measures.