Public Policy Studies Program Progress Report 2004-5

Submitted by: PPS Program Faculty Members

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Introduction

In December 2002, the Public Policy Studies Program (PPS) submitted its first Academic Program Review (APR). This document provided the foundation for reflecting on the work that had been accomplished in PPS as well as outlining a path for the future. At that time, two faculty members were dedicated full-time in the program. Those members were Professors Demissie and Sampson. Prof. Heneghan, from the Environmental Science Program was the Program’s director and the primary author of the APR.

From the APR, a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was created to assist with continual advancement for PPS. The MOA was signed June 2003, and this PPS Progress Report reflects the fifth cycle of reporting.

Background on PPS during the MOA Period

PPS has undergone significant changes and growth during the period of the MOA. PPS was originally comprised of two dedicated full-time faculty members, those being Professors Demissie and Sampson, along with nine affiliated faculty members who had joint appointments in other departments. The affiliates were: Professors Larry Bennett (Political Science), Susan Bennett (Public Services Graduate Program), Gabriella Bucci (Economics), Liam Heneghan (Environmental Science), James Montgomery (Environmental Science), Thomas Murphy (Environmental Science), Alex Papadopoulos (Geography), Joseph Schwieterman (Public Services Graduate Program), and Barbara Willard (Communication).

The program continues to attract students who are interested in PPS as a major. In addition, students have expressed interest in having a minor degree of study in PPS. The continued student interest in public policy and growth of the program has necessitated some changes in its governance. Today, PPS has re-structured itself and hired a full-time Director. Prof. Kelly Tzoumis was hired in September 2004 as Director. At that same time, Prof. Bartling was added from Barat College into the program. Recently, Prof. Susan Bennett has been transferred (effective July 1, 2005) from the Public Services Graduate Program to a full-time faculty member in PPS. During academic year 2004-5, the PPS faculty has grown from two full-time members with a part-time director to five full-time faculty members and a full-time director. The result of this growth has given the faculty the opportunity to re-structure itself in terms of governance and decision-making for the program.

Currently, PPS has created a governance structure that includes voting and decision-making responsibilities for the five full-time faculty members, with representation from the original affiliated faculty members. Two affiliated faculty members were self-selected in April 2005 for purposes of participating along side the full-time faculty in terms of voting and decision-making. These faculty members are Professors Susan Bennett and Jim Montgomery, who are expected to serve a minimum of one year as full voting members. The remaining original affiliated faculty members continue to be a vital component of PPS by serving as an advisory council to the program. Since Prof. Susan Bennett recently moved into the program full-time, the PPS faculty will discuss the need to replace her with a member from the newly formed PPS advisory council. Because this is a very recent event, the faculty are in the process of discussing how to best re-adjust its structure.
This progress report reflects a dynamic program that is experiencing maturation as it grows in both enrollments in classes as well as majors, has developed a new minor, and has hired several new faculty members. PPS faculty members are committed to establishing governance processes, personnel guidelines for tenure and promotion, and a means for curriculum review. Activity in all of these areas has begun and will continue into the next academic year. Currently, Prof. Demissie is leading the governance process beginning with a focus on personnel processes for tenure and promotion; Prof. Susan Bennett is leading the curriculum review; and Prof. Tzoumis is responsible for the assessment process which includes establishing a mission statement and learning outcomes.

Below is the progress being made on each element of the MOA following the suggested format. Overall, this is a tremendous amount of work by the PPS faculty, considering the organizational impacts of doubling the number of full-time faculty in one year, and the hiring of a new director. PPS faculty members are meeting the service needs evident in many of the MOA elements while continuing to actively publish in their respective fields, apply for grants, present papers at conferences, and teach seven courses, often with large enrollments. One final note, the PPS faculty members have also developed collegiality with their new colleagues during this period of change and transformation which has been part of the reason for its significant accomplishments as a unit.
PPS Accomplishments

1. Strategic Planning

   a. Governance

   The Public Policy Studies Program has been in the process of formalizing its governance including determining voting rights and auxiliary roles corresponding with levels of involvement. Once governance decisions have been formalized, mission and learning goals drafted for the program will be voted on.

   Recently, the program has gained three new faculty members and a new Director. This year has been spent working on a governance structure by the faculty, in coordination with the LA&S Dean. The PPS governance structure, which was created and implemented in agreement with this element of the MOA, includes voting by those faculty members dedicated to PPS full-time, and two representatives from affiliated faculty members. The affiliated faculty has taken on the critical task of serving as an advisory council that assists with providing guidance to the program in areas of assessment, strategic planning, and other important matters.

   Currently, there are several important initiatives being worked on by PPS faculty members. First, Prof. Demissie is leading the effort for governance which is focused on personnel matters such as creating a process for tenure and promotion, since these issues appear to be the most pressing ones in the near future. Second, Prof. S. Bennett drafted learning goals which will be considered along with a mission statement for a formal vote in academic year 2005-6.

   b. Integration of Public Policy Studies Tracks

   The Public Policy Studies Program is pursuing a strategy for integrating its urban studies and environmental studies tracks, while preserving the distinctiveness of each track. Cross-linking of courses is being developed in order to programmatically connect the two tracks. Common areas such as social justice, sustainability, and the urban environment are areas actively being pursued.

   Several tasks have been accomplished in this area and will need to continue over time. Several courses have been created or planned for implementation to link the tracks. First, Dr. Antonio Morales-Pita (a PPS adjunct) created and implemented a new course titled Sustainable Development (PPS 330). This course brings the students from both tracks together to learn about sustainable development concepts impacting both environmental and urban matters. This course is now one of the primary elective courses taught by Prof. Bartling. Second, Prof. Sampson has created a new senior capstone titled, Gentrification: Urban Savior or the Evil Empire? , which will be offered in academic year 2005-6 to bring PPS students together to study the topic of gentrification that requires an understanding of both environmental and urban issues. In the past, students took different capstones based on their chosen track. PPS has decided to bring students together in the capstone to better integrate the tracks. Third, a new public policy GIS course (Geographical Information Systems 244) was offered to focus on public policy.
issues for both tracks in Spring 2005. Fourth, Prof. Tzoumis is offering a new environmental justice course in conjunction with the Little Village Environmental Justice Organization, using a service learning, community-based pedagogy. This course will be offered in Autumn 2005 and will be cross-listed across the PPS tracks. She recently received a Public Service Council grant to design this course over the summer 2005 which will include opportunities for student research in academic year 2005-6.

2. Curriculum

a. Core Courses

Progress is being made in the conscious integration of the Public Policy Studies’ learning goals into the core courses. This progress will continue throughout the coming academic year (2003 - 2004).

Before this MOA element could be accomplished, PPS faculty had to establish learning outcomes and a governance structure as well as a mission statement. Prof. Susan Bennett drafted learning goals which are under review by the faculty. However, this MOA element will be ongoing into 2005-6 and is expected to be completed by the end of that academic year.

b. Flexible Third Track

Students, in conjunction with their advisors, can tailor a set of courses to focus on their areas of interest and create a hybrid course of study between the two existing tracks. Areas of interest will be monitored should any particular area appear to merit its course base being expanded or being developed into a formal third track.

There has been no discussion on this matter by PPS faculty members. It is something that is considered a lower priority given the more immediate concerns for governance regarding personnel matters, curriculum, and structuring the program from the recent growth in faculty members. This matter will be considered later in academic year 2005-6. The Director is investigating the historical information that went into the reasoning for this third track option so that a full discussion can begin with the faculty.

c. Career/Graduate School Advising

The Public Policy Studies Program will pursue a variety of activities to improve student advising and cohort collegiality. Activities may include events to enable students to discuss careers and graduate school opportunities with policy professionals, talks by faculty about research interests, and the creation of a Public Policy Student Club. Furthermore, the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences will continue discussions with the Public Policy Program about the possibility of gathering space for the program being allocated, when/if facilities become available.
Several new initiatives have been implemented by the PPS faculty members under this element. First, there is a monthly PPS newsletter that contains profiles of students, alumni, and faculty. This has enhanced communication among students, as well as between students and faculty. The newsletters announce annual course schedules, employment and internship opportunities as well as explain important advising issues. Second, quarterly PPS student-focused events have been implemented. In November 2004, PPS hosted an election night party on campus that was well attended. In February, a speaker was hosted by PPS from the Clinton White House, who came to campus to discuss the death of environmentalism. In April, PPS supported the Institute for Nature and Culture at their annual Forum on Nature and Culture public lecture. This year’s speaker was the renowned environmental justice activist, Lois Gibbs. At the end of April, PPS co-sponsored a career fair with the Illinois Association of Environmental Professionals (IAEP). In June, PPS hosted an event for PPS graduating seniors along with their family and friends to be recognized by the program. Finally, Prof. Bill Sampson is in the process of coordinating a student organization for PPS which will begin Autumn 2005. These efforts will continue as part of the normal operation of the program.

d. Quantitative Skills

The Public Policy Studies Program will continue to investigate curricular elements needed to enhance students’ quantitative/research skills. Furthermore, the program will look into whether or not some of the electives, particularly those in Economics, that fulfill the quantitative requirement can have sections for students not interested in pursuing a business degree as, anecdotally, many Interdisciplinary Studies students feel disenfranchised when enrolled in these courses.

PPS has accomplished this element through a variety of changes in the curriculum, since these skills have to be reinforced in several classes rather than one class. First, the process on how PPS assessed the level of quantitative skills of its students was addressed in its 2005 PPS Assessment Report. From the assessment of student work in two classes recognized as being rigorous in using economics and quantitative skills, it was shown that there was a need for creating some additional courses that assist PPS students with these skills. Prof. Tzoumis created a new course titled Quantitative Public Policy Analysis (PPS 204) to assist PPS students who may not have taken college algebra prior to coming into the PPS. This course was approved in 2005 and will be offered in Spring 2006 to assist students with research and quantitative skills.

Also, Prof. Joseph Schweiterman will offer a new course, “Urban Regional Planning”, in Winter 2006 that focuses on using economic approaches. This course will assist PPS students who may not have taken microeconomics prior to coming into the program gain practical application knowledge of economic approaches to public policy.

Finally, Prof. Susan Bennett will be teaching a new Public Policy Methods course in Winter 2005, which will assist students in using research skills and the potential errors that can result from the design of different data collection methods.
3. Assessment

[Compliance with University/TLA assessment practices of the highest priority for the Public Policy Studies Program and will begin in the 2003-2004 academic year. – this sentence seems awkward]

PPS submitted its first assessment report in April 2005. It focused on a need identified in this MOA for quantitative skills (2d see above). Originally, PPS was going to pursue the creation of learning goals as its assessment project. While learning goals have been drafted, and discussed in a limited manner among the faculty, it was decided to change the assessment target for this year to element 2d in the MOA. The reason for this was that faculty wanted to get a governance structure in place prior to creating learning goals and to incorporate the views of recent faculty members.

4. Students

a. The Public Policy Studies Program will seek ways to enhance contact with students through career/graduate school advising events and formalizing advising procedures.

PPS is preparing an orientation program for new and returning students in the program. Cathy Clark, office assistant, has been working on the orientation packet for several months. The orientation will be mandatory for all PPS students beginning 2005-2006 Autumn quarter as well as returning students, so that all students receive the same information. At that orientation meeting, the students who do not have an advisor will be assigned one based on their career and subject matter interests. They will be introduced formally to the program's curriculum and given an overview of the schedule of classes.

b. The program will track data on student advising, contact information, retention, and graduation.

PPS has a database for student and alumni contact information which is used frequently for announcements about jobs, courses, PPS student events, and other program matters. Retention and graduation monitoring occurs quarterly by information provided by Cathy Clark to the director.

5. The Public Policy Studies Program is committed to promoting the diversity of faculty, students, and staff, and will, when a new faculty line is made available, use hiring strategies intended to enhance its diversity.

Due to the current policies for hiring in LA&S, PPS is not anticipating or planning for any additional faculty lines for hiring. Currently, the program is rather diverse in its composition based on gender, race, age, and expertise.

6. Collaborations
a. **Within the University**

The Public Policy Studies Program is committed to identifying and collaborating with other programs, departments, and centers and institutes within DePaul University when collaboration can benefit all parties.

PPS faculty members teach approximately 4-5 courses in the program. They support a variety of programs in other departments as well as in the First Year Program for the remainder of their course load. Thus, the entire PPS faculty is committed to working with other programs and departments.

PPS faculty also actively supports DePaul University centers and institutes. For instance, Prof. Bartling is active in the Institute for Nature and Culture, Prof. Demissie is active in the Center for African Diaspora, Prof. Tzoumis has submitted a joint grant to EPA for PPS and the Chaddick Institute and she collaborates with the Steans Center. Prof. Susan Bennett will continue to assist the MPS program in the future as needed while being a PPS faculty member.

b. **Outside the University**

Collaborative programming and activities will be pursued by the Public Policy Studies Program with appropriate external entities, both public and private. Both the program and the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences agree to discuss possibilities in these areas.

PPS has joined with the IL Association of Environmental Professionals (IAEP) to host a career fair for students. Currently, the Director is in discussion with the U of IL-Springfield to host a career fair in Springfield that focuses state agencies and regulators. As the program establishes its internal governance processes, this element will become the focus. It is anticipated that strategic planning for external events will occur in academic year 2005-6.

7. **Marketing**

The Public Policy Studies Program will use the first-year programming as an area to offer courses that relate to public policy studies and inform potential students about this major. Additionally, the program will restructure its web-site to increase its user-friendliness and provide more information.

Working with the PPS director, Prof. Bartling has made several changes to the PPS Web site which includes postings for internships and employment positions. One success has already been realized from this change. An alumnus, Constance Clay, received a position from a posting with Save the Dunes from the PPS website. This summer the director of PPS will be conducting a review of the Web site and seek additional revisions for marketing purposes. In addition, Cathy Clark actively updates the PPS bulletin board in the Clifton building as a form of marketing and communication for PPS.
PPS faculty have focused on first year programming in order to offer more PPS courses as a means of informing students about the program. For instance, Prof. Bartling created a course titled Public Policy and Leadership, which is associated with the LAS Self and Society Domain. Prof. Kelly Tzoumis created a service-based learning course for the junior experiential learning domain titled Environmental Justice. She also has taught most (four out of five) of her courses this academic year in Quantitative Reasoning (ISP 120). Professors Sampson and Demissie already offer a variety of courses in areas such as honors, multiculturalism, Self and Society Domain, Study Abroad, as well as focal points or the Chicago Quarter courses.

In addition, the Director has asked the PPS faculty to each develop a Chicago Quarter course so that everyone has the opportunity to teach in first year program. Professors Bartling, Demissie and S. Bennett have been asked by the Director to be prepared to offer a Chicago quarter course in Autumn 2005.

The Director is investigating a table-top PPS exhibit to use at career fairs and displays of PPS student work.

Signed:

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Chair of Unit Review Committee    Department Chair/Program Director

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APRC Subcommittee    APRC Subcommittee

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Chair of APRC      Dean of the College

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Associate V.P. for Academic Affairs   Executive V.P. for Academic Affairs