


Memorandum

To: Faculty Senate
Seton Hall University

From: Karen E. Boroff, Ph.D. 
Interim Provost and Executive Vice President

Re: Approval of the Report of the Program Review Committee regarding the Political Science and Public Administration department
(2019-FS-14)

Date: August 20, 2019

The Office of the Provost is in receipt of the approval of the Senate's Program Review Committee Report regarding Political Science and Public Administration department. It is noted that while the information from the department was submitted in February 2017, the reviewers made their site visits in spring 2017, the dean's letter was dated August 1, 2018, and then submitted to the Program Review Committee in November 2018. Therefore, the review that we are approving is already over two years old. There are benefits that could have been gained from the reviewers' comments. I do not think it is appropriate for a program to wait for this amount of time to get an endorsement. Given this, the next program review will be in 2022.

Both the Academic Policy Committee's report and the external reviewer's report offer some insights that are worth noting for the full Political Science and Public Administration review. The Program Review Committee reports the need for a stronger narrative to make the claim that their faculty, "exceeds the norms of productivity." I will ask the dean to provide an analysis of faculty scholarship. There was mention of grants, but it appears that some of those awardees have left the University. I also note that at least two faculty of the thirteen tenured or tenure track did not submit any information regarding scholarship or vitas.

Every review made the point that the focus was on undergraduate education. Therefore, the information provided by the students was very valuable. I urge the department to attend to the external reviewers comments about rotating various upper level electives, cooperating with other departments and schools to consider the appropriateness of some of their electives, making undergraduate majors more aware of the MPA and the various opportunities for internships both locally and in D.C., and working more closely with Career Services. The reviewers' comments on enrollments as a reflection of trends, i.e. declining interest in Law School, more recent interest in elections, are worthy of some consideration as these questions of electives and internships unfold. We do not want courses listed in the catalogue, which have not been offered in years. This is false marketing to students and unethical.

Given that reviewers referred to the tradeoffs involved in class size, the department should analyze these decisions more quantitatively. In order to justify new fulltime faculty hires, I strive for approximately 60% of

the credits in the major to be taught by full-time faculty and 40% to be taught by adjuncts. The chair needs to work with the dean to help manage this.

The assessment op-ed exercise described as students come in as freshmen and then repeated when they are seniors was interesting. That all the faculty are involved in the grading is also commendable. It would be useful to know whether this exercise has informed on curricular changes or affirmed that the curriculum is meeting its learning objectives. The major does list six detailed learning outcomes on its website. These outcomes have to be linked to particular courses, so those details on the website need to be provided.

In general, I felt all the reviewers provided some useful points for follow up by the department. Based on the Program Review Committee's recommendation, I approve of the report on the Department of Political Science and Public Administration on the undergraduate program. I also recommend that when a program review has been delayed for whatever the reasons for over a year, some additional information as to what has transpired during the interim is appropriate.