

# **Report**

**CAPPA Accreditation Review Committee**

**Master of Arts in Public Administration and  
Graduate Diplomas in Public Policy and  
Administration**

**Carleton University**

**March, 2009**

**Ian Clark, Bryan Davies, Réjean Landry (chair)**

## Introduction

The Carleton University Accreditation Review Panel was established in 2008. The panel consisted of Ian Clark, School of Public Policy and Governance, University of Toronto, Bryan Davies, Chair of the Canada Deposit Insurance Corporation, and the Chair of the Panel, Réjean Landry, Department of Management, Laval University.

Each member of the Panel received three volumes of relevant materials from the School of Public Policy and Administration of Carleton University in September 2008. The materials consisted of Volume 1, the Programs; Volume 2: Appendices which included information regarding faculty, physical and financial resources, program regulations and courses; and Volume 3, Curriculum Vitae.

The Panel met by teleconference to review the principles of mission-based accreditation and to discuss the information needed in order to undertake their mandate. A site visit to Carleton University took place on March 13, 2009. The three members of the Panel were at Carleton University for the site visit.

Dr Susan Phillips, director of the School of Public Policy and Administration organized a full day with meetings with the supervisor of the Masters Program and Diplomas, Dean of the Faculty of Public Affairs, Dean of Graduate Studies, faculty members and students.

The mission of the School of Public Policy and Administration at Carleton University is to:

*«Provide high quality, multi-disciplinary, and professionally relevant graduate education in public policy and administration and be a centre of research excellence that informs policy and governance issues at an international, national and local level. The School also provides a bridge between academia, the public sector and civil society through collaborations, professional training, executive interchanges, co-operative education and applied research.»*

The Masters of Arts in Public Administration and Graduate Diplomas in public Administration of Carleton University underwent periodic review by the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies (OCGS) in 2006 and both were judged to be of good quality. In fact, the consultants' report concluded their review by saying that:

«Carleton's School of Public Policy and Administration has excellent graduate programs. It has a strong track record and the momentum to adapt to a changing environment. The faculty is up to the task of delivering the MA program and PhD programs and of producing quality research. Carleton's professors are also well known among the public administration community. They are strongly involved in various networks. We have both in the past reviewed other programs and Carleton's is in far better shape than others we know. It has the resources and the leadership to prosper.

The School of Public Policy and Administration has no unique challenges to face.»

#### RECOMMENDATION:

**The Review Panel unanimously recommends that the Carleton University Master of Arts in Public Administration and Graduate Diplomas in Public Policy and Administration be granted accreditation for the full term of seven years.**

The Carleton School of Public Policy and Administration has many strengths that support the implementation of its mission regarding the training of students in public administration and public policy. The major strengths that the Panel wants to highlight are:

#### **The School of Public Policy and Administration:**

1. SPPA's commitment to collegial decision-making and openness in its internal governance seems to be valued and shared by faculty and the faculty morale seemed very high, to the extent one could discern this from our brief discussions and draw the positive conclusion from the lack of turnover.
2. SPPA clearly benefits from being one of the declared priorities of the university, in that it has 1) a high level of staff resources (four full times plus an additional person on advancement), 2) a high level of scholarship funds and 3) strong support from the Faculty Dean and the Graduate Dean.
3. Moreover, as evidenced in the interviews conducted by the Panel with both faculty members and students, the unit is robust and dynamic, and passes on its passion for high quality, multi-disciplinary and professionally relevant graduate education to the student body (underlined taken from the School's Mission Statement).

#### **Programs:**

4. A strong program including well defined core and eligible courses.
5. A regular offering of core and eligible courses of the different programs and diplomas.
6. Various internal appraisals of programs and diplomas which are sensitive to the need for improvement.

#### **Faculty:**

7. Faculty members have significant experience in training students in professional programs and diplomas.
8. Faculty members are well networked with the federal government agencies, nonprofit organizations and, increasingly, with international organizations, thus reinforcing the pertinence of their teaching in the programs and diplomas.
9. Faculty has a significant research and publication record which is instrumental in building bridges between training students and advancing knowledge.

10. The expertise of a relatively large regular tenured faculty is complemented by the presence of a large number of adjunct professors and sessional instructors, thus contributing to maintain and consolidate an appropriate balance between research and practice-based perspectives.
11. With this depth and scale of teaching resources, the School is able to offer a variety of specialization streams, permitting students to pursue areas of focus, without sacrificing their core understanding of key public policy and public management concepts and issues, which are addressed via compulsory courses.
12. The faculty age structure is relatively well-balanced, providing the opportunity for continuity, while at the same time, ensuring the injection of new ideas and approaches.

**Students:**

13. In addition to having substantial staff resources, the School has been successful in retaining handsome student awards funds (notwithstanding the change in University policy resulting in the withdrawal TA positions).
14. This, combined with the inherent draw of its co-op option and the unique feature of its location in the Nation's capital, helps the School attract quality students.
15. The School provides a computer room and office space for a significant proportion of its students, thus facilitating knowledge sharing and interactive learning among students.