

**Report of the Site Visit Committee for the
Periodic Intensive Review of the**

**Master of Arts (Planning)
Master of Science (Planning)**

**in the School of Community and Regional Planning,
College for Interdisciplinary Studies**

**University of British Columbia
Vancouver, British Columbia**

April 2010

Undertaken on behalf of the
Canadian Institute of Planners and the
Planning Institute of British Columbia

By: Ray Spaxman, FCIP (Chair)
Erik Karlsen, FCIP
Dana Anderson, MCIP, RPP

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Periodic Intensive Review
University of British Columbia, April 2010

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REPORT OF THE SITE VISIT COMMITTEE ON THE PERIODIC INTENSIVE REVIEW

Master of Arts (Planning) Degree
Master of Science (Planning) Degree

in the School of Community and Regional Planning,
College for Interdisciplinary Studies

UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

1.0 REPORT SUMMARY

The Periodic Intensive Review was undertaken at the request of the School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP) at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver. The purpose of the review is to consider the granting of accreditation to the Master of Arts (Planning) and Master of Science (Planning) Degrees as planning degrees recognized by the Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP) and the Planning Institute of British Columbia (PIBC).

The University prepared and submitted the required self evaluation and the necessary supporting documentation. The local Affiliate, PIBC, worked with the Director of SCARP, Dr. Penny Gurstein, to organize the Periodic Intensive Review. The Periodic Intensive Review Site Visit Committee undertook the necessary preparation, site visit and evaluation in accordance with the By-laws and requirements of CIP. After the site visit and discussion amongst the members, the Site Visit Committee is respectfully submitting the recommendation found herein.

2.0 REPORT RECOMMENDATION

Following the review of the self evaluation report, meetings with faculty members and students, a tour of the program facilities and discussion amongst the Site Visit Committee members, the Site Visit Committee respectfully submits the following recommendation:

THAT the Master of Arts (Planning) and Master of Science (Planning) Degrees in Planning in the School of Community and Regional Planning, College for Interdisciplinary Studies at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Columbia **BE RECOGNIZED** by the Canadian Institute of Planners and the Planning Institute of British Columbia Ontario for five (5) years beginning with the 2010-2011 academic year and ending with the 2014-15 academic year.

3.0 SUPPORTING RATIONALE

The Site Visit Committee has based its recommendation on the following:

- a) The degrees are in planning as defined by CIP and PIBC;
- b) SCARP within the College for Interdisciplinary Studies fulfills the administrative requirements in terms of capacity and academic independence to control and deliver its program;

- c) Members of SCARP are actively involved in the teaching of the planning curriculum; and,
- d) The content of the courses and the range of courses available fulfill the requirements for recognition.

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 General Overview of the Master of Arts (Planning) and Master of Science (Planning) Programs

The vision for SCARP is “sustainability through democratization of planning”. SCARP’s mission is to advance the transition to sustainability through excellence in integrated policy and planning research, professional education and community service. SCARP’s program is shaped by three long-range goals:

- (i) To give effective meaning to the concept of ecologically sustainable social and economic development and to explore local and global paths toward achieving it as professional planners;
- (ii) To increase the effectiveness of its professional graduates in working with diverse interests at the local level, in communities and regions where people live and work; and,
- (iii) To ensure its graduates maintain professional standards in all circumstances.

The Master Degree of Arts (Planning) and Master Degree of Science (Planning) are offered by SCARP each year. The program is generally to be completed in two years. The program is offered to students who have obtained a four-year honours bachelor’s degree (or equivalent). SCARP’s Masters Degrees require the completion of 60 credits of coursework including a 12 -credit Thesis or 6-credit Professional Project.

All students are required to take 7 core courses, all within SCARP. These core courses include:

- Plan 502 - Introduction to Planning Theory and History
- Plan 506 - Legal Context of Planning
- Plan 511 - Planning Research: Quantitative Methods and Computer Applications
- Plan 514 - Quantitative Methods II
- Plan 515 - Planning Research: Qualitative Methods & Research Design
- Plan 540A - Omnibus: Planning for Sustainability
- Plan 547C - Masters Professional Project or Plan 549C - Masters Thesis

All students are required to select at least one 3-credit course from a list established each year for each of the following four dimensions of planning knowledge:

- Ecology and Risk
- Physical Planning and Urban Development
- Social Dimensions of Planning
- Planning Process and Analysis

Students may also elect to take Directed Studies or an Internship to gain credits as well as obtaining credits from courses taken outside of SCARP.

4.2 Procedure for Periodic Intensive Review

The request to initiate the review of the Master Degree programs came from SCARP to PIBC. In turn PIBC appointed the Site Visit Committee in February 2010 to conduct the review.

The Periodic Intensive Review was undertaken in accordance with the requirements found in the *Canadian Institute of Planners Manual - Recognition of University Degrees*. The Site Visit Committee included the following full members of CIP:

- Ray Spaxman, FCIP (PIBC), Chair
- Erik Karlsen, FCIP (PIBC)
- Dana Anderson, MCIP, RPP (OPPI)

The Site Visit Committee received the *Membership Manual Volume 3 - Recognition of University Degrees* from PIBC as well as the *Self Evaluation Report* from SCARP prior to the site visit. The School also provided a copy of the report prepared for the recent Planning Assessment Board (PAB) review for reference.

On Thursday March 25th and Friday March 26th, the Site Visit Committee met at SCARP and conducted its site visit. Prior to the commencement of the visit, the Site Visit Committee conferred on the requirements for accreditation and reviewed the documentation received. The Site Visit Committee had the opportunity to discover the unique characteristics of the program and to rigorously examine how the program fulfills the accreditation requirements. Following the two day site visit, the members collaborated and a draft report was prepared. After further review and discussion this final report was completed.

4.3 Relevant Documentation Considered for the Review

The following information was provided and reviewed by the Site Visit Committee:

- (iv) *Membership Manual Volume 3 - Recognition of University Degrees Canadian Institute of Planners*
- (v) *Self Evaluation Report, Periodic Intensive Review of the Master of Arts (Planning) and Master of Science (Planning) in the School of Community and Regional Planning (March 2010)*
- (vi) Recently completed report for PAB
- (vii) Curriculum Map
- (viii) School Faculty CV's
- (ix) Course Outlines
- (x) An information package on the UBC Library
- (xi) SCARP Responses to 2004 CIP Site Review Committee Report

4.4 Faculty and Students interviewed for the Review

The following faculty and students were interviewed by the Site Visit Committee:

- (i) Penny Gurstein, Director, SCARP
- (ii) Michael Burgess, Principal, College for Interdisciplinary Studies
- (iii) Sneja Gunew, Associate Principal, College for Interdisciplinary Studies
- (iv) Anthony Dorcey, Professor, SCARP
- (v) Stephen Toope, President, UBC
- (vi) Anna Kindler, Acting Provost, Academic Affairs
- (vii) Leonie Sandercock, Professor, SCARP
- (viii) Tom Hutton, Professor, SCARP
- (ix) Tim McDaniels, Professor, SCARP
- (x) William Rees, Professor, SCARP
- (xi) Paula Farrar, SCARP Librarian
- (xii) Maged Senbel, Assistant Professor, SCARP
- (xiii) Stephanie Chang, Associate Professor, SCARP
- (xiv) Larry Frank, Associate Professor, SCARP
- (xv) Nora Angeles, Associate Professor, SCARP
- (xvi) Mark Stevens, Assistant Professor, SCARP
- (xvii) Meeting with Associate Unit Representatives:
 - a. Cynthia Girling - Chair, Landscape Architecture, School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture
 - b. Julie Wagemaker - Deputy Director, Lui Institute for Global Issues
 - c. Julian Dierkes, Keidanren Chair in Japanese Research in Institute of Asian Research
 - d. Paul Demers - Director, School of Environmental Health
- (xviii) Fourteen current Masters students
- (xix) SCARP Alumni and Adjunct Lecturers including Bill Buholzer, Frank Ducote, Adam Cooper

5.0 EVALUATION FOR RECOGNITION OF THE PROGRAM

The *Membership Manual, Volume 3 for the Canadian Institute of Planners* sets out criteria for the recognition of degrees in planning from Canadian educational institutions and requires the evaluation of the planning program with respect to the particulars outlined in CIP By-law No. 1, Section 8.6 of Schedule A and Appendix IV of the CIP Membership Manual Volume 3.

Where a potential member has a degree from a recognized planning program it exempts the member from the requirement to pass a written examination. An assessment of eligible programs shall be undertaken by the Affiliate within whose jurisdiction the program is given. The following evaluation is provided with reference to specific criteria as required:

CRITERIA	DISCUSSION
The degree shall be established by a post-secondary educational institution recognized by a Government of a Province of Canada	<p>The Site Visit Committee confirmed that the program meets this criteria.</p> <p>UBC is recognized by the Province of British Columbia.</p>

<p>The degree must be in the field of planning, planning being described as the “scientific, aesthetic and orderly disposition of land resources, facilities and services within a view of securing the physical, economic and social efficiency and well being of urban and rural communities” .</p>	<p>The Master of Arts (Planning) and Master of Science (Planning) Degrees are, in the Site Visit Committee’s opinion, degrees in the field of planning as defined by CIP.</p>
<p>A Master’s degree in planning should require at least two years or equivalency of study in a normal case.</p>	<p>The Master of Arts (Planning) and Master of Science (Planning) Programs meet the two year study requirement.</p>
<p>The word “planning” or the French equivalent shall appear in the title of the degree or parenthetically to define the discipline of planning within the designated branch of knowledge and shall not be subordinate to another discipline within the branch of knowledge.</p>	<p>The Master of Arts (Planning) and Master of Science (Planning) have <u>Planning</u> in the title parenthetically.</p>
<p>The program offering the degree in planning shall be a recognized administrative unit, within the educational institution, in the direct charge of an individual whose substantive qualifications are in planning and who is officially designated by the educational institution as the responsible executive, academic office of the unit having authority on academic matters at least equivalent to that of a department chair.</p>	<p>SCARP is a recognizable administrative unit within the University with independent responsibility for a budget and appointments to teaching faculty.</p> <p>The Director has substantive qualifications in planning, is a full member of CIP, and has the authority on academic matters necessary to ensure the planning course content requirements are fulfilled.</p> <p>The Site Visit Committee is satisfied that this criterion is met.</p> <p>2010 Director: Dr. Penny Gurstein, PhD, MCIP</p>
<p>The faculty shall include at least three academic members whose major appointments are in the planning program.</p>	<p>There are currently 9 faculty members whose major appointments are in the planning program.</p>

<p>At least three “full-time equivalent” faculty members of the degree granting institution must be Members; at least two of whom must have their “major appointment” in the planning program. Two or more members with part-time teaching appointments in the planning program shall be considered to be one of these full-time equivalents.</p>	<p>The Site Visit Committee is satisfied that this criterion is met.</p> <p>There are currently 3 full-time faculty who are full members of CIP all of whom have major appointments in the planning program.</p> <p>There are several adjunct faculty members who are full members of CIP.</p> <p>It should be noted that many of the faculty members are actively involved in the activities of CIP and PIBC.</p>
<p>Does the course content effectively address the four overlapping categories of essential substantive knowledge: process, content, context and role and do the courses teach an efficient number and quality of skills. Does the course content cover what planners need to know?</p>	<p>Through discussions with the faculty and students, and a review of the Self Evaluation Report, the curriculum map and course outlines which describe the course content, it is the Site Visit Committee’s opinion that the Master of Arts (Planning) and Master of Science (Planning) Programs fulfill the requirements for substantive planning knowledge.</p> <p>The subject area of ethics and values is incorporated into required courses 502 and 506 as well as through several electives.</p>

The Site Visit Committee is satisfied through its evaluation that the program meets the required criteria as established by CIP and PIBC.

6.0 COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS

Through the discussions with faculty members and students, as well as others associated with SCARP, and the review of the materials provided, the Site Visit Committee makes the following comments:

- 6.1 The School of Planning offers two Masters Degrees in Planning - a Master of Arts (Planning) and a Master of Science (Planning). Both degrees offer a program that has been carefully developed to accommodate the students in each area and provide a challenging learning environment. The course content for both areas is well balanced and offers a good range of choice while ensuring that the fundamental knowledge and skills required for professional planners are

taught. The course content also requires a high level of independent and collective group work which reflects the requirements of the planner in the working world.

- 6.2 The Master of Arts (Planning) and Master of Science (Planning) Program courses are taught by a very highly qualified faculty. The range of expertise in a wide range of planning areas and the number of experienced faculty is impressive. SCARP also has a group of practicing professional planners, the majority of whom are full members of CIP and PIBC, who offer a wide range of elective courses and are brought in as lecturers. Many of the current faculty are in joint appointments with other Schools and Departments. This provides for excellent opportunities for research and teaching opportunities but can be difficult in relation to workload for the faculty in the cross-appointments and their availability to students. On balance, the Site Visit Committee noted that joint appointments of SCARP faculty offered students access to in-depth learning in fields associated with planning, which strengthens their knowledge and skills as planners.
- 6.3 There were some concerns expressed regarding the significant number of tenured faculty members who will be retiring in the next few years. Many expressed the need for SCARP to ensure this transition period is addressed. Based on discussions with the Director and many faculty members the Site Visit Committee are confident the transition is being well planned.
- 6.4 SCARP is both internationally and nationally recognized as having a strong research focus. There are numerous research projects currently underway by many faculty members including research associated with the Centre of Human Settlements.
- 6.5 SCARP completed a strategic plan in 2008 and formed a working group to lead the strategic planning activities. One of the initiatives that has been implemented from the strategic planning exercise is the Teaching, Learning, and Curriculum (TLC) Committee. TLC has representation from the faculty and students and addresses the core activities of SCARP and issues such as course and curriculum evaluations, program review, internships, alumni connections and development, continuous professional learning opportunities and program development. The Site Visit Committee was favourably impressed by the work completed by this group.
- 6.6 The Site Visit Committee noted that several courses involve the opportunity for students to apply skills and work in groups to solve real problems, develop plans and implement plans. The “hands on” approach and involvement with the local community provides “relevance” to current planning ideas and trends.
- 6.7 The Site Visit Committee met with a large group of students for lunch. When asked why they selected the UBC planning program, the majority expressed that it was because it had a reputation of a well balanced program. Many specifically referred to a faculty member with whom they had sought the opportunity to work. Several of the students had grown up in British Columbia and had a strong interest to remain and work in British Columbia after

graduation. Several of the students also noted that while they did not receive grants or scholarships and while there were no teaching assistant positions within SCARP, this was a less important factor in selecting the program as the tuition fees were relatively low compared to other programs. The students did express concerns about the physical facilities included the lack of adequate computer facilities.

- 6.8 Students expressed the benefits of the range of course offered, both qualitative and quantitative, and the flexibility within the program. There were some concerns raised by the students that some of the courses were not offered this year. This appears to be due to scheduling and demand. The students did identify an interest in having more housing and transportation related courses offered as well as a greater focus on First Nations.
- 6.9 The School's physical facilities were one of the areas of considerable discussion by faculty and students. The space is not adequate for the students' and faculty needs. This is an issue that has been referred to in previous Site Review reports but the Site Visit Committee was very pleased to hear that there is a commitment to develop new space for SCARP jointly with the School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture. A campaign committee has been established to develop a strategy for the new space. There was also evidence of support for the new space from the President. He noted that SCARP is a strong, well grounded planning school which is well aligned with the University's strategic plan.
- 6.10 The Internship Program while still in its infancy is improving. Faculty members have introduced assistance for students to find internships and prepare for the work term through a professional development course. SCARP is also committed to expanding its outreach to the planning community to secure support for increased internship experiences.
- 6.11 The Site Visit Committee concluded its visit with the Director of SCARP and provided an overview of the main issues that are discussed herein. There was also a discussion about the importance of the interaction of SCARP with PIBC and CIP and the need to engage the students in the recommendations of the Planning for the Future project which will set the new standards for CIP membership.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the self evaluation report, interviews with the faculty and students and the review of all documentation provided, the Site Visit Committee is of the opinion that the Master of Arts (Planning) and Master of Science (Planning) offered in SCARP in the College for Interdisciplinary Studies, at UBC, fulfills the requirements for the Periodic Intensive Review and should be accredited by CIP and PIBC.

SUBMITTED BY:

(original signed)

Ray Spaxman, FCIP (PIBC) Chair
Erik Karlsen, FCIP (PIBC)
Dana Anderson, MCIP, RPP (OPPI)