

Senate Committee on University Priorities Memorandum

TO: Senate
FROM: Jon Driver
Chair, SCUP and
Vice President, Academic
RE: School of Criminology
DATE: January 13, 2010

The Senate Committee on University Priorities (SCUP) has reviewed the External Review Report on the School of Criminology, together with responses from the School, the Dean of Arts & Social Sciences and input from the Associate Vice President, Academic.

Motion:

That Senate approve the recommendation from the Senate Committee on University Priorities to implement the Action Plan for the School of Criminology that resulted from its External Review.

Following the site visit the Report of the External Review Team* for the School of Criminology was submitted in May 2009.

After the Report was received a meeting was held with the Dean of Arts & Social Sciences, the Director of the School of Criminology and the Director of Academic Planning (VPA) to consider the recommendations. The School then prepared an Action Plan based on the Report and these discussions. The Action plan was then submitted to the Dean on October 29, 2009. The Dean endorsed this Action Plan on November 10, 2009.

The Review Team members stated that since the last review the School has strengthened its commitment to its graduate programmes and the research activities of its faculty and the quality of undergraduate programme remains strong.

SCUP recommends to Senate that School of Criminology be advised to pursue the Action Plan.

Attachments:

1. School of Criminology External Review - Action Plan
2. External Review Report – May 14, 2009

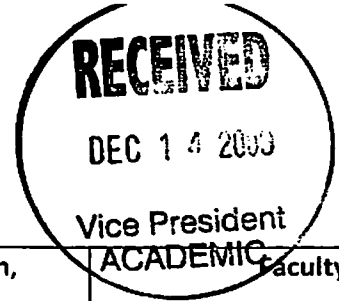
*** External Review Team:**

Rosemary Gardner (Chair) – University of Toronto

Rick Linden –University of Manitoba

Vincent Sacco –Queen's University

CC L Cormack - Dean, Arts & Social Sciences
R Gordon - Director, School of Criminology.



EXTERNAL REVIEW – ACTION PLAN

Unit under review School of Criminology	Date of Review Site visit April 1st – 3 rd 2009	Responsible Unit person, Dr. Robert Gordon, Director	Vice President ACADEMIC Faculty Dean Dr. Lesley Cormack
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Note: It is not expected that every Recommendation made by the Review Team needs to be included here. The major thrusts of the Report should be identified. Some consolidation of the Recommendations may be possible while other Recommendations of lesser importance may be excluded.

External Review Recommendation	Unit's response notes/Comments (if any)	Action to be taken	Resource implications (if any)	Expected completion date
1. <i>To address accessibility issues, reduce the number of undergraduate courses with tutorials in order to increase enrollments in those courses.</i>	We agree with this recommendation.	The School has initiated an experimental program in our largest, lower division course – Criminology 101 (Introduction to Criminology) – which will see a major change in the delivery of tutorials to undergraduate students in that course. In the Fall of 2010, we will experiment with an e-tutorial system in the same course. If these experiments prove to be successful we will consider extending the initiatives to other lower division courses in the 2011/12 academic year.	TA budget reductions to be applied to the TI budget side to enable more sessional instructors to be hired.	Continuing initiative, no end date.
2. <i>To address accessibility issues, consider expanding the number of undergraduate courses offered on-line, as long as the current quality of the on-line offerings can be maintained.</i>	We agree with this recommendation.	The School is continuously adding new distance education courses, which usually include significant on-line components, to our already very large selection of such courses. The School is also constantly reviewing and updating our existing courses to maintain our long-standing reputation for excellence in Distance Education.	Additional funds for the development of distance education (on-line) courses, for instructional staff to offer these courses, and for the development of on-line components in existing courses.	Continuing initiative, no end date.

<p>3. <i>Reduce the number of credit hours required for an honours degree in criminology; reduce the number of credit hours required before entering the honours program.</i></p>	<p>The School does not agree with this recommendation.</p>	<p>The main course credit requirements for any honours degree awarded by the University are set by the University at 132 credits. While the External Review Team encourages the University to reduce the number of required units to something less than 132, we would not support this change.</p>	<p>No new resource implications.</p>	<p>Maintain the status quo.</p>
<p>4. <i>Do not add additional courses to the undergraduate curriculum unless and until some of the current offerings are dropped.</i></p>	<p>The School does not agree with this recommendation.</p>	<p>We are growing, especially at the Surrey Campus, and have a total of 24 new undergraduate courses approved for the Surrey Campus alone. These courses are tied to the CRIM-ONE initiative, the new Police Studies program, and, shortly, the new Cyber Crime program. The removal of existing courses to “make way” for new courses will undermine our program initiatives across the board but particularly at the Burnaby Campus where new courses are developed to reflect new research program initiatives such as the research being conducted into sexual violence and aggression.</p>	<p>No new resource implications</p>	<p>Maintain the status quo</p>
<p>5. <i>Increase the coverage of more critical and more contemporary theoretical perspectives in theory courses and in other courses, where appropriate.</i></p>	<p>The School agrees with this recommendation.</p>	<p>The Undergraduate Program Committee will continue to explore this issue. The recommendation is timely since we are already planning to introduce a new course – Gender, Law and the State – in the Spring Term (2010). Two of our existing, upper division “critical theory” courses are also currently under revision and should be ready by the Spring Term.</p>	<p>Relevant new courses will be added with the support of existing faculty members who are already developing the courses.</p>	<p>Sept. 2011</p>

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<p>6. <i>Develop the theoretical content of new courses, particularly those in the area of cyber-crime</i></p>	<p>The School agrees with this recommendation.</p>	<p>A new faculty member – Dr. Sara Smyth – joined us in September 2009, and is developing new courses in the cyber-crime area that will include significant theoretical components.</p>	<p>No resource implications</p>	<p>September 2010.</p>
<p>7. <i>Replace the current pro-seminar (Crim.840-3) with a seminar focused on developing graduate students' professional skills, such as grant writing, conference presentations, and so forth.</i></p>	<p>The School agrees with this recommendation.</p>	<p>The School is already planning to replace Crim. 840 with substantive courses coupled with professional skills workshops and seminars.</p>	<p>No resource implications</p>	<p>September 2010.</p>
<p>8. <i>Incorporate more contemporary and critical theoretical perspectives into both theory courses and substantive courses at the graduate level.</i></p>	<p>The School agrees with this recommendation.</p>	<p>The School has already initiated some changes to both a core graduate level theory course offered each Fall (Crim.800) and other courses offered in the Spring Term.</p>	<p>No resource implications.</p>	<p>Changes have been implemented.</p>
<p>9. <i>Clarify the purpose of and expectations for the M.A. practicum, without draining resources from the thesis-based programs or consider eliminating it.</i></p>	<p>The School agrees with this recommendation</p>	<p>The School has already clarified a variety of issues affecting the M.A. by coursework, practicum and project paper, and improvements have been introduced. The option will be retained.</p>	<p>No resource implications.</p>	<p>Changes have been implemented.</p>

4.

<p>10. <i>Think carefully before expanding the M.A. in Applied Legal Studies and establishing a coursework M.A. for criminal justice professionals.</i></p>	<p>The School agrees with this recommendation.</p>	<p>No expansion of the MA in Applied Legal Studies is contemplated at this time. A coursework MA for criminal justice professionals is under review as part of the Police Studies program at the Surrey Campus.</p>	<p>No resource implications at this time.</p>	<p>No changes at this time.</p>
<p>11. <i>Work with the Associate VP Research to ensure that the new forensics facility lives up to its research, teaching and service potential.</i></p>	<p>The School is happy to comply with this recommendation.</p>	<p>The Director of the School of Criminology has met with the Dean of Arts and Social Sciences to explore ways of supporting and enhancing the work of the Centre. A business plan will be developed for the Centre which will form the basis of discussions with the VP Research.</p>	<p>The business plan will identify the areas of start up and continuing funding required for the Centre to operate, and the potential sources of revenue.</p>	<p>Continuing initiative, no end date.</p>
<p>12. <i>Engage in a strategic planning exercise to identify the focal areas for which the School wants to be known. Once decided upon, these focal areas should be communicated within and outside the University through the School's website and public documents.</i></p>	<p>The School has followed this recommendation.</p>	<p>The School followed this recommendation when completing the School's three year plan (submitted to the Dean of Arts and Social Sciences in mid September).</p>	<p>No resource implications</p>	<p>Continuing initiative.</p>

The above action plan has been considered by the Unit under review and has been discussed and agreed to by the Dean.

Unit Leader (signed)	Date
Name <i>Robert M. Gordon</i> Title Professor and Director.	December 7 th 2009

Dean's comments and endorsement of the Action Plan :

I agree with the school and the external review team on most of the recommendations, so here I will only highlight a few.

First, it is timely that the external team has suggested that the School engage in strategic and succession planning, something that we are all doing through the 3-year planning exercise. I know that the School will take this seriously and we have had and will have conversations about this planning process in the next few months. I am concerned, as the external team was, that Criminology not over-extend itself with new programs, even as I applaud its entrepreneurial and imaginative plans. I have every confidence that we can work these out, but especially in such tight financial times, we must be careful not to start or expand programs without a clear idea of where the resources will come from.

Second, I want to highlight the recommendations to increase tri-council applications and funding, and to publish more in peer-reviewed journals. Again, the School agrees with this recommendation and will be actively encouraging this in the coming years.

With regards to curriculum, the Dean's Advisory Committee of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences has been actively discussing the necessity to reexamine the use of tutorials, and Criminology is in the process of testing some alternate delivery models. My office has also informed departments and schools that they will not be allowed to bring forward new courses without deleting others.

I am in agreement with the external review team and disagreement with Criminology with regards to the number of credits necessary for an honours degree. I believe that SFU should join the majority of Canadian universities in requiring 120 credits for an honours degree, rather than 132. However, this is an issue better dealt with at a university level, rather than within the School of Criminology. I urge SFU to explore this possibility.

There are several institutional issues that are important in this report, areas that call for input from the Dean as well as the wider university.

1. The Forensics Centre. The Dean's office has been working with Criminology, Archaeology, and the Steering Committee of the Centre to establish a business plan, in order to argue effectively for added resources. I would urge the Steering Committee of the Forensics Centre to act on this as rapidly as possible, in order to move forward in a timely matter.
2. With regards to the relationship between Criminology and the Office of Research Services, I would propose that within the next year we hold a meeting among the parties in order to see whether there can be any meeting of the minds.
3. I agree completely with the external recommendation that the School of Criminology be declared a Schedule A unit. I have twice taken this request forward, but it has been turned down each time. I here ask that this issue be brought forward to the appropriate Senate committees so that we can have an open discussion of why Criminology is not eligible for this status

6.
Faculty Dean

Lesly Lomax

Date

10 Dec, 2009

Report of the External Review Committee
for the School of Criminology
Simon Fraser University

Rosemary Gartner
Centre of Criminology
University of Toronto

Rick Linden
Department of Sociology and Centre for Defense and Security Studies
University of Manitoba

Vincent F. Sacco
Department of Sociology
Queen's University

With the assistance of
Tom Grieve, Chair
Department of English
Simon Fraser University

May 14, 2009

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I. Introduction and Overview

The School of Criminology at Simon Fraser University underwent its last review in 2002. In the fall of 2008, the University appointed another review team and arranged for a site visit on April 1 through April 3, 2009. Prior to the site visit each reviewer was sent the School's Self Study Report, along with copies of various academic and research plans for the University and the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. During the site visit, the review team was given c.v.s of all faculty members, the report of the 2002 External Review Committee and other documents relating to the School's teaching and research activities. To address our Terms of Reference, this report draws on these documents, as well as our discussions and observations during the site visit.

During our three-day site visit, we met with senior administrators, including Dr. Bill Krane (Associate VP Academic), Dr. Glynn Nichols (Director of Academic Planning), Dr. Wade Parkhouse (Dean of Graduate Studies), Dr. Lesley Cormack (Dean of FASS), Dr. Norbert Haunerland (Associate VP Research), and Dr. Jonathan Driver (VP Academic); the School's Director, Dr. Robert Gordon and its Executive Committee (Dr. Gordon, Professor Neil Boyd, Dr. Bill Glackman, Dr. Gail Anderson and Ms. Roxanne Jantzi); other faculty members and support staff; graduate and undergraduate students; and library staff.

Present during these meetings was Dr. Tom Grieve, Chair of the Department of English, the internal member of the review team. We are grateful to Dr. Grieve for his invaluable insights, information, and perspective throughout the site visit.

Since the 2002 review, the School of Criminology has grown considerably. The number of majors in the undergraduate program has risen from 650 to over 900; the number of graduate students enrolled in the program has increased; full time faculty now number 33 (28 of whom are tenured or tenure track), compared to 24.5 in 2002; and the School has expanded onto the Surrey campus and moved into its new space in ASSC1. This growth has resulted in new opportunities and new challenges, particularly at a time when the University faces severe budgetary constraints.

In our initial meeting with University administrators, we were told that the School is seen as robust, entrepreneurial, and well-run; and that they had no issues or areas of major concern. Interest was expressed in how a number of new initiatives are working out and in the School's plan for the near future, particularly with regard to what the School sees as its areas of focus or "what it wants to be known for". Our general impression of the School is quite consistent with that of the University. Under the direction of Dr. Gordon, the School has developed in several directions, both in its teaching and research missions. Our visit with faculty, staff and students gave us every impression of a collegial, energetic and engaged group, enriched by both senior scholars with active research programs and recently-hired junior scholars who are already impressively productive. We, too, were interested in learning more about initiatives launched or solidified since the last review and about the School's view of its identity.

II. The Undergraduate Program

As noted above, since 2002 the undergraduate program has expanded greatly with an increase of over 40% in the number of majors and over 75% in annualized undergraduate activity FTEs.¹ To the already wide variety of programs and degrees available in 2002 have been added a minor and a post-baccalaureate diploma in legal studies. The Surrey campus now offers 24 courses a year as well as a concentration in Police Studies. Finally, the number of courses listed in the undergraduate calendar now exceeds 80 (compared to 54 in 2002). The continued demand for the School's undergraduate courses is an indicator of their quality, but this comes at a price.

Course Availability.

Most importantly, the accessibility of courses needed by majors to graduate is a major concern. Turn-away appears to be a problem throughout the University, but its importance to the School should not be underestimated. One obvious way to address this would be to hire more faculty members and/or increase the budget for temporary instructors, but given budgetary constraints, this does not seem a viable option. As an alternative, we encourage the School to think more creatively about tutorials. If fewer courses offered tutorials, class sizes could be increased. Reducing the number of classes with tutorials would have the added benefit of reducing scheduling conflicts between tutorials and graduate classes. The graduate students we spoke with said that their tutorial duties often conflicted with courses they needed to take for their programs, with the consequence that they were delayed in finishing their coursework. The School has tried to deal with this issue by scheduling graduate courses in the late afternoons and evenings, or on days of the week when tutorials are not held. However, our understanding is that this may not be possible in the future.

Another means to increase accessibility is to increase the number of undergraduate courses available through CODE. Our impression, based on a meeting with a demonstration by John Whatley, is that the on-line program is well-organized, of high quality and well-regarded by students. On-line courses are also well-integrated as an option with the School's broader teaching program. One hesitation we have about recommending the expansion of CODE courses is that the School already relies on its CODE offerings much more than do other academic units in FASS.

The Honours Program and the Major in Criminology.

The honours program is quite rigorous and requires completion of an honours thesis and a public presentation of the thesis research. We were quite impressed with the theses we looked at and the fact that they are bound and shelved in the faculty conference room; this is a good way of recognizing the work of these students. Our understanding is that it is the University's policy to require 132 credit hours for an honours degree. We encourage the University to reconsider this policy, because the additional 12 credits required for an honours degree adds a minimum of an extra term, more typically a fifth

¹ From an average of 500 - 600 FTEs in 1996 - 2002 to 971.3 in 2007-2008.

year, to the completion of an undergraduate degree. This seems an unnecessary burden and may discourage able students from pursuing an honours degree. In addition, the School requires students to complete 110 semester hours before they can enter the honours program, which also may add time to degree completion. We encourage the School to consider allowing entrance to the program at an earlier point, so that students can begin to think about and choose courses that will assist with their theses. Currently students can declare a major in criminology once they have completed 60 credit hours, which typically means they must wait until their third year of study. The undergraduate student we met with indicated students would prefer to be allowed to declare a major earlier, e.g. after compulsory courses are completed or after 45 credit hours. If this change would allow majors more opportunities to enroll in the criminology courses they need for their degrees, it seems worth considering.

Curriculum

In its self-study, the School asked the review team to consider whether there are new and emerging areas in criminology and criminal justice that should be examined for possible new courses. The list of courses a criminology program could offer is exceedingly long and so, not surprisingly, we were able to identify some topics that do not appear to be covered in the existing curriculum (e.g., victimology, crime and gender). However, we feel the more than 80 courses that are currently described in the undergraduate calendar are already too many. We therefore encourage the School to drop courses before any new ones are added; candidates for removal might be those that can be taught by only one faculty member or those that have not been offered for a period of years.

One area that does not appear to be adequately covered by existing courses is theoretical work that is more critical and/or more contemporary. This includes but is not limited to cultural criminology, critical perspectives (e.g. Foucault), and risk perspectives. We recognize that the move of some faculty to the Department of Sociology a few years ago may be responsible for this situation. It should be rectified. In addition, we are concerned that theoretical grounding may be lacking in some of the newer undergraduate offerings, such as courses on cyber-crime or courses in the police studies concentration.

The Field Practice Program

We were also asked to comment on student assessment in the field practice program. The use of journals as an assessment technique seems quite appropriate to us. Neil Madu provided us examples of student journals. We were impressed with the quality of these and the extent to which they allowed and encouraged students to engage in critical thinking. Obviously, not all students' journals will reach these standards; but that is no different from student performance using other evaluation methods.

Support Staff

We met with Philip Jong and Gabriel Sauro, Senior Adviser and Adviser (respectively) for the undergraduate program, and were impressed with their commitment, energy and good relations with other staff and faculty. It is clear that the growth in the undergraduate program has increased their workload substantially. This has

been exacerbated by the loss of the undergraduate secretary and by the as-yet unfilled receptionist position. As a consequence, Jong, Sauro and other staff have developed what they call “informal job sharing”, whereby they help each other out during particularly busy times. Beyond his normal job duties, Mr. Jong also seems to be the go-to person for technical support. The undergraduate program appears to be well-served by the two advisers, despite these demands. We encourage the School to consider whether it can provide some recognition of Mr. Jong’s willingness to take on additional duties.

Other Issues

The self-study also expressed concern over maintaining academic standards in classes with diverse student abilities, including possible lowering of marking standards. If members of the School feel this is an issue, we would encourage closer monitoring of the introductory-level courses so that weaker students are either weeded out or given incentives to perform better. Increasing the current required grade point average (2.25) for students wanting to major in criminology might provide such an incentive and could also help ensure high standards in more advanced courses.

The School is considering establishing international field schools at the undergraduate level. Our view is that the School’s resources are already stretched with other new initiatives. Because of this and the current fiscal climate, we do not think field schools should be given priority at this time.

Concluding Comments

Based on our review of various documents, our discussion with the Associate Director for Undergraduate Studies, and our meeting with the undergraduate student representative, we believe the undergraduate program in criminology to be of high academic quality and popular among students. However, as noted in the 2002 review the program continues to put “a heavy burden on the shoulders of the faculty and staff” of the School. In the seven years since the last review the demands of the program have grown, with an increase in enrollments, majors, programs and degrees. To address the issues raised by this growth, we recommend the following.

Recommendation 1: To address accessibility issues, reduce the number of undergraduate courses with tutorials in order to increase enrollments in those courses.

Recommendation 2: To address accessibility issues, consider expanding the number of undergraduate courses offered on line, as long as the current quality of the on-line offerings can be maintained.

Recommendation 3: Reduce the number of credit hours required for an honours degree in criminology; reduce the number of credit hours required before entering the honours program.

Recommendation 4: Do not add additional courses to the undergraduate curriculum unless and until some of the current offerings are dropped.

Recommendation 5: Increase the coverage of more critical and more contemporary theoretical perspectives in theory courses and in other courses, where appropriate.

Recommendation 6: Develop the theoretical content of new courses, particularly those in the area of cyber-crime.

Recommendation 7: Continue the practice of evaluating students' work in the field practice program with journals.

Recommendation 8: Do not make the development of international field schools a priority.

III. The Graduate Program

The School currently has 54 Ph.D. students, 51 M.A. students, and 23 students in the Applied Legal Studies stream. In response to a recommendation in the 2002 review, the School initially increased their Ph.D. admissions, but recently has reverted to their earlier enrollment levels. In the last three years, an average of seven students a year have begun the Ph.D. program. Although the number of students offered places in the M.A. program has been stable over time, the size of the M.A. cohort has varied considerably with no particular trend. In 2007 and 2008, the size of the entering M.A. cohorts was 15 and 14 respectively. In its self-study, the School notes that while it is "comfortable" with the number of existing offers and acceptances to the M.A. program, it would increase the number of offers if there were more high quality applicants. Attracting more high quality M.A. and Ph.D. students probably would require more active marketing and recruiting, and the School is intending to pursue this. We concur with the view that increasing the number of graduate students should depend on the quality of the applicant pool; and we see no strong reason to recommend growth at the M.A. or Ph.D. level.

Curriculum

According to the self-study, there has been an effort to focus and reduce course offerings, both to provide a core knowledge base and ensure sufficient students sign up for courses. Core courses are offered in the fall and spring terms; additional spring term offerings are based on preferences of new students, as determined by intake interviews in the fall. Directed readings courses allow students flexibility. Currently approximately five graduate courses are offered each term. M.A. students are required to take two research methods courses, the theories of crime course (I), and the proseminar; Ph.D. students are required to take three research methods courses, the theories of crime course (I), and the proseminar. The School has especially strong offerings in research methods courses, which appear to prepare students well for conducting their thesis research and participating in faculty research projects. The four graduate students we spoke with praised the range of methods courses available to them.

The required proseminar course is in need of major revision, according to both students and faculty. Two alternatives proposed by the School are 1) a "counting crime" course; or

2) a course on the preparation of thesis proposals. There was no support for either of these options among the graduate students we spoke with. Instead, they preferred a professional development seminar that would teach students how to write grant proposals, how to put together a teaching dossier, how to present papers at conferences, and so forth. In addition, such a course could provide graduate students assistance in becoming effective discussion leaders and essay markers. We concur with this suggestion, while recognizing that the types of professional development issues may vary between M.A. and Ph.D. students. If different faculty conducted different class sessions, this would provide a way to introduce faculty to students in their first year. Alternatively, the Graduate Chair could conduct this class. We understand this is the practice in the Department of English, where the Graduate Chair receives teaching credit for a similar course.

The graduate curriculum, like the undergraduate curriculum, needs to have an infusion of more critical and contemporary theoretical perspectives into its theory courses and other courses, where applicable. The graduate students indicated this is an important issue for them and we concur.

The Executive Committee noted that the university requirement that at least five students be enrolled in a graduate course before it can be offered has meant that courses occasionally have been cancelled. We suggest the School consider marketing its graduate courses throughout the university to encourage enrollments of students from other disciplines. The multi-disciplinary nature of the faculty and of criminology as a whole should be highlighted in this effort. Having students from other disciplines in criminology graduate courses could also enrich the experience of criminology graduate students.

The self-study raised the issue of the admission and management of graduate students from diverse backgrounds and the variation in their exposure to the basics of the field. One way to address this would be to require remedial course work, in addition to the normal course load. This would not necessarily require students to take additional graduate courses: Students could, for example, audit existing undergraduate courses.

The M.A. by Practicum

Faculty members and graduate students seem to be in agreement that the practicum M.A. needs to be either revised or eliminated. The 2002 review supported this program as a way to reduce time to completion for M.A. students. It was initially designed for those interested in restorative justice, aboriginal justice, and community corrections. It is not clear that it has met either of these two purposes. The program remains quite small: Currently only approximately three students enroll in the program each year.

A major concern of students is that those in the practicum M.A. are viewed as “second-class citizens.” This is, in part, because this year they were not eligible for graduate fellowships (which are meant to support students during the thesis writing process). (We understand this was an ad hoc decision made this year, but is not necessarily a permanent

ruling.) The required professional ethics course was seen as unnecessary (since students in this program typically have experience working within professional organizations). Finally, the students indicated that the expectations and procedures for the program are not clearly articulated, and that the program lacks the flexibility to meet its students' needs.

Given the consensus on this issue, we encourage the School to determine the purpose of the program and whether it is achieving that purpose. If it is not and it is not clear how this can occur, the program should be eliminated.

The Coursework M.A.

The School is considering whether to expand the M.A. by course work in Applied Legal Studies to include those with a general interest in applied legal studies. The program's size currently is limited to the estimated number of future openings for notaries public. While the self-study indicates the program currently does not drain resources from the School, it is not clear this would be the case were it expanded. In the absence of a strong rationale to do so – which should include consideration of the academic content of the program – we are not in favour of expansion.

The School is also considering a coursework M.A. for criminal justice professionals that would be offered at/through the Surrey campus. The rationale is that this could be a “useful mechanism for building bridges with those in the community.” The self-study notes that it would be “imperative that this program not drain resources currently in place for our M.A. and Ph.D. thesis programs.” Our question is: How could it *not* drain resources from these other programs? In the 2002 review, concern was expressed about an executive M.A. program of this sort. That report recommended that implementation of the program only take place “after wide and extensive consultation with all faculty members.” We share these concerns. In addition, there is a larger issue with regard to more market-driven graduate programs. The School has developed a number of such initiatives recently. Our concern is that these may not have a sufficiently strong academic rationale and may make it more difficult for the School to develop an identity beyond its current “big tent” approach. While there are certainly benefits of such a catholic perspective, we encourage the School to think seriously about what they want to be known for and how they want to differentiate themselves from their competitor institutions.

Funding and Completion Rates

While the School has been successful – at least recently – in university-wide competition for entrance scholarships (they received two \$18,000 awards this year) and in SSHRC competitions (currently three or four students hold SSHRC awards)², funding for graduate students is much less generous than at some competitor institutions. This is, of course, a provincial-wide problem. It affects the School's ability to recruit the best students and it affects students' progress through the program, since almost all of them

² The School also received one dedicated award of \$10,000 and four dedicated awards of \$9,000 from the School of Graduate Studies. As a consequence, their top two Ph.D. entrants will receive \$28,000 and \$27,000 respectively for the 2009/2010 academic year.

have to take on heavy work obligations to support themselves. The School has been able to offer students an array of teaching assistantships, sessional/instructor positions, and research assistantships; and students benefit greatly in the experience they obtain through this work.³ That many of them finish their programs with extensive teaching experience and/or with a number of publications (arising from their work as research assistants) is clearly to their advantage on the job market. Indeed, of eleven students who completed their Ph.D.s since Sept. 2004, seven of them hold tenure track appointments at universities in Canada or the United States; three others are sessional instructors at colleges or universities.⁴

Nonetheless, many graduate students, upon completing their coursework, get full- or part-time jobs, which slow their time to completion of the degree. Average time to completion for M.A. students is 7 - 8 terms; for Ph.D. students it is 6.6 years. Currently, of the 54 Ph.D. students, 27 have been enrolled for four or more years; and only 15 Ph.D. students have completed their degrees since 2001. While our immediate reaction to these numbers was concern, we recognize that the School's and the university's ability to do much about speeding time to completion by offering more funding is limited. Moreover, the School did not flag this as a major concern in its self-study. The four graduate students we met with did express concern about funding issues; however, we are not aware of any graduate program in which students are not concerned about funding.

One area that may affect time to completion that is within the School's control is scheduling conflicts between tutorials and graduate courses. Reducing the number of courses with tutorials, as we recommend above, could help alleviate these scheduling conflicts and allow graduate students to finish their coursework in a timely manner. The School also offers a small number of on-line graduate courses each year, which can also reduce scheduling conflicts. However, we are unsure whether or how this affects residency requirements, and this may be of concern to the School of Graduate Studies.

Other Issues

Involvement of graduate students in faculty research projects appears to be quite extensive. As a consequence, SFU criminology graduate students probably have stronger publishing records when they complete their programs than students in many comparable programs. This is also linked to the School's success in SSHRC graduate fellowship competitions. We applaud the School's and individual faculty members' efforts at promoting collaborations between students and faculty.

Concluding Comments

³ Having said this, graduate students do not appear to get much training in teaching, except that which they obtain on the job. We understand there is a one-day t.a. training workshop offered by the university, but we think this could be supplemented with more extensive training in teaching, either through the School or the University.

⁴ As far as we could determine, the 11th is an Inspector with the RCMP.

We are positively impressed with the School's graduate program. Students are offered a range of opportunities to participate in faculty research and to gain skills at teaching; and these experiences appear to serve them well after they complete their degrees. The graduate students we met with were quite satisfied on the whole with the program. Any complaints were directed at specific aspects of the program, such as the M.A. practicum and the proseminar. Their relations with faculty seem quite good. (However, while we appreciate the input from the four graduate students with whom we met, we would like to have met with more graduate students during our visit.) The School is especially strong in the methods training it offers to students. In contrast, theoretical breadth in course offerings is much more limited. Based on our comments above, we offer the following recommendations.

Recommendation 9: Replace the current proseminar (Criminology 840-3) with a seminar focused on developing graduate students' professional skills, such as grant writing, conference presentations, and so forth.

Recommendation 10: Incorporate more contemporary and critical theoretical perspectives into both theory courses and substantive courses at the graduate level.

Recommendation 11: Clarify the purpose of and expectations for the M.A. practicum. If achieving these cannot be done without draining resources from the thesis-based programs, consider eliminating it.

Recommendation 12: Think carefully before expanding the M.A. in Applied Legal Studies and establishing a coursework M.A. for criminal justice professionals. We are not enthusiastic about these initiatives because these programs could divert resources from existing programs, they appear to be largely market driven, and they would make it more difficult for the School to clarify its academic identity and purpose.

Recommendation 13: Consider ways of reducing barriers to students' completion of graduate coursework in a timely manner.

IV. Research⁵

Faculty members at the School are engaged in a wide variety of research projects and policy analyses. Most of the tenured and tenure-track faculty currently hold grants or contracts that support their research programs. The self-study indicates that "the Criminology Research Centre is currently administering 65 projects for 17 faculty members representing grants" totaling over five million; about \$1.6 million is administered through the Office of Research Services. Much of the faculty's external research funding comes from provincial sources; only a small number of faculty members

⁵ While this may seem a small point, we would like to reiterate the recommendation of the 2002 review committee with regard to the formatting of c.v.s. E.g. refereed and non-refereed publications should be listed in separate sections; articles that have been submitted for publication should not be listed as publications; and technical monographs/reports should be listed in a separate section.

hold grants from Tri-Council sources. One reason for this may be the relatively large amount of policy-related and applied research conducted by the faculty on issues primarily of interest to the provincial government. Should provincial sources of funding be reduced because of the current economic climate, faculty will need to more actively pursue sources outside the province. We suggest the School encourage applications by faculty members for Tri-Council funding for this reason and as a way to raise the research profile of the School.

As noted in the 2002 review committee report, the School as a whole is quite productive, with most faculty members regularly publishing reports, textbooks, book chapters, and articles. However, the 2002 review committee also expressed concern over the relatively low levels of publication in high quality, peer-reviewed journals. It appears that there has been a shift in this direction over time. Nevertheless, currently only about a quarter of the faculty regularly publish in peer-reviewed journals. Faculty should be encouraged to think about how to turn more of their policy and applied research into peer-reviewed articles.

The junior faculty are very active at disseminating their research in rigorously refereed outlets, which bodes well for the future. At the same time, with such productive records these faculty members may very well be sought out by other universities – a possibility that the School and the University need to be prepared for. Currently, junior faculty appear to have very collegial relations with senior faculty and this is an important part of cementing their commitment to the School.

Centres and Institutes.

Most research projects are housed within one of the School's eleven centres and institutes. The Criminology Research Centre is the administrative unit for external funding received by faculty, a change instituted based on a recommendation in the 2002 review. It appears to serve this purpose well. We were initially curious and concerned about what seemed to us a proliferation of centres and institutes within the School. Based on discussions with faculty and students it appears that these centres do not create factions or conflicts, but may in fact reduce them. Faculty felt the centres help them obtain funding and build networks with scholars within and outside SFU, can assist them in recruiting graduate students, are useful for public relations and reduced conflicts among faculty over space and resources. We talked to some students working at the centres. They appeared to be enthusiastic and engaged, and gave no indication that they felt cut off from other students or faculty not associated with their centres. Faculty also appear to collaborate easily across centres. New faculty indicated they were pleased with the centre structure. Because there is little cost associated with the centres and they perform useful functions, we recommend no changes in the current structure.

There is clearly an issue surrounding funds and other support for operating and maintaining the lab facilities at the Centre for Forensic Research. We heard conflicting views from faculty at the School and University administrators on this issue and do not feel we have the knowledge or expertise to adjudicate among these views. Clearly the problem is complex. We urge relevant faculty at the School and the Associate VP

Research to work together to ensure that the new facility lives up to its research, teaching, and service potential.

Relations with the Office of Research Services

There seems to have been little if any progress in resolving the long-standing conflict between the School and the Office of Research Services. The 2002 review committee recommended that faculty and staff from the School meet with staff in ORS to work out ways to address the problems. Whatever efforts have been made have not been successful and the issue is still very salient for faculty at the School. We concur with the 2002 review report, when it stated "It is not in the interests of the School or the university to allow this situation to continue." It would have been useful for us to meet with people in ORS during our visit to discuss this issue; however, while a meeting was on our schedule it was subsequently cancelled. We recommend that the Associate VP Research, the Dean of FASS, and the Director of the School try to finally resolve this issue.

Concluding Comments

Collaboration and interaction among faculty at the School has created a stimulating research environment. We sensed a good deal of energy and excitement among faculty and students about on-going and potential research projects. The products of the faculty's labours have been particularly rich in more applied and policy-related areas. At the same time, with the addition of new faculty since the last review, more academically-oriented research is being conducted and planned. All of this greatly enhances the training of graduate students and the School's reputation nationally and internationally. One way to build on this strength is for the School to identify and clarify its research strengths on its website, in its public documents, and to the University administration. This is a point to which we return below. The recommendations arising from our discussion of the School's research are as follows.

Recommendation 14: To enhance the School's already strong research profile, encourage faculty to apply for Tri-Council funding for their research and to publish the results of their research in national and international peer-reviewed journals.

Recommendation 15: Work with the Associate VP Research to ensure that the new forensics facility lives up to its research, teaching, and service potential.

Recommendation 16: Work with the Associate VP Research and the Dean of FASS to resolve the tensions between the School and the Office of Research Services.

V. Space and Resource Issues

The School is very well-served by the new space it occupies in ASSC1 and at the Surrey campus. Most review committees raise issues about inadequate space, but we do not need to because SFU has provided the School of Criminology with excellent space. However, we do have two concerns about the design of the School's space within ASSC1. First, we

found it unfortunate that access to the Director's office, the undergraduate advisors' offices, and some faculty offices is restricted during regular business hours. This is exacerbated by the loss of the receptionist position. We understand the reason for securing the West Wing, i.e. the higher level of protection required by ICURS. Nevertheless, undergraduate students could not be blamed if they felt their presence around the School was discouraged. On the other hand, our second concern has to do with the lack of security in the North Wing of the School. During evening and weekend hours, we understand that the ASSC1 building is often open and anyone coming into the building therefore can have access to the areas where faculty and students have offices in that wing. Given the break-ins and thefts in the building, concern over the safety of persons and property is not unreasonable. This may be a particular issue for female faculty and students who work alone in the evenings and on weekends. The installation of security doors at the entrance to that wing of the School could solve this problem. We understand the School has offered to pay for security doors, but has been refused permission to install them. It would be ironic and potentially embarrassing for the University if the School of Criminology comes to be seen by faculty and students as an unsafe place.

We were quite impressed with the staff with whom we met during the site visit, including the School's administrator (Ms. Jantzi), the two undergraduate advisors discussed above, the graduate secretary, Christine Grout, and the academic program coordinator, Tania Muirhead. They all appear to be dedicated, hard working, and able to work together effectively. The growth of the School has increased the workload of all the staff, as has the opening of the Surrey campus. When the additional staff member is hired, some of the workload stress will be alleviated. However, the School's administrator, in particular, is affected by the Surrey expansion, because she now spends part of her time there. We understand that fiscal constraints greatly limit staff hiring; nevertheless, we would point out that the ratio of staff to faculty and students at the School is lower than at comparably sized departments in FASS.

With the opening of the Surrey campus the issue of building a cohesive academic community when the faculty are split between two campuses arises. The School currently ensures that faculty members teach at both campuses, but it is apparent that few of them spend much time at the Surrey site. Nevertheless, none of those formally assigned to the Surrey campus expressed concerns about this issue; and the ones we talked with spent enough time at the Burnaby campus to feel well integrated into the School. The growth of the cybercrime and police studies programs at Surrey should help to build communities in those areas, particularly given the close proximity to the new RCMP E Division headquarters.

Library resources available to the School appear to be adequate. We base this on our discussion with the acting associate university librarian and liaison librarian for the School who provided us information about the research data library, as well as the publication collection.

We recommend the following with regard to these space and resource issues.

Recommendation 17: Consider whether there is a way to make at least some parts of the West Wing more accessible to students and visitors.

Recommendation 18: Install security doors to the North Wing of the School.

VI. Relations with the University

Our impression is that the School's relations with FASS, Graduate Studies, and other levels of the University administration are good, as suggested in our introduction. There is one irritant that rates considerable attention in the School's self-study and that was expressed to us during our visit: The School's categorization as a Schedule B department. Our understanding is that the School is similar or larger in size and complexity to departments that are categorized as Schedule A units. We encourage strong consideration be given to changing the School's categorization.

Recommendation 19: Change the School's categorization from Schedule B to Schedule A.

VII. Governance and Strategic Planning

The School has expanded in many directions and hired a substantial number of new faculty members in recent years. Given these accomplishments and changes, it may be an appropriate time for the School to reflect on its current situation and future direction. We recommend that the School conduct a strategic planning exercise to determine what they consider to be their focal areas and to ensure alignment between these areas and the curriculum, research, and future hiring priorities of the School. In particular, we suggest the School not advance its plans for new initiatives until such an exercise has been carried out. Determining whether and to what extent pursuing these initiatives is consistent with the focal areas identified in the planning exercise should be one of the goals of that exercise.

The School could also use the planning exercise to develop ways to communicate its focal areas and its identity both within and outside of the University. Its national and international reputation will be enhanced by becoming known as at the cutting edge of certain areas within criminology.

The planning exercise would also provide a forum to discuss the succession issue identified in the School's self-study. Dr. Gordon will complete his third five-year term as director in 2013 and while he may decide he wants to commit to a fourth term, it is in the School's interests to identify, if not a specific successor, the qualities the School would like in a successor.

In its self-study, the School asked for our view on changing the School's name. On

balance, we feel the current name is fine unless there are strong reasons for wanting a change. We were not made aware of any such reasons.

With regard to governance and strategic planning we recommend the following.

Recommendation 20: Engage in a strategic planning exercise to identify the focal areas for which the School wants to be known. Once decided upon, these focal areas should be communicated within and outside the university through the School's website and public documents.

Recommendation 21: Discuss the qualities the School wants in the next Director.

VIII. Summary

We wish to thank all those who took time to meet with us during our visit. We are grateful for their cooperation and their frank and informative comments. We also thank those who made and adjusted arrangements for us before and during our visit. They ensured that our task was not only problem-free but pleasant.

According to our terms of reference, the purpose of our review is to "provide the University with assurances" about the quality of the School's teaching programs, the quality of faculty research and collaboration, the extent of faculty participation in the administration of the unit and in the dissemination of knowledge, and the extent to which the School provides a stimulating academic environment conducive to obtaining its objectives. This report is intended to convey those assurances.

Since the last review, the School has strengthened its commitment to its graduate programs and the research activities of its faculty. The quality of these programs is quite high and is likely to increase given the energy and productivity of the School's recent hires. The quality of undergraduate program remains strong, although it is strained by student demand and issues of accessibility. Faculty members play an active and positive role in the administration of the unit and in the dissemination of knowledge. The School has developed a collegial and congenial culture that seems to serve the interests of both faculty and students well. A good deal of credit for all of this goes to the Director, Dr. Rob Gordon and his Executive Committee. In particular, under the direction of Dr. Gordon, the School has undertaken a number of new initiatives that have the potential to expand its profile, particularly in the areas of post-graduate teaching and service. Given this growth and the current fiscal climate, it seems an appropriate time for the School to reflect on its identity and strengths, and to plan for how these can be highlighted, consolidated and reinforced over the next few years.