



20 November 2017

**School of Marine and Environmental Affairs
Director's response to the 10-year review report**

Context:

The School of Marine and Environmental Affairs underwent a 10-year review in AY2016-17. The review was led by the Graduate School and was performed by a review committee consisting of the following individuals:

Sarah Curran, Professor, Jackson School of International Affairs
Thomas Dietz, Professor of Sociology and Environmental Science and Policy, Michigan State University
Jeremy Firestone, Professor and Director, Center for Carbon-free Power, University of Delaware
Stephen Gardiner, Professor, Philosophy
David Layton (Chair), Professor, Evans School of Public Policy and Governance

SMEA prepared and submitted a self-study in advance of the committee's site visit on January, 2017. SMEA received the final report of the committee late in spring, 2017. The report was shared with SMEA faculty and the recommendations of the committee were discussed at faculty retreats in spring and fall, 2017.

Director's Response to the Report of the Committee:

The SMEA faculty appreciates the efforts of the committee and the thoughtful nature of the recommendations made. Responses to specific comments made by the committee (in italics) are as follows, in rough order of appearance in the committee's report. Note that in this academic year SMEA already has taken action to address many of the committee's recommendations.

The committee recommends that the faculty should grow by 1 or 2 positions so as to ensure the sustained excellence of the program.

Important avenues of potential growth that were identified during our review include expertise with regard to the Arctic, decision sciences, ethics and human geography.

We agree that a modest increase in FTE will be very helpful to delivery of the MMA program. In an era of university-wide budget constraints, we are looking for means to increase the size of the faculty.

- 1) In July 2017, we appointed Yoshitaka Ota as a Research Assistant Professor. Dr. Ota is supported by funding from outside sources. In his first full academic quarter in SMEA he already is helping to advise students and has offered guest lectures in courses.
- 2) We are pursuing joint hires with other units on campus. For example, we are preparing an application for bridge funding offered by the Provost for a joint hire in population health. We hope to obtain a position for a scholar focused on Arctic studies.



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- 3) We currently are advertising for an Assistant Professor of Society and Environment. Expertise in geography is prominent in the job announcement. Note, however, that this position represents replacement for a retirement; it does not represent growth in the number of faculty members.
- 4) We will continue to look for opportunities to increase the size of the SMEA faculty in ways that recognize existing budget constraints.

Given the wealth of course resources at UW, it would be helpful to identify courses that would match student needs and when appropriate to negotiate with the instructors and units offering those courses.

We continue to advise and assist students in pursuing relevant courses outside SMEA. The SMEA Program of Studies allows students to obtain credits toward the MMA degree for electives taken outside SMEA. To allow even greater flexibility, the faculty voted in September 2017 to allow students pursuing certificate programs and dual Master's degrees to substitute one required SMEA elective course with a course outside SMEA. This alternative will benefit students in the Program on Climate Change Certificate Program and the new Certificate Program in Ethics, among others. We can investigate more formal arrangements with other units.

They should maintain careful attention to core course content as a foundational platform for outstanding training. Their thoughtful consideration of how best to structure the 500 series should continue.

We continue to tune the core series (SMEA 500, 501, 502). Among the innovations we have made in AY 2017/18 are:

- 1) Adding a co-instructor for SMEA 501 (Integrated Assessment). Dr. Cleo Woelfle-Erskine joined the faculty in late 2017 and will work with Dr. Allison to offer 501 this year. Woelfle-Erskine and Allison take different yet complementary approaches to integration.
- 2) Engaging practitioners to teach SMEA 502 (Decision Making and Action Taking). SMEA affiliate faculty member Bob Pavia will partner with SMEA alumnus Eric Laschever to offer this course. Pavia brings the experience of a long career at NOAA, while Laschever has had a full career as a practicing attorney of environmental law.
- 3) The entire faculty will convene in January to consider further changes that can strengthen the core series in future offerings.

Think carefully about how to add the 'e' (environmental) content on the science-based policy side.

Professor Dolsak's research and teaching directly address non-marine environmental policy. Her expertise now is complemented by the addition to the faculty of Asst. Professor Woelfle-Erskine, who comes from a science and technology background at UC Berkeley and who focuses on environmental issues in freshwater systems.



While we recognize that the terrain surrounding international recruitment may have changed recently and so one must tread judiciously, we suggest the program become proactive in recruiting international students.

Noted. SMEA consistently has recruited a small number of international students. We can attempt to increase this number in the coming years.

Think about how to reward faculty for the capstone and thesis work. Make the capstone work easier for faculty while maintaining a high quality student experience. Consider assigning a TA to the overall capstone effort. This could be a TA in science communication.

The success of the capstone program is a priority issue within SMEA. Among the objectives of the faculty are to:

- 1) Realize the full benefits of the capstone program for both students and faculty. This includes benefits in terms of faculty time allocation, student training, and experiential learning.
- 2) Firmly establish the capstone program as an equivalent pathway to the SMEA degree.

Innovations made in AY2017/18 include changes to the way both the capstone and thesis options are advertised to students, and stronger faculty input into student decisions regarding choice of option. We appreciate the committee's recommendation to add an RA for the capstone program and will work to do so. The capstone program is growing at a reasonable pace. We intend to reach a 50:50 ratio of capstone to thesis students within a few years.

Continuing to hire the best new faculty will require some doctoral educational opportuneness to support their scholarly enterprises.

SMEA continues to have an interest in developing a small PhD program. We recognize that the best new faculty will expect to admit PhD students to support their research endeavors. At the same time, we recognize the constraints associated with limited funding, limited capacity, and other issues. We are working to navigate these issues.

It is unclear why the PhD proposal is/was labeled 'Environment and Society'.

The SMEA faculty have reconsidered the name of the PhD program and now favor a name such as "PhD in Marine and Environmental Affairs".

Diversity

We continue to prioritize diversity goals. Drs. Ota and Woelfle-Erskine both add diversity to the faculty, and diversity is prominent in our current faculty job search. We will continue to strive to increase diversity among our students.