

Review of the UW Interdisciplinary Urban Design and Planning Ph.D.

March 11, 2014

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I. The Review Process

This report is the result of an assessment of the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program in Urban Design and Planning (IPPUDP) carried out in January and February, 2014. The assessment began with a careful review of the self-study document provided in early January. That review led to a request for and receipt of supplementary information from the program director prior to the site visit. The review culminated in the site visit on February 5-7 during which the full review committee (internal and external members) held individual and group meetings with 42 faculty, students, staff and administrators including:

- ✓ The program director
- ✓ Members of the steering committee
- ✓ Faculty groups associated with three “clusters” (Urban Environment & Transportation; Urban Ecology & Well Being; and Urban Development Processes)
- ✓ The chair of the Department of Urban Design and Planning
- ✓ 15 Students at various stages of progress through their studies ranging from 1st year students to those finalizing their dissertations
- ✓ 3 recent graduates of the program
- ✓ The dean of the College of Built Environments (by conference call)
- ✓ The dean and associate dean of the Graduate School
- ✓ The program operations specialist

II. Overview of the program

The Interdisciplinary Ph.D. in Urban Design and Planning at the University of Washington is one of the oldest of approximately 39 doctoral programs of urban and regional planning now operating in the U.S. and Canada (Self Study/S.S., p. 3). “The program seeks to prepare scholars who can advance the state of research, practice, and education related to the built environment and its relationship to society and nature in metropolitan regions throughout the world” (S.S., p. 5). It does so by providing a core curriculum grounded in the method and theory of urban design and planning coupled with a robust set of student opportunities for interdisciplinary training and research. Interdisciplinarity is managed in the program through the participation of a large and dedicated group of scholars from other disciplines including the critical humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and medicine. With a wide range of research orientations, three general clusters have been defined to describe the program’s areas of expertise:

- ✓ Urban Environment and Transportation
- ✓ Urban Development Processes
- ✓ Urban Ecology and Wellbeing.

Across these “clusters”, the program seeks to train “leaders in the international community of researchers, practitioners and educators who focus on improving the quality of life and environment in metropolitan regions” (S.S., p.5). These areas are identified in the program’s strategic plan and self-description, but considerable interaction and overlap is recognized in practice and several faculty members and students identify their interests as spanning across them.

Ph.D. Program Structure

The program requirements are organized to ensure progressive training towards the Ph.D. Degree, while encouraging a diverse set of trajectories for inquiry by the students depending on their choice of topic.

Students enter the program with Master’s degree. The majority of students enter with degrees in urban planning, but some come with other backgrounds in social and natural sciences. The program itself is then organized into three phases as follows:

Phase 1 students take a sequence of three courses in urban planning and one each in quantitative and qualitative methods.

- ✓ Advanced Research Design (URBDP 591, 4 credits, Fall of first year)
- ✓ Planning Theory (URBDP 592, 4 credits, Winter of first year)
- ✓ Interdisciplinary Urban Research (URBDP 593, 5 credits, Fall of second year).
- ✓ Quantitative methods course from a range of options offered in programs across campus (including Urban Design and Planning).
- ✓ Qualitative methods course from a range of options offered in programs across campus (including Urban Design and Planning).

During Phase I, students are advised by a lead advisor and committee formed in the first quarter. Phase I culminates in the completion of the Phase I paper and development of an interdisciplinary research plan for Phase II, both evaluated by the students Phase I committee prior to advancement to Phase II.

Phase II begins with the formalization of a Ph.D. advisory committee and approval of a curriculum plan including 7 courses from a list of classes offered by a range of relevant UW departments, covering:

- ✓ 3 courses in urban processes and patterns (theory based)
- ✓ 2 courses in urban and environmental design and planning (practice based)
- ✓ 2 additional research design and methods courses
- ✓ (under consideration) 1 course on teaching methods

Phase II ends with the General Examination, which tests competency through an

interdisciplinary literature review and prospective Ph.D. dissertation plan developed by the student in consultation with the Ph. D. advisory committee. The exam includes written and oral components.

Phase III involves formalization of the dissertation proposal, completion of the dissertation research, thesis writing and Ph.D. defense, ending when the student satisfies all requirements for the Ph.D.

Summary of Administrative and Review History

The program was established in the College of Architecture and Urban Planning in 1967, its first degree was granted in 1970. In 1989, administration of the program was moved to the Graduate School. In 1998, a program review raised a number of concerns that triggered a provisional review in 2004. As a result of significant changes and a positive review in 2004, the program was moved from “provisional” status to “continuing” status. The program has remained under Graduate School administration to this day, while occupying space in the College of the Built Environment’s Gould Hall. The program shares faculty and close interaction with and support from the Department of Urban Design and Planning (UDP) and the College of Built Environments (CBE – formerly the College of Architecture and Urban Planning).

III. Findings and Recommendations of the last (2004) Program Review

In the 2004 Review, the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program in Urban Design and Planning was lauded for its successes in expanding participation of faculty from a wide range of disciplines, for focusing the program goals and intellectual sophistication that embraces topics broader than traditional urban planning, for substantially increasing research activity, and for dramatically increasing external funding.

The 2004 review committee report noted that the program had responded to the 1998 review recommendation by

- ✓ Clarifying program goals, student requirements and program policies
- ✓ Dramatically increasing student funding
- ✓ Defining core and affiliate faculty
- ✓ Dramatically increasing research activity through external funding
- ✓ Creating clear expectations for first year students
- ✓ Working with the Dean of the (then) College of Architecture and Urban Planning (now CBE) to obtain space for the program and students in Gould Hall

The 2004 review recommended

- ✓ a shift to “continuing” status with a regular review cycle of ten years

- ✓ continued administration within the Graduate school because of universal support for the arrangement
- ✓ diversification of funding to limit dependence on unpredictable large grants through:
 - external fellowships
 - UW fellowships and funding
 - Development of high enrollment undergraduate courses that could support TAs for students in the Ph.D. program
 - Creation of a development plan to build an endowment fund.
 - Collaboration with other UW units.
- ✓ effort to remove disincentives for faculty (especially junior faculty) in non-Urban Design and Planning units to participate in the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. program perhaps through University appointment modifications, provision of research support, buying teaching time, and increased communication with leaders of other UW units (departments, schools, colleges) to emphasize the value of the program to graduate students.
- ✓ enhanced attention to the administration of the program beyond the efforts of the Director and part time Graduate School program administrator.
- ✓ greater focus on program governance
- ✓ development of a vision and strategic plan
- ✓ growth of critical mass of faculty to sustain the program's intellectual vitality and future leadership.

IV. Findings of the 2014 Program Review

Successes of the program

The Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program in Urban Design and Planning remains vibrant and active. Virtually all of the praise given to the program in the 2004 review applies in 2014, indicating remarkable effectiveness despite a number of ongoing challenges. The program is an asset to its students, the Graduate School, CBE, UW, and the discipline of urban planning as a result of its:

- ✓ strong research leadership by faculty from UDP and other units across campus
- ✓ signature research areas. The UW program faculty and students are internationally known for their strengths especially in the areas of
 - urban ecology
 - public health dimensions of urban design and planning
- ✓ range of additional research foci that enrich the breadth of training in the Ph.D. program, such as, East Asian urbanization research, food systems planning and broader issues of infrastructure finance (including transportation, water, and electricity).

- ✓ successful model of interdisciplinary training that ensures students graduate with depth in urban planning and the intellectual breadth and skills to work across disciplinary boundaries
- ✓ administration by a steering committee and core faculty drawn from a range of disciplines, perpetuating the interdisciplinary culture to the Ph.D. program
- ✓ dedicated faculty, administration and staffing that have ensured the vitality and continued success of the Ph.D. program
- ✓ a student body of diverse intellectual backgrounds and interests chosen annually from deep applicant pools
- ✓ successful students, who obtain jobs in urban planning and other disciplines. Notably, 43 of the past 47 graduates have achieved employment in professional/ academic positions, and many have become leaders in the field.

Challenges faced in maintaining and growing program success

The review committee was impressed with the program's record of success, made all the more surprising given several challenges and constraints that would seem to work against the ongoing effectiveness of the program. These issues include:

- ✓ *Limited availability or predictability of student funding opportunities.*

Funding for students derives primarily from grant supported research assistantships (RAs) generated by faculty in the program and teaching assistantships (TAs) from undergraduate courses offered in UDP and elsewhere. Of the funding provided in the past decade, teaching consistently provides roughly 30% of available student support, fellowships 10-25%, while faculty grants have supplied 45-60% (S.s. Figure 3). As a result, and as noted in the 2004 review, the success of funding – and consequently, the success of the program in recruitment, retention, and graduation of students – rests heavily on the success of a funding model that is inherently unpredictable. This is a source of increasing concern in recent years as federal grant support and support from the university in the form of teaching assistantships has declined. In spite of this, the program has maintained its enrollments and continued to fund the majority of students through their programs.

In addition, fellowship support from the Graduate School has been cut, and there is concern that the new budgeting policy in the university (Activity-Based Budgeting or ABB) could negatively impact student support as well as faculty involvement in an interdisciplinary Ph.D. program. Notably the program, which has maintained a student body of around 20 students through the past decade, has managed to fund approximately 17-19 students annually. Variability of student opinion of the program and financial support within it reflect this pattern, with most students feeling well supported while a small number feel quite differently. Unfortunately,

the opportunities for funding are not equally available to students across the intellectual spectrum of the program. Those students attached to well-funded research projects in general have better opportunities for support than those working on less well-funded topics. This asymmetry is a manifestation of the broader institutional inequality in financial support for the more scientifically-oriented research topics compared to those employing more humanistic or social science approaches.

- ✓ *Difficulty recruiting and supporting sufficiently large cohorts of incoming students.*

Student enrollment of 3-4 students/year creates a challenge for cohort identity, continuity, and the resourcing of teaching. A preferable cohort size would be closer to 6-8 students per year. Such an expansion would only be possible with an increase in the financial support available to students in the program. It is not readily apparent how to increase student funding. At a minimum, it is imperative that the program be able to maintain current cohort sizes in the face of reductions in financial support.

- ✓ *Incentivizing faculty involvement from across campus.*

Interdisciplinary programs often struggle to engage the active participation of faculty with primary appointments in disciplinary units. This challenge is especially difficult under ABB, where faculty teaching effort translates more or less directly to the budgetary status of teaching units. The challenge is also hardest to overcome for junior faculty pursuing tenure and promotion based largely on their contributions to their field and unit of employment. Notably, non UDP faculty active in the IPPUDP report that they participate, in spite of these constraints, because of the intellectual rewards of working with the students on interdisciplinary research. Most or all are tenured faculty and did not seem to feel discouraged from participation by their units. Recruiting junior faculty to participate in the program, however, is recognized as a challenge, and one that limits the ability of the program to cultivate future program leaders from the early stages of their careers.

- ✓ *Maintaining a curriculum structure that meets the needs of students entering with different backgrounds.*

A significant strength of the program is the diversity of student intellectual backgrounds. While roughly 50% of students enter the program with a professional degree in urban planning, others arrive with backgrounds in architecture, environmental science, public health, and other fields. Such a mix of students is a fundamental strength, and enhances the effectiveness of the program by attracting motivated students from a range of perspectives. Yet students entering without a background in urban planning voiced some frustration that the program took them longer to complete, as they had to devote considerable time to core classes focused

on the theories and methods of planning. Some students would have liked more latitude to meet core requirements with courses that they judged would be more directly relevant to their program and career goals. The current curriculum structure attempts to strike a balance between disciplinary depth (in urban planning) and interdisciplinary breadth. Faculty in the program reported that graduates emerge from the program uniquely qualified to address interdisciplinary questions while grounded in the field of urban planning. The review committee calls attention to this tension, but does not see it as a fundamental weakness. On the contrary, it represents a key balancing process to ensure depth and breadth that so far is working for graduates of the program, whose careers success is well documented.

The review committee nevertheless felt that the curriculum could usefully evolve to include core classes that illustrate thematic and interdisciplinary research. Such courses might come from the Department of Urban Design and Planning, from other Units in the University or through courses taught by faculty in multiple disciplines that are central to each cluster of studies. These courses might correspond to the areas of inquiry in which the program has had the most enduring success and the greater impact through scholarship and through the careers of its graduates.

✓ *Complexity of administration of an interdisciplinary Ph.D. program under multiple chains of authority*

The review committee devoted considerable effort trying to understand of the complex administrative structure of the program. While the program itself is managed by the Graduate School (GS) and the director (Marina Alberti) reports to the GS associate dean (Becky Aanerud), the intellectual core of the program is, every director has been, and the greatest number of faculty serving it are in the Department of Urban Design and Planning (UDP) within the College of Built Environments (CBE). TA appointments that support the program's students are largely generated by the undergraduate courses in UDP, and the space allocated to support the Ph.D. program is made available by CBE. A recently created interdisciplinary Ph.D. program on the Built Environment (PPBE), administered fully within CBE further complicates the landscape for the uninitiated. The committee wondered whether these factors might put the IPPUDP in a position of vulnerability or disadvantage, for example, if a dean or chair decided to direct more discretionary funding to programs more fully within their administrative framework, such as PPBE.

Somewhat surprising to the review committee, we found the opposite sentiment through the administrative ranks. Deans Aanerud and Eaton (GS) and Schaufelberger (CBE), the current chair of UDP, Qing Shen, program director Alberti, and all faculty interviewed about it, see the current administrative structure as

optimal for the health and well-being of the program. Two reasons are offered for this. First participation of faculty from outside of CBE is easier when the program is administered at the Graduate School (GS) level, thus supporting the interdisciplinarity at the core of the program. Secondly, the complex administrative dynamics provide net stability through a broader base of support. Moreover, everyone involved in both the GS and CBE expressed a genuine commitment to supporting the success of the program. Whatever the reason, it is evident that the program has been sustained more or less with the current administrative structure since 1989, and there appears to be universal support for maintaining the arrangement.

It remains unclear how the new Ph.D. program in the Built Environment, despite its different focus, will affect the Interdisciplinary Program on Urban Design and Planning, and this is something that should be watched. Differences reported indicate that the IPPUDP has a stronger basic research orientation in urban planning with more interdisciplinary emphasis while the PPBE is more heavily focused on applied aspects of design and covers a broader range of disciplines within CBE. Some degree of overlap is noted in the more humanistic research interests of the Development Processes cluster. Many of the UDP faculty participate in both doctoral programs, and those asked appeared to view PPBE as a positive and complementary addition. Some of the students we interviewed expressed frustration that they did not interact much with the students in PPBE and thought there might be opportunities for more social and intellectual engagement.

✓ *Ensuring continuity of energetic and committed leadership and cultivating future leaders*

A significant ingredient in the ongoing success of the program is the engagement of dedicated and energetic faculty from within and beyond UDP. The steering committee is composed of faculty from departments across campus; these committee members devote three years to supporting the effective operation of the program. Leading them and carrying the bulk of the effort to keep the program strong, the director, Marina Alberti has worked tirelessly to ensure the program is effectively administered. This includes an ongoing strategic planning process and the hundreds of thankless tasks required to keep a Ph.D. program functional. Professor Alberti is ably supported by the assistance of Grad School program administrator, Jean Rogers, who received universal praise for her effective support and maintenance of the program's day to day operation (responding to student needs, helping the director, maintaining the – small – budget, etc.). The program administrator clearly expressed her feeling that the support she provides to the interdisciplinary Ph.D. program is manageable, and she does not see a need for additional time or assistance.

While these individuals and groups are doing a commendable job, we have concerns in particular over the future leadership of the program, and the director's

position in particular. Professor Alberti has been tremendously successful, but with ongoing struggles to maintain, let alone grow the program, there is a risk that no clear successor will be ready to step into the post in the future. Thus, while the immediate need then is to support and encourage the current director to remain at the post in the near term, it is important that future leadership be cultivated from among the more junior program faculty.

V. Committee Response to Unit Defined Questions:

In their strategic plan IPPUDP identified five key objectives that are then used in the self-study to pose (and then answer) “unit defined questions”. The objectives identified are to:

1. Reach national prominence (defined as a top 3 US Ph.D. planning program).
2. Align the curriculum and structure with the program’s intellectual focus.
3. Create and support quality mentorship and advising.
4. Develop an effective, accountable, and transparent governance structure.
5. Generate and sustain necessary resources for the long-term viability of the program

The questions asked:

- a. *What progress has the Program made towards this objective?*
- b. *What challenges and opportunities do the current structural and financial changes at the University of Washington pose to fully achieve this objective?*
- c. *What challenges and opportunities do the emerging changes in national and international trends in urban design and doctoral education pose to achieve this objective?*
- d. *What can we learn from other institutions and PhD programs to address the challenges and opportunities above and to make further progress towards this objective?*

We have addressed many of the relevant issues above. Here we discuss the successes, challenges, and opportunities as related to each of the objectives.

1. Reach national prominence (defined as a top 3 US Ph.D. planning program).

IPPUDP has established excellence in a number of areas. As noted already, the program is particularly strong in urban ecology and the interface with public health. The program demonstrates excellence in faculty and student research collaborations; external funding success throughout core and affiliated faculty ranks; and success in placement of students.

It is difficult to rank programs in urban planning because each tends to have unique character and identity due to the unique mix of faculty in residence and

areas of emphasis. No current ranking of programs exists. Committee member Ruth Steiner, our subject specialist in urban planning, would place IPPUDP in the top five to ten urban planning Ph.D. programs nationally but higher in specialty areas, such as urban design, urban ecology, and the integration of planning and public health. To reach the top three spot, the program would need to measure itself against the currently dominant programs at U.C. Berkeley, MIT and elsewhere – benchmarking data chosen by the program to evaluate its own success in this aim have not been included in the program’s self-study and strategic plan so far. With the addition of another key faculty member with a major funded research program and a strong national reputation, the program might emerge in the top three, though probably not without the ability to bring in student cohorts larger than 3-4 students/year.

Given existing strengths in the program already, there are only two primary means to increasing prominence in the field, both alluded to above.

- ✓ retain, recruit and cultivate prominent faculty
- ✓ graduate more Ph.D. students

The productivity and success of any Ph.D. program is based on the success of the faculty in it. Key faculty participants devote huge amounts of time and energy to the success of the program. These faculty need support for their efforts and in some cases more people need to help share the loads. Program standing could be *lowered* significantly if leading faculty were to leave UW or retire without replacement. In addition, hiring someone with an established record in research and teaching could help to boost the program’s national standing if the opportunity were to appear. Supporting and retaining strong junior faculty to join the ranks of the prominent senior faculty is essential to long term program health. This last option is probably the most attainable given current resource constraints at the University of Washington. Several early to mid-career faculty in the program are on promising trajectories. Program leaders and administrators should continue to mentor and support those faculty to facilitate their success.

With an incoming cohort size of 3-4 graduate students per year, the program takes 50% fewer students than industry leaders like U.C. Berkeley and still fewer than MIT. Increasing cohort sizes is only possible with increased student funding. This may be achieved, stochastically, through increased levels of success in large grant competitions. Shuffling priorities and mechanisms of ABB and other administrative streams of funding in the upper administration could help to some extent, but probably not enough to allow the program to grow significantly. Professor Alberti’s idea of bringing together a wider collection of urban-oriented programs from across campus might leverage economies of scale in staffing and increase some student support, though how is not yet clear. Perhaps more interestingly, the plan might result in a further broadening of the intellectual scope of the program, with positive implications for the stature of the program. The committee did not have enough information to evaluate this idea, though we encourage further exploration.

Fund-raising emerges as the most promising avenue for generating increases and more predictable financial support. The upcoming capital campaign provides an opportunity for the University to partner with the IPPUDP to devote attention towards support the next generation of university educators and leaders in sustainable urban environmental planning. Building an endowment over time could result in significant increases in both the stability and capacity of student support in the program.

While program faculty would like to *increase* program prominence, a more immediate concern is that the unpredictability and possible deterioration of traditional sources of student support could *reduce* cohort size and regularity thereby undermining the sustainability of a very successful Ph.D. program. Therefore, a more practical and attainable target in the short term would be to ensure sustainability of the program through any and all efforts to increase the predictability and diversity of funding sources and through continued efforts to sustain and grow faculty leadership and intellectual engagement.

A step toward a more sustainable program may involve clarifying resource flows to students in the program. The committee struggled with the inability to track how faculty grant success (altogether impressive) translated to student support. This was a result of the inherent complexity of tracking funds to a program in which faculty from across campus participate partially in IPPUDP as well as other units. As such the funding credited to the faculty in the program is not directly translatable to relative support for the program's students. Much of it goes elsewhere. With the ability to track and analyze student funding streams, it should be possible to better identify risks to program sustainability (e.g., impending retirements or grant closures contributing disproportionately to the funding pool) and perhaps avenues for greater investment.

If the size of the incoming cohorts cannot be increased, the program faces the challenge of trying to sustain its first year core program. Classes of 3-4 students are hard to justify and ABB pressures could force the program to change the way the core curriculum is taught. While these pressures could undermine program success, there is also an opportunity here to explore curriculum restructuring. Perhaps some courses could be taught every other year or the classes might in some cases be reorganized to serve students in both the IPPUDP and in the new Ph.D. program in the Built Environment (PPBE) or other closely allied programs. There should be no question that a successful Ph.D. program needs to have some classes that are specific to that program's core intellectual mission. Nevertheless, creative solutions may be needed to expand or even maintain the enrollments in some core courses. The current effort to require students to take the core seminar twice is a creative short-term solution to small enrollments, but may not best serve student progress in the longer term.

National and international trends in urban design and planning and IPPUDP's opportunities and challenges include:

✓ Sustainability

A significant trend in urban planning today is in the issue of sustainability. With its unique strengths in urban ecology, health, transport and development, IPPUDP is well-positioned to capitalize on the many currently opportunities in this area.

✓ Asian and Globalization studies

The urban planning field is growing in areas of Asian urbanization and globalization and IPPUDP well positioned due to its strengths in Asian and Pacific Rim urban design and planning.

✓ Design

The emphasis on design is unique to this program. This is a growing area of interest in the field, and IPPUDP has been doing this for decades, way “ahead of the curve”.

✓ Reintegration with dimensions of Public Health

While urban planning originally split from public health, there is a broad trend today for public health to filter through urban planning at various levels. IPPUDP is a leader in this area. We see a particular opportunity within the program for the merging or blending of urban ecology with studies of health and wellness (e.g., environmental health and pollution, water quality, walking, biking, etc.)

✓ Knowledge to practice

Nationally, there has been a growing trend away from purely academic or basic research towards greater engagement between scientific based research and application. Funding agencies are responding to these changing pressures and funding research that makes the case for greater interdisciplinarity and broader societal implications (e.g., NSF’s Biocomplexity and its Sustainability in the Environment programs). IPPUDP is situated well to meet these demands and attracts students specifically because of the unique combination of a rich scientific research approach linked to real world solutions at the nexus of urban ecology, health, transportation, and development processes. Real world problems require interdisciplinary solutions and faculty and students alike appear drawn to this program because of its success in researching these problems.

✓ Multi-year packages for student recruitment

A trend that could threaten student recruitment is a move in universities across the country to fund incoming students with multiple year packages. IPPUDP manages to fund most but not all students through their studies. If funding offers

decline, the best students will go elsewhere. Fortunately, IPPUDP appears to be in high demand with many more applicants than can be accepted. Erosion of the quality of students – and student welfare through their degree term – are the main issues to worry about should funding levels drop. A silver lining is that UW tuition is lower than that at many competing programs, so the size of student support to be raised if needed is less than it would be in many other places.

2. Align the curriculum and structure with the program's intellectual focus.

The curriculum and program were dramatically restructured following the 1998 review. By 2004, the program had roughly the same phase structure as today. More recently, in response to ongoing strategic planning, the core faculty redefined the program around the three clusters. This more resulted from an intentional effort to define the program around interdisciplinary research problems rather than traditional specializations. Faculty and recent graduates both thought that this was an exciting development that is energizing collaborations. At the same time, these clusters have fuzzy boundaries and many faculty participate in research that crosses all three clusters. Our impression is that the three clusters have yet to make a strong imprint on program identity and reputation. The program faculty may find it useful to capitalize on the innovative cluster approach as an opportunity for further evolving the core curriculum as well as the research themes they currently represent.

Some faculty and students noted that the curriculum today is more supportive of the scientific dimensions of the program despite intentional effort to broaden the program to include more humanities oriented scholars and students. In particular some faculty are concerned that students with interests in the less scientific dimensions of the program would be better served with a more flexible core curriculum than currently in place, while those with more scientific interests are better served by the existing core. These same students often face steeper challenges in securing funding and take longer to get through the program.

3. Create and support quality mentorship and advising.

The Steering Committee has worked hard to create and install a structure that regularizes student assessment and advising. The innovation look like they should. Nevertheless, students report that mentoring remains somewhat uneven across the program. For example some complained that they had relatively little guidance in identifying appropriate interdisciplinary courses, suggesting that some adjustments still need to be made in the areas of advising and/or curriculum clarity.

4. Develop an effective, accountable, and transparent governance structure.

The program is governed effectively by the director and an active steering committee composed of core faculty representing a wide range of UW departments,

supported by Jean Rogers. Members on the steering committee engage in strategic planning, program policy design and revision, and assessment of student progress. The degree of investment and the degree of intentionality towards designing an ever improved program is admirable. Overall this seems an effective approach to a complex and challenging cross-disciplinary program. If there is room for improvement in this area, it is better informing students about these support and governance mechanisms. They are widely supportive of Director Alberti's inspirational leadership, but less aware of the steering committee's role. Adding a student representative to steering committee meetings would be one way to help reduce the student confusion about the operation of the program.

5. Generate and sustain necessary resources for the long-term viability of the program

We have addressed this question in the answers above. IPPUDP is a model in many ways for a successful interdisciplinary Ph.D. program at the University of Washington and elsewhere. Its biggest challenges are in funding students at a level commensurate with maintaining and perhaps growing the program. Interestingly, this concern was mirrored in the 2004 report, right down to the suggestion of fundraising for endowment support.

VI. Recommendations

Overall Recommendation:

- ✓ Program Continuation with the next full review in ten years.
- ✓ Interim report in five years to enable ongoing monitoring of uncertainties in funding, faculty engagement, coordination of curriculum with other related disciplines, and administrative support.

Specific Recommendations:

- ✓ Work to secure more and more consistent funding for students through:
 - development of undergraduate classes that can draw larger enrollments and support more TAs.
 - engagement with higher administration to mitigate possible negative impacts of ABB system.
 - seeking ways to direct a larger number of ABB dollars and indirect cost recapture to support program maintenance and growth. As a unique program technically unaffiliated with any large undergraduate teaching unit, the IPPUDP will need a creative solution to ensure that, as an interdisciplinary program, it will continue to be supported.
 - pursuit of private funding through the upcoming capital campaign. Work more closely with UW Advancement to explore strategies for raising private donations.

- ✓ Continue efforts of ongoing assessment of program structure, curriculum, and student needs with strategic planning, annual student reviews, and similar mechanisms.
 - As part of the program goal to “align the curriculum and structure with the program’s intellectual focus”, develop new courses associated with the intellectual clusters or other strong foci. This will help to better express and reinforce the cumulative progress achieved thanks to interdisciplinarity, over the progress of the program thus far.
 - Clarify typical trajectories for students entering with and without Planning background. Also clarify to students why core courses based in the department of Urban Design and Planning are important for the academic success and future careers of all students, particularly those coming from other backgrounds.
- ✓ Maintain and expand efforts to cultivate a common culture among students by:
 - *Retaining and increasing the effectiveness of the shared graduate student work space.*

Students working in the research laboratories appear to get desks in those labs, where they develop close community with other lab members. Other students need a place to work and congregate. The existing shared space could be more effectively configured. With insufficient workstations elsewhere, some students claim the common room as their own workspace thus diminishing its intended function as a communal space for all students.

- *Expanding opportunities for more integrative activities between lab and non-lab assigned students within the program*

Students expressed a lack of solid community identity outside of existing lab groups. The expansion of opportunities for group seminars or research symposia that draw together students and faculty from across the program would be a relatively easy step.

- *Expanding opportunities for social and intellectual interactions with students in the Ph.D. Program on the Built Environment.*

Students would benefit from greater interaction with other doctoral students within the program and the College of Built Environments. This could be accomplished through a variety of activities ranging from formal, curricular changes, including sharing of courses with students in the PPBE program to organized social activities bringing together students in IPPUDP and PPBE. Sharing courses with the PPBE would also allow for a more efficient use of resources, if appropriate shared classes could be identified.

- ✓ Continue to explore opportunities to expand the size of incoming cohorts to 6-8 students per year, a doubling of the program.

The applicant pool suggests the existence of demand, but the current structure of funding does not appear sufficient to support growth. See the recommendations above (increased undergraduate enrollments, ABB mitigation and fundraising). Success getting large grants funded could also continue to support and even allow some short term growth, depending on the size and number of the grants landed.

- ✓ Clarify the brand identity of the UW Ph.D. program with new, intellectually compelling and professionally applicable, definitions of “urban design” and “urban planning”.
- ✓ As part of the strategic planning process and in the Interim Report in five years, model trajectories of success and potential for future development.
 - Better define and visualize flow of resources to the program and away from it... to develop more strategic collaborations and partnerships with other administrators of those other programs across campus.
 - Model trajectories of success and potential for future development. Without this, it will be impossible to model how the larger cluster will work.
 - Develop tangible metrics on interdisciplinary education & outcomes.
 - For instance:
 - ✓ how the program achieves interdisciplinary training within the curriculum
 - ✓ funding sources and their variability through time.
 - ✓ student backgrounds
 - ✓ co-authorship
 - ✓ jobs of graduates in traditional and non-traditional positions
 - ✓ courses these graduates teach in their current position, if applicable.

VII. Summary: Academic and Educational Quality of the Doctoral Program

Throughout the preceding pages, we have attempted to identify the strengths and challenges of the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program in Urban Design and Planning, with our recommendations to help maintain the strengths and reduce the challenges. Here we summarize these finding in the terms of the committee charge questions:

- 1) Is the IPPUDP doing what it should be doing**
Yes.

The program is healthy and successful. An academically successful and intellectually committed group of faculty from across campus, invest valuable time and experience maintaining the vitality of the graduate program. Students in the program are being successfully recruited, educated, mentored, graduated and placed in competitive jobs.

2) Are they doing it well?

Yes.

- ✓ Faculty in the program are internationally known for their scholarship.
- ✓ Students trained in this program work with faculty through a number of collaborative venues.
- ✓ The core course sequence, while it may frustrate some students, is clearly effective in training students in the core elements of the discipline.
- ✓ Students engage in a wide range of cutting edge research projects and graduate to successfully compete for academic and other jobs worldwide. Some of these graduates have gone on to be recognized leaders in the field.

3) How can they do things better?

The IPPUDP has invested considerable energy in an ongoing process of strategic planning. This planning has clearly paid off while challenges remain desirable in areas of curriculum tailoring, student funding, junior faculty recruitment, and leadership succession. We recommend that the steering committee:

- ✓ consider the possibility of evolving the core courses to engage students around the three key intellectual themes of the program.
- ✓ continue to apply for grants with student support
- ✓ develop new undergraduate courses that will appeal to a larger number of students both to generate additional TAs
- ✓ consider reinstating the “associate director” position to formalize training of a possible successor and share the duties of the director.
- ✓ rotate some responsibilities through the IPPUDP steering committee.

4) How can the University assist the program?

- ✓ Maintain administrative, intellectual, and financial support for the program. Support program expansion to meet the demand of large and highly qualified applicant pools.
- ✓ Create incentives for participation of junior and other faculty in interdisciplinary activities outside of their own home departments and colleges.
- ✓ Direct new funds to the program to increase the number of student support packages available.

- ✓ Explore possible synergies and economies of scales across the university to reduce the costs of maintaining this and similar programs and allowing for greater stability and growth.
- ✓ Commit Advancement staff-time to work with faculty and students to build a strategy for fundraising that could provide endowments or other sources of support.