

**April 15, 2015**  
**Committee Report**  
**Program Review of the**  
**Master of Arts in Cultural Studies and**  
**Master of Arts in Policy Studies**  
**Interdisciplinary Arts and Science**  
**University of Washington- Bothell**

**Committee charge and process**

As a part of its regular review of University degree programs and in coordination with the UW Bothell Chancellor's Office, UW Bothell School of Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences, and the Office of the Provost, the University of Washington Graduate School formed a committee of three faculty members to review the Master of Arts in Cultural Studies (MACS) and Master of Arts in Policy Studies (MAPS).

The committee was made up of two faculty members from the University of Washington, Seattle and one faculty member from the University of British Columbia:

**José Antonio Lucero**, Associate Professor, UW Jackson School of International Studies, (Committee Chair)

**Mary Kay Gugerty**, Professor, UW Evans School of Public Affairs

**Handel Kashope Wright**, Professor, Department of Educational Studies, University of British Columbia

The committee was charged with assessing the quality of the graduate degree programs under review and to provide faculty with constructive suggestions for strengthening those programs. The School of Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences (IAS) was last reviewed in 2007-2008. At that time, MAPS was given continuing status with recommendation for interim report in three years and program review in five years. The Master of Arts in Cultural Studies started as a new degree program in 2008 and is currently undergoing its first review, as mandated for all new degree programs. The committee examined previous reports, a MACS/MAPS self-study and conducted a site visit at UW Bothell over two days (Feb. 26-27, 2015) during which we meet with administrators, faculty members, staff, current graduate students and alumni.

As in previous reviews, the committee was tasked with providing a status recommendation for both programs under review. Accordingly and for reasons we will detail below, the committee recommends that both MACS and MAPS should be granted continuing status with subsequent review in coordination with the next School of Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences review (2017-2018).

Taking into account the questions and concerns raised in the self-study, the reports will examine each program in turn, with specific attention to the following items:

- Program Project Vision and Strengths
- Program Challenges
- Recommendations for Program

After discussing each program individually, the report will then consider the relationship between MACS and MAPS, and discuss both existing and potential tensions and synergies. The report concludes by giving specific attention to the unit-defined concerns regarding outward linkages, cohort dynamics and community-based learning.

### **MACS: VISION AND STRENGTHS**

Cultural studies as praxis, understood as the imbrication of theory and practice in the service of broad social justice goals, is a particularly demanding field to conceptualize and evaluate. This is because of its constituent characteristics and locations: it ideally combines the characteristics of being interdisciplinary (or even post-disciplinary), theory driven, engaged in and informative of practice, and oriented toward textual and corporeal sociocultural representation and social justice, is located in the academy but ventures beyond what constitutes traditional academic work. It is perhaps not surprising that most programs and departments of cultural studies fall short of the ideal, settling for producing models that resolve the supposed paradox of praxis usually by emphasizing theory (and eschewing practice) and by limiting the examination of representation to the textual (at the expense of embodied categories of identity representation) and in some cases downplaying the focus on social justice. In short, most academic models of cultural studies are not praxis models. Rather, they are characterized by complex, theory driven, interdisciplinary study of texts that tends to downplay or eschew practice elements.

The above description of the field is introduced in order to contextualize the assertion that the MACS program at the UW Bothell is clearly ambitious, distinctive and outstanding both nationally and internationally as a model of cultural studies as praxis. MACS is largely successful in simultaneously being theory driven yet practice oriented; locally focussed and yet informed by national and global theorization; committed to addressing sociocultural representation not only in textual terms but in terms of the diversity of both students and faculty; generally readily interdisciplinary yet with respect for disciplinary focus and depth when required; aimed at producing both reflexive cultural workers and academics. The Centre for Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham, UK (original birthplace of institutionalized, academic cultural studies) and its successor, the Department of Cultural Studies and Sociology, and the present day Cultural Studies Program at the University of British Columbia, Okanagan, come to mind as similar cultural studies programs but it must be said that none of these have quite the same emphasis on the local and the undertaking and examination of cultural work and cultural workers that the MACS program does.

The curriculum of the MACS Program is clearly rigorous with a heavy emphasis on a rich and impressively wide-ranging array of theoretical figures, texts and frameworks (both national and international) as curricular foundations. Rather than a unitary conception, MACS introduces students to an overall definition and working conception that includes variations and different

emphases (based on disciplinary backgrounds and approaches to interdisciplinarity). This is in keeping with the best approaches to cultural studies as a field of studies.

In our conversations, there was a clear consensus regarding the strength and effectiveness of the MACS approach. Faculty, staff, and student alike were invested in and excited about the particular way that critical interdisciplinarity is being put into practice in the program. Moreover, there was clear evidence of the excellence of the faculty members who were lauded not only for their pedagogical and scholarly talents but also for their “accessibility” and “flexibility.” The graduate students, who are particularly engaged and constructively critical (as we indicate below), nevertheless wanted to emphasize their admiration and gratitude for the program. They feel that they are getting a terrific education about the operation of society in general and social and cultural institutions, including the ways in which sociocultural difference (e.g. race, gender, class, etc.) shapes power, and vice versa. We were pleased to hear some enthusiastic praise like:

- “I love this program!”
- “This program changed my life.”
- “MACS gave me new language to explore and understand my world.”

The richness of the course offerings, the range of faculty expertise, and the combination of theory, performance and practice are clearly appreciated by both alumni and current students. Additionally, alumni noted that the program had done a superlative job in preparing them for PhD program and work in the community.

As always, of course, there were also areas of concern.

## **MACS: PROGRAM CHALLENGES**

While we will devote much of our concluding remarks to the unit-defined concerns with outward linkages, cohort dynamics, and community-based learning, we would like to identify several key challenges that emerged in our conversations.

### **1. Lack of financial support of students**

Probably the most common concern we heard over two days of conversations was one about the lack of financial support for students: the dearth of fellowships, TAs, RAships or other campus employment opportunity. Such a complaint is not unique to MACS or MAPS, but there seems to be a clear consensus that this challenge is greater at UWB than it is on the Seattle campus.

### **2. Program pace and expectations: Pressures on junior faculty and students**

A concern at the top of many lists was related to the terrific ambition of the program. In two years, students and faculty do an impressive amount of work around portfolios, community-engagement, capstone projects and theory-intensive curriculum. The concern is that it may be too much. Junior faculty, stretched thin not only by the teaching and advising requirements of MACS and MAPS but by the pull of many “CAWGs” (Curricular Area Working Groups within undergraduate programs that require junior faculty teaching and administrative labor), are feeling somewhat overwhelmed (with some indicating they were close to the breaking point).

Some graduate students similarly feel that the program requirements are too heavy. From the initial 10 credit BCULST 500 course to the expectations regarding community work, some students feel overwhelmed.

### 3. Unevenness of student expectations, experience

Another area that could use attention is the difficulty of serving at least two distinct sets of students' needs: those who consider themselves to be cultural workers and are therefore interested in theory-informed improvement of their practice and those who see themselves as more academically oriented and interested in preparation for doctoral studies and eventually academic careers.

In addition, students come to the program at often quite different moments in their respective lives. Some are seasoned professionals, with clear areas of concentration and interest; others are fresh out of undergraduate educations, with less of a clear intellectual or professional orientation.

### 4. Diversity

The MACS program stresses diversity and representation as core characteristics. The program is doing quite well in this area in terms of the curriculum. The readings are representative of national and international cultural studies, and authors and theorists from sociocultural minorities (queer, people of color, women/feminist, postcolonial, Native, etc.) are well represented in the curriculum. The MACS program has managed to attract a very socio-culturally diverse student body and both traditional and non-traditional students. The same cannot be said for faculty and administration, which remains rather homogenous (e.g. in racial terms, distinctly white). Recent hires have addressed this concern and administrators are certainly aware of this challenge, but we would note that there is particular passion around the issue (expressed especially by students).

### 5. Program Impact

A small number of faculty members wondered aloud just how much MACS has impacted the broad conversation on cultural studies. Another way to think about this issue relates to the regional focus of the program. One of the principal aspects which makes the MACS program distinctive is that it is focussed on the local, the Puget Sound: it draws heavily on the local for students, for community engagement and practice placement and for its overall object of study. This makes for a compact and focused program. However, the focus on the local, while quite successful, is arguably undertaken at the expense of a consideration of the broader regional, national and indeed international community and issues which are represented only in textual form (e.g. cultural studies as a form of American studies which in turn means taking into account the current turn to transnational American studies). Furthermore the focus on the local has contributed to keeping the profile of the program restricted to the local level, an unfortunate hiding of this forward thinking cultural studies model which ought to be a bright light shining on the national and international cultural studies community, under the bushel of the local.

## 6. Praxis: Community and Classroom challenges

The practice elements (e.g. community engagement, portfolio) are what make the UW Bothell MACS a distinctive and exciting model of cultural studies. The committee noted that there is the paradoxical feeling that these elements are simultaneously over-emphasized (with students and faculty alike concerned about how to best accomplish these tasks) *and* that these elements are not given enough attention (in that there is a need for clear model/s for bringing theory and practice together to make for cultural studies praxis).

Community based learning and research (CBLR) are clearly essential elements of MACS as a praxis-based cultural studies program. However, many graduate students expressed frustration about the community-based dimension: there were not enough specific and long-term connections with community partners, and there were (seemingly) ways to speak about “the community” without really engaging communities. It is also notable that in the mid-program and end-of-program surveys, the ratings for CBLR are relatively low over several years (with some variation). One student noted: “We could go through this whole program without working in the community. A graduate of the program noted that the program felt “disconnected from local social movements.” One staff member noted that the lack of clear engagement with community partners also meant that there is an under-appreciation of MACS in the Puget Sound region.

## **MACS: RECOMMENDATIONS**

Keeping these concerns in mind, the committee would like to have the program consider several possible avenues of action. With the hope of being generative rather than exhaustive or conclusive, we list some possible paths that MACS faculty members, administrator and staff might consider, roughly in the order of the challenges reviewed.

### 1. Supporting students financially

- Find creative ways to make the case for Graduate Student Assistantships. These may arise in conjunction with some of the suggestions below regarding the coordination of CBLR, outside speakers, or new faculty-graduate student workshops.
- In addition to funding students during graduate school, another way to think about the economics of graduate study is to focus on post-graduation placement. Greater networking, professional development, and other investment in professional services may help alleviate student anxiety on this issue.

### 2. Program pace and workload for junior faculty and graduate students

- Provide more course release time for junior faculty. It should be standard that junior faculty are shielded from too much teaching and especially service work early in career to enable them to learn the ropes and to establish their research agendas. At UW Bothell junior faculty need to variously get up to speed on the MACS model in general (and portfolio and capstone, etc. in particular- see recommendation for workshops below); establish a research agenda and be shielded initially from “institution building” (which senior faculty and administration are clearly and understandably quite enthusiastic about)

- Establish mechanisms and strategies for workload management. These could include workshops for junior faculty on concepts, contents and pedagogy of portfolio, capstone and MACS conception of cultural studies praxis. In addition, as one faculty member mentioned, there might be ways to “collectivize” labor in ways that can increase opportunities for collaboration among students and instructors and de-emphasize the individualized expectations of capstone and portfolio projects. It might also be possible to encourage MACS and MAPS students to collaborate on specific work from shared placements to joint portfolios and/or capstone.
- Consider revising the BCULST 500 (10 credit) course. This course was the subject of concern from faculty and students alike. In theory, it makes a good deal of sense, but it seems that in practice it may be a little too much of a good thing. We might suggest approaching these ten credits in another way: 5 credits (taught by one instructor) can be used for a rigorous theoretical introduction, and 5 credits (taught by another instructor) as a kind “praxis link” during which there would be few additional readings, with majority of the credits spent on further discussion and explication of theory from first 5 credits and discussion of application of theory in practice through writing projects or praxis discussions or exercises.

### 3. Addressing student “unevenness”

- Consider research clusters in addition or as alternative to current curriculum organization (so core + research clusters or core + electives + research clusters). This will be particularly beneficial for both more academically oriented students generally and cultural worker students who are interested in in-depth explorations of certain themes (e.g. multiculturalism and its alternatives or approaches to identity politics or environmentalism).
- Organize opportunities for past and current MACS students at various stages (alumni, second year, first year) to congregate, thereby facilitating discussion of program history, experiences, and strategies for successful progress through the program. These can include presentation sessions of capstones (in process by first year and attended by second year and alumni), completed capstones (by second year attended by alumni and first year); student organized study groups.

### 4. Diversity

- Efforts should be made or redoubled at recruiting and keeping faculty of color and opportunities and encouragement provided for such faculty to participate in administration at all (and especially senior) levels.
- Broaden the scope of expert voices beyond professors and texts of academic and intellectual theorists to include local and regional artists, community activists, Indigenous intellectuals and artists and other cultural workers (including and especially MACS alumni who can help students make the links between cultural work and theory). This would be another avenue for diversifying the MACS intellectual community.
- Increase efforts to reach out to and recruit students from historically Black, Latino, and tribal colleges.

## 5. Program Impact

- Consider expanding the spatial outline of the object of cultural studies of the program beyond the Puget Sound to the broad Pacific Northwest (south to Oregon and north to Vancouver Island and British Columbia Lower Mainland, including making links with cultural studies faculty at University of British Columbia Vancouver and the UBC Okanagan cultural studies program). Such a move will keep the focus on the local while broadening the scope of the local, forging links with other institutions that will prove mutually informative and beneficial
- Explore the existing UW networks of Native and Indigenous Studies as a way to create additional and alternative geographies of knowledge-production that link Coast Salish peoples of this region with other Indigenous peoples like Pacific Islanders and Triqui and Mixtec migrants (from Mexico) who have a significant presence in the Puget Sound area. As Native peoples continue to forge economic, political and legal projects across the world, indigeneity also provides a vocabulary and network of local-global connections.
- Encourage research on and documentation and discussion of the UWB MACS model as topic of academic and intellectual dissemination (by students and especially by faculty).

## 6. Address praxis

- Give more attention to “operationalizing” praxis. Make stronger and more explicit connections between theory and theorization on the one hand and practice and cultural work on the other. There is a need for a more organized approach to community-based learning.
- There is a need to establish and utilize a repository of cultural workers and organizations that have either accommodated or are interested in taking on MACS students. Such a repository should be dynamic and include routinely updated information such as how successful both the hosts and students judge experience of placements to be; host continued interest (or “host fatigue”), etc. This could possibly be done in conjunction with CBLR efforts at the MAPS program.
- Placements appear to be a practical matter at present (which they are of course) but they can be conceptualized and organized more formally as research and learning sites if an appropriate overall frame was adopted (e.g. service learning for social justice).

We would also like to provide one final recommendation, which is a general one about the collective self-understanding. While we are reluctant to add any more meetings (as all feel that there are too many meetings to attend), there does seem to be a need for a conversation over different perceptions of the program. It is quite striking that faculty and administration are mostly of the opinion that there are tensions within cohorts and that the cohort model has issues that need to be resolved on the one hand while students (past and present) are unanimous in their approval and praise of the model and of their own cohorts. Perhaps even more significant is the gap between almost all junior (and some senior) faculty members’ perceptions that junior faculty are being asked to take on too much (teaching, service, administration, advising loads) and that some are in serious danger of burnout while most senior faculty and administration feel these concerns are inflated or merely a manifestation of “growing pains” of new faculty.

## **MAPS: PROGRAM VISION AND STRENGTHS**

The MAPS program seeks to distinguish itself as a program of policy studies with a liberal arts focus not typically found in public policy/public administration programs. The MAPS program has a number of strengths. Faculty have worked hard to develop rigorous set of core courses that build the basic analytic and substantive skills students need to undertake program and policy analysis, as well as manage complex public and nonprofit organizations. The program has also developed excellent connections with local and regional organization and a growing alumni network, which provide important opportunities for graduate students during and after the MA program.

The MAPS faculty has strengthened the capstone requirement. The research design course in the first year helps students to develop skills to undertake the capstone project. The list of completed projects suggests that students are undertaking rigorous, substantive applied projects for a diverse array of local clients. Many faculty members feel the capstone is an important learning tool in which students bring together and apply the set of skills developed through core courses.

Overall the basic pieces of the MAPS program are strong. Faculty are proud of the feel strongly strong set of core courses they have built. Students largely agree with this assessment. There is some call by faculty (and some students) to increase the rigor of these courses but with this might have to go hand-in-hand with recruiting efforts that bring in students with a different or more developed set of basic skills. Our review of syllabi suggests that the core courses are rigorous and challenging and meet the standards of similar policy programs nation-wide. The faculty has also put effort into getting students ready for the capstone experience and ensuring that their first year courses lay the groundwork and prepares a diverse set of students for the capstone experience. Individual student experiences of course may vary and this is at times reflected in the evaluations, but overall students evaluate their experience as very high quality.

In general, students are happy with this program offerings and cohort model, although both faculty and students would like to see the program grow in certain directions. Faculty voiced their desire for the program to raise admissions standards and increase the rigor of the core courses, while students were most concerned with more opportunities for networking and professional development.

The faculty hires made since the 2008 MAPS review have strengthened the program and resulted in a stronger set of core courses and electives but strengthening and deepening the electives remains an important part of the MAPS agenda. A core issue for the MAPS program and faculty is how to integrate the vertically structured professional scaffolding required of a professional policy program with the more horizontal and open structure characterizing the MACS program and the IAS approach to education more generally. We take up this issue and others below.

## MAPS: PROGRAM CHALLENGES

### 1. Leveraging Resources

The unit-defined MAPS questions focus on leveraging concentrations and building synergies with undergraduate and graduate programs at IAS. This is a critical issue that the committee feels should be explored. It is challenging for the committee to make specific recommendations in this regard, because we do not fully understand the structure or content of these other programs. Nevertheless, we do suggest some possibilities for working with other units below.

Some faculty members in the MAPS program feel that it is difficult to build a strong policy program without greater autonomy in the hiring process, which is not part of the IAS model. The committee acknowledges this tension, although recent hires do seem to suggest that there exists a cadre of high quality faculty who would welcome teaching and conducting research in a critical policy space. For MAPS to grow and deepen, the program may well need more faculty members who are comfortable in this space.

### 2. The “fit” of policy studies in liberal arts setting (Scaffolds vs. Rhizomes)

Policy programs tend to focus on building a ‘tool kit’ that can be deployed across an array of policy challenges. The field tends to employ a deductive approach to problems, with an ‘action’ orientation towards crafting and implementing solutions to problems. Almost all policy programs use what one faculty member characterized as a ‘vertical’ logic: first gain skills in core courses, then apply those skills in electives. Learning is ‘scaffolded’ and sequential. This contrasts with the rhizomic structure employed in IAS. As many MAPS faculty argue, it could be challenging to raise the profile of the program and attract stronger students (which many faculty would like to do) without building on these key characteristics of the field. That said, if MACS and MAPS can recognize and understand the differences, there are ways forward that can enhance both programs. We turn to this important issue in our recommendation and in a separate section on MACS/MAPS relations.

### 3. Cohort Dynamics

Cohort dynamics form an important part of this program and make it distinctive from many other policy programs. In general, graduates feel the cohort model is an important and useful part of the program, and find that they benefit greatly from it. Surveys of graduates suggest that student ability to benefit from this model varies somewhat, and that there is probably year-to-year variation in cohort dynamics. In recent years, some cohort challenges have emerged, but these appear to be cohort-specific and do not suggest the overall model should be abandoned. This component of the program offers opportunities for distinguishing the program from others and for offering support to working students who are otherwise on campus relatively minimally.

Student responses on evaluations suggest that students should be encouraged and supported in developing their cohort as early as possible in the program to offer each other support and to build the cohort through the sequence of core courses.

#### 4. Admissions, Recruiting and Curricular improvements

Administrators, faculty members and students in the MAPS program are calling for more selective admissions criteria and more rigor in coursework. To the extent that rigor entails stronger scaffolding in core courses, this will make integrated electives with CS more challenging to undertake. The need for stronger recruiting and clearer admissions standards echoes what we heard in the MACS program, although as the program is currently constituted MAPS should perhaps be targeting a different set of students, and recruiting staff need to clearly understand the aims and approach of each program.

Faculty in both programs emphasized recruiting as a key area to support and build. Particularly important is having recruiting staff that understand the curriculum and goals of each program, and can help steer potential students in the appropriate directions. Some concern was expressed by administration about the size of MAPS cohorts, while acknowledging that recruiting efforts on campus have not always been fully staffed or supported. The committee senses that there is likely sufficient demand for the MAPS program at Bothell, and if a slightly larger cohort size would be preferred pedagogically and financially, this should be achievable without a drop in student quality. The policy program at UW Seattle no longer provides a defined evening track and is quite large. The Bothell program provides a potentially attractive evening and smaller class-size alternative. Should the faculty decide to pursue a more blended approach with CS (we discuss options below), this would serve to further distinguish the program.

### **MAPS: RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### 1. Curricular Strategies

The committee suggests considering three paths for revising and improving the curricular offerings. The first option involves increasing the number of 400/500 grad/undergrad classes. This has the advantage of being done internally, but it would require individual faculty members to propose and design new courses, which would in turn require program-wide coordination.

A second possibility involves exploring synergies with other UW professional programs, as per the unit-defined questions. This would have the advantage of reaching out to other units that are already working in professional fields with similar set of norms and expectations about analysis. With some units (business, health studies) there may be some commonality in core courses that may facilitate collaborations. Beyond the UWB campus, MACS may also explore borrowing the model of certificate programs utilized on the UW Seattle campus. The opportunity to create specializations might also help with recruiting. The UW Seattle experience suggests certificates in nonprofit management and international development are important recruiting tools. These kinds of initiatives may lead to larger class sizes and potentially more efficient use of resources.

There are, of course, some potential disadvantages of these possible collaborations. For example, it may require extra work on the part of faculty to harmonize student capabilities, which may vary quite widely as collaborations move across specializations. Larger class sizes also would increase already heavy faculty workloads.

The third path for enhancing the curricular offerings involves increased collaborative offerings with MACS. This may be administratively simpler than working with other IAS units, but there are epistemological and methodological challenges (discussed below) that may complicate this potential collaboration.

## 2. Policy Studies in Liberal Arts Setting (Scaffolds and Rhizomes)

The committee can envision two approaches to this challenge that lie at two ends of a spectrum. There are probably multiple options in-between – and these are not mutually exclusive paths.

The first option is to build bridges with MACS and to develop a set of opportunities for both sets of students. This could be done in a relatively ‘add on’ way that does not require a complete re-thinking the approach of core courses. Some of this has been tried with some success in joint elective courses. A clinic approach to the capstone as well as greater CBLR coordination provide opportunities to interact (see below). This approach, however, will require a high degree of faculty effort and support. Having both sets of students in electives increases class size and means the instructor must be willing to help students see across epistemological divides. If the programs wanted to become even closer than both sets of faculty would need to provide insights into the approaches of the other program during the course courses. Since both sets of core classes are already quite demanding (a view shared by faculty and students) this approach might be very challenging to implement. Other ways of bridging between the programs were suggested during the site visit, such as student-led presentation of projects. This option could also involve strengthening opportunities for graduate/undergraduate offerings, such as is happening with the law and economics program.

The strongest version of this approach would have the MAPS program encompass within its offering an ‘alternative’ to traditional policy programs in the form of a Critical Policy Studies approach. The inter-disciplinary approach, some alignment with MACS and a more critical approach to thinking about policy would result in a very interesting program that could be attractive to both PS and CS students and could build on what is happening in parts of the undergraduate program. The committee is not sure how feasible this would be to undertake wholesale from a resource or recruiting perspective, but one can definitely imagine that this kind of program would bring in a very interesting set of diverse students. In this approach, both traditional and critical approaches would co-exist – as they do now – but with critical studies taken up as a more explicit strategy.

The other approach is less radical and focuses more on building on the internal strengths of MAPS as a policy program. This approach would involve developing a set of electives across policy schools at the Bothell campus, including perhaps nursing, business and environmental programs. This could take the form of a policy certificate, or a substantive area certificate, for example in environmental management. The committee did not have the time or information to assess these potential partnerships, but our sense is that the professional approach of these programs would be a more natural fit with the policy studies. This approach also brings challenges. Just because students are in ‘professional’ programs does not mean they bring the same set of skills to courses. Yet the more applied and action-oriented approach of professional programs may be a more natural fit for faculty and students alike. The structure of the Bothell campus may make this more administratively feasible than similar efforts at the Seattle campus,

which is another comparative advantage. This form of collaboration with other professional units should be explored, regardless of other strategic decisions.

### 3. Community Based Learning and Research and Clinic Model

There is a general consensus that CBLR is working well within MAPS. MAPS has had time to institutionalize a CBLR approach, which is a fairly typical approach for many policy schools and students and faculty alike recognize its strengths. MAPS might consider making better use of its alumni network to leverage opportunities for students and increased central attention to CBLR options from administrative staff could strengthen both programs. Given that students from both PS and CS end up in quite similar post-graduate positions in non-profit and community organizations, students across both programs could benefit from enhanced opportunities for community interaction throughout their studies.

Faculty are already considering the option of a clinic-based capstone. Clinic options could take a multitude of forms, but would allow students to specialize in way best suited to their career goals. If clinic options are incorporated into a class-based format this could provide helpful structure to the process and could reduce variation in the quality of the capstone advising experience and the quality of products produced (a point brought up by some students in the evaluations). If fewer students need capstone advisors, this could reduce the burden on junior faculty as well. A number of high quality masters' programs (SPEA at Indiana University, Humphrey School at University of Minnesota) have moved towards classroom/clinical projects in which a group of students, supervised by faculty, undertake projects for a common client. The Evans School at UW Seattle is also experimenting with this model. Thus there are many opportunities to learn from other programs and this approach is in keeping with emerging standards and approaches in the public policy/studies field.

Importantly for those faculty members in both programs that would like to see more collaboration between the two programs, a clinic offers possibilities for MAPS/MACS collaboration if students from both programs could be involved. Given that MACS and MAPS students often follow similar career trajectories, this would give them added exposure to each other and would provide a space to learn from each other's approaches to problems without requiring joint formal classroom learning.

Potential downsides to this approach include a possible reduction in opportunities for students to be involved in faculty research, as well as a relatively high cost in terms of faculty time – if running a clinic that faculty member is unavailable to teach core or elective courses. If developing a broader range of electives is a priority this presents a bit of a challenge. Recruiting clients may require some administrative staff support. Depending on the structure, the clinic model may present challenges for students working full-time if they are unable to engage in the necessary amount of collaboration with clients. Nonetheless the committee feels the clinic option is very worth exploring.

Overall the committee feels that MAPS faculty have worked hard to develop a high-quality, rigorous program. The program has many natural advantages that could be better advertised to the community: small class size, a cohort model, individual interactions with faculty, and the ability to work while completing the program. Our sense is that sufficient demand for the

program exists, and the challenges with getting recruitment staff in place that have plagued the graduate programs have been part of the challenge. Recent hires seem comfortable with navigating the CS/PS world and willing to think creatively with their senior colleagues about paths forward. We see a strong need for the PS program on the Bothell campus and recommend that faculty and administration work to make hard decisions about a clear path forward, and then that administration commit to the necessary resources to help the program succeed.

Below we revisit these opportunities for collaboration from the perspective of both programs.

## **MACS/MAPS: POTENTIAL COLLABORATIONS AND LINKAGES**

Although the committee was charged with exploring strategies for linking the MACS and MAPS programs, its members are of the opinion that this step assumed willingness at collaboration and linkage that might not be strongly present. This work, the committee feels, needed a prior step of garnering full support of both programs, or failing that, not being undertaken. That said, the committee feels there are several possible avenues and levels of collaboration between the two graduate programs.

One option would involve keeping the present structures intact and allowing connection to operate at the level of students. With this option students would initiate, facilitate and operationalize connections between the programs. Such connection would take the form of jointly organized student presentation of MA capstone projects (in process and upon completion), registering for electives in both one's home program and the other program based on interest and members of both cohorts socializing together.

A second option would involve all avenues in option one and added avenue of identification of existing courses and development of new courses (e.g. on the continuum of research paradigms, their disciplinary roots and political implications) that address common interests and concerns (e.g. human rights, critical approaches to the law politics of difference, critical policy studies). If links are to be formed between MACS and MAPS it will require collaboration between the two programs.

The following are what the committee found in terms of readiness and enthusiasm for exploring such links. There is apparently a considerable gap between senior and junior faculty of MAPS with the former being more inclined to maintaining a separate and traditional policy studies program while most junior faculty appear more open to the idea of collaboration, linkages with MACS. Some senior faculty expressed the concern that linkages with MACS would mean involve policy studies taking on cultural studies characteristics. Indeed, some MAPS faculty wanted to move in another direction, toward greater autonomy and independence. On the other side of the boundary, senior and junior faculty of MACS tend to be quite open to and enthusiastic about the prospects of linkages with MAPS, though through a Critical Policy Studies lens. Students from both programs are of the strong opinion that the two programs and their subject matter are quite separate. It would appear that cross-pollination in courses has been relatively one-sided to date, with only some MAPS students having taken MACS courses and no MACS students reported taking any MAPS courses. This may be the natural result of the 'vertical scaffolding' approach of policy courses.

Some potential options that could help begin to bridge the programs include:

- A course co-taught by MACS and MAPS faculty and taken by students from both programs that addresses the disciplinary histories and philosophy of research traditions and expose students to research paradigms from positivist through postpositivist and constructivist to critical/feminist and postmodernist/poststructuralist would help students situate themselves paradigmatically and to understand the paradigms to which others subscribe. This type of course might be necessary to undertake the ‘closer cooperation’ model described above, and might be a ‘hard sell’ to some faculty members, but it could result in a distinct and attractive approach for both programs.
- Electives of both programs (either existing courses or newly developed courses) could be (re)designed with the prospect of being of interest to students of both programs. For example, courses on policy that take a critical perspective on policy studies and its applications would appeal to MACS students.
- Shared presentations: MAPS and MACS students could present reports on their portfolios and capstones together and to an audience composed of faculty, alumni and current students of both programs.
- MAPS/MACS Invited Speaker Series: This could feature talks on topics of mutual interest could be co-organized by the two programs.

## CONCLUSIONS

The committee is aware that this report has provided findings and made recommendations that extend beyond the specific questions raised in the unit-defined questions. We do think this more comprehensive approach necessary to provide additional information and options, which we believe both programs will find useful. In addition, there are clear connections, between the recommendation of this report and the concerns of MACS and MAPS programs. In the interest of clarifying those connections, we organize this concluding section around the specific questions about each program individually and the questions common to both.

The unit-defined questions for MACS addressed question of program coherence, resources, and impact.<sup>1</sup> The committee has found that the MACS program has considerable strength and has been able to articulate and implement an ambitious, innovative and praxis-centered approach to cultural studies. Intellectually it is very coherent and in many ways one of the more successful examples of Cultural Studies that the members of this committee have encountered. Where we identify some tensions and strains regard some of the nuts-and-bolts (not to mention CAWGs) of the program. The growth of IAS has meant considerable responsibilities for all faculty members

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<sup>1</sup> *How can MACS develop coherent mechanisms, structures, and messages about its curriculum and co-curriculum among faculty and staff instructors and advisors? How can MACS leverage the networks that it has developed locally and nationally in order to mobilize further resources for faculty, students, and alumni, build the reputation of the program, attract a broad range of students to the program, and enhance its impact?*

and thus this program is embedded within not only a rhizome of intellectual opportunities, but also a thicket of labor-intensive forms of teaching, advising and administrative duties. The search for a sustainable balance can be elusive, but one of the messages we heard many times was that there is more work to do in striking that balance.

How can MACS leverage its national and international reputation in ways that can mobilize more resources? One possibility lies in external funding. Foundations like Mellon, Kellogg, Ford or perhaps the National Endowment for the Humanities that can generate some ways to bring faculty together in ways that provide opportunities to put the UWB model in conversation with other currents in the academy, and help faculty members advance their individual and collaborative research agendas. For example Mellon Sawyer Seminar or a NEH Summer Institute grant programs are both worth considering as ways to bring faculty together developing broad intellectual currents. These funds could also facilitate some opportunities for generating some graduate student employment opportunities, and also raise the visibility of the program.

MAPS faces a different set of challenges. Feeling a bit in the shadow of the MACS program, many MAPS faculty members understandably seek for a path that is distinct and separate from MACS. The unit-defined questions reveal a desire to build on expertise in an impressive number of substantive policy areas in the creation of a policy education at and beyond IAS and Bothell.<sup>2</sup> The committee has outlined various possible paths, and attempted to discuss the relative risks and pay-offs of different paths. We would, however, like to underline why these choice are both so important and difficult.

The general challenge for collaborative learning in a policy context, as noted by several MAPS faculty, is that public policy/administration programs operate in a professional field. That field has been defined through accreditation processes so that there are strong norms and defined 'rules' about how such programs should operate to produce a policy studies/administration professional.

It was clear to the committee that the senior MAPS faculty are absolutely correct about what it would take to raise the profile of MAPS within the traditional policy paradigm in terms of certain kinds of hires and a particular curricular and epistemological approach. The committee encourages the leadership of UWB to recognize the viability and validity of that model. It is a very legitimate choice about direction. That said, it would be hard to accomplish this within the IAS context; scaffolds and rhizomes are not easily synthesized. This implies an important and difficult set of options for MAPS: Build a new kind of policy program that would certainly be attractive and interesting, but possibly not to current senior faculty nor to the accrediting institutions of public policy; or alternatively forge links with other professional programs at

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<sup>2</sup> *How can we best leverage these concentrations [in social policy, education, labor and health, environmental policy, and human rights/social justice] in the context of a general policy education? What strategies can we use to provide quality instruction and sufficient depth in areas of student interest? How can we strengthen MAPS curricular offerings by building synergies with undergraduate and graduate degrees in IAS and collaborating with other UW Bothell and UW graduate programs in which a latent or active policy area exists (in the Schools of Nursing and Health Studies; Educational Studies; Business; and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, and at UW Seattle)?*

Bothell, a potentially more palatable and viable approach. We have outlined a potential ‘third way’ of having a critical policy studies track within the MAPS program that could attempt to split the difference between these two options.

Finally, the questions shared by MACS and MAPS raise the important questions of community-based learning (CBLR), the cohort model, and recruitment of graduate students.<sup>3</sup>

As this report has noted, CBLR is key to both programs, though it seems to have been institutionalized more cohesively in Policy Studies than in Cultural Studies. This seems like an area in which the University could invest; some possible investments range from providing additional resources (and possible GSA positions) to providing a strategy for placing both MACS and MAPS students with community organizations, perhaps in ways that can make possible graduate student collaborations. It was pointed out to us that MACS and MAPS students often work in very similar kinds of organizations after graduation. We wonder why this can’t also be the case before graduation.

Turning to the question of the cohort system, we should again note some difference. For MACS there are some mixed opinions. On the one hand, there is some concern on the part of both faculty and administration about how well the model is working. On the other the students (alumni, second and first year) are unanimously and unreservedly enthusiastic about the cohort model and feel it is working well and provides all manner of benefits. The committee was more persuaded by the students’ perceptions and are of the opinion that the cohort model is working well and is quite beneficial. The model promotes collaboration, cohesion and a sense of community among students (notwithstanding the quite diverse student body).

The MAPS students with whom we spoke were unanimously supportive of the cohort-based model. There is a more mixed opinion in the end-of-program evaluations we reviewed, but the overall the view remains positive. The committee does not have the expertise or knowledge about specific cohort-support strategies, but we do feel that explicit attention to cohort

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<sup>3</sup> *How can we build upon the mission of the MACS, MAPS, and IAS, and its specific cross-sectorial emphasis in ways that develop a sustainable infrastructure for community-based partnerships oriented toward research and learning? What curricular, co-curricular, and/or institutional structures or models might best support this work? How might other academic and non-academic units be engaged in developing community-engaged labs or clinics, for instance?*

*What strategies might be developed to leverage the cohort model of graduate education as a means of developing and teaching cross-disciplinary and cross-sectorial collaboration practice? What pedagogical best practices might enable us to deal proactively with the tensions produced by cohort-based learning?*

*What recruitment and funding strategies can best enrich these programs? Can the emphasis on community-engaged learning and scholarship be leveraged in this context? Are there models for supporting graduate students that do not rely solely on financial aid or teaching and research assistantships that come with tuition waivers?*

management is important for both programs. And as noted above, the cohort model and the relatively small size of both programs provide an infrastructure for increasing collaboration across programs.

The cohort model in both MAPS and MACS offers a mechanism for bringing these programs together, perhaps relatively early in their programs. Without conscious attention to this cross-fertilization, cohorts could reify into ‘camps’ that will make collaboration more challenging.

Finally, there is the common concern with recruitment. IAS has invested in providing greater, centralized support for recruitment. That is very promising. The committee noted a desire on the part of both programs to attract diverse pools of high-quality applicants. MACS seems to have done particularly well in recruiting an ethnoracially diverse set of students but it is clear that both MAPS and MACS both have more work to do in this area. MACS and MAPS alumni are also an underutilized resource. All the graduates with whom we spoke expressed willingness, indeed eagerness, to be involved in both programs and disappointment that they have never been asked. Clearly, the lack of financial support for graduate education (TAs and RAs) will be a challenge to effective recruitment. However, if program can demonstrate and highlight the success both have had in placing students in state agencies, community organization, and top-notch PhD programs, the investment in a UWB education can make considerable sense to many potential applicants. Additionally, if changes can be made in UW-Seattle application to allow UWS applicants to also be considered by UWB programs, there is a greater chance that UW, as a whole, can do a better job of capturing the considerable talent that exceed the capacity of individual departmental program at various campuses. The committee comes away from this experience with a great admiration for both programs and will certainly promote both programs through our own professional and personal networks.