



December 12, 2024

To: UBC Vancouver Senate
Christopher Eaton, Associate Registrar for Academic Governance / Director,
Senate & Curriculum

From: Gage Averill, Provost & Vice-President Academic, UBC Vancouver

Re: Annual Report on External Reviews

Request:

That Senate receive for information a report summarizing external reviews of academic units at UBC Vancouver in 2023-24.

Rationale / Background:

Each year, the Office of the Provost and Vice-President Academic compiles a report to Senate listing the external reviews of academic units that occurred in the previous academic year. In 2023-24, there were 12 departmental external reviews undertaken.

With the help of the Faculties, a summary of each external review is provided in this report, highlighting key findings, recommendations, and units' preliminary responses to the reviews.

Also included is a list of the academic units that were externally reviewed 2-3 years previously and have provided mid-term progress reports to the Provost Office on the status of implementing the recommendations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gage Averill', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Gage Averill
Provost and Vice-President Academic, UBC Vancouver

External Reviews of Academic Units 2023-24 Annual Report from the Provost Office to Senate (UBC Vancouver)

December 12, 2024

The following units undertook External Review in the 2023-24 academic year, and those reviews are summarized in this report. We are grateful to the Faculties and their units for providing these summaries.

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Mid-Term Progress Reports on External Reviews 2020-21:

The following academic and administrative units undertook External Reviews in 2020-21 and are now at the approximate mid-point between reviews. They have submitted progress reports to the Office of the Provost & VP Academic on the status of implementing the recommendations.

- Department of Anthropology - Faculty of Arts
- Department of Geography - Faculty of Arts
- Department of History - Faculty of Arts
- Department of Linguistics - Faculty of Arts
- Department of Sociology - Faculty of Arts
- MSc in Craniofacial Science / Dipl. In Pediatric Dentistry - Faculty of Dentistry
- Department of Wood Science - Faculty of Forestry
- Centre for Health Education Scholarship - Faculty of Medicine
- Centre for Hip Health & Mobility - Faculty of Medicine
- Department of Pediatrics - Faculty of Medicine
- Department of Computer Science - Faculty of Science
- Department of Earth, Ocean & Atmospheric Sciences - Faculty of Science
- Institute for the Oceans and Fisheries - Faculty of Science
- Department of Statistics - Faculty of Science

Department of Civil Engineering
Faculty of Applied Science
Summary of External Review, October 2023

Key Findings of the Review Committee:

- *The department is a top-tier civil engineering program in Canada and the world.*
- *The undergraduate program recently obtained six years' accreditation from CEAB.*
- *The morale of the department is generally good.*
- *The department head is universally respected with broad support.*
- *All faculty and staff appear to be fully committed to the collective enterprise of moving the department forward on key strategic priorities.*

Key Recommendations of the Review Committee:

- *Implement key actions articulated in the strategic plan.*
- *Support a department-wide student-led graduate council.*
- *Support large interdisciplinary grants, with strong integration of junior faculty.*
- *Build on relationships with other units in Applied Science.*
- *Develop and execute a departmental communications strategy.*

Department's Response:

- Work has already begun with discussions held at this year's retreat and a follow up at a departmental meeting. An implementation plan should be completed during the 2024/2025 academic year and be ready for implementation the following year.
- Student experience and student engagement have been identified as something the Civil Engineering department should commit resources to support, especially as community needs to be rebuilt after the years of COVID shutdown. A student-led initiative seems an ideal way to engage students in building community, and should be supported by the department with resources.
- Research collaboration within the department and including junior faculty is an ongoing priority within the department. This is included in the strategic plan as part of the Research Excellence pillar and the process for implementation is being discussed.
- The department is committed to further developing links with other units in Applied Science (APSC), in particular through the APSC President's Academic Excellence Initiative (PAEI) that is a Faculty wide hiring plan to focus their research and teaching on thriving communities across the disciplines of architecture, planning and engineering.
- Civil Engineering currently employs a fulltime communications professional who works closely with our Manager of Research and Strategic Initiatives. Developing a departmental communications strategy is being built into our implementation plan.

**Institute for Gender, Race, Sexuality and Social Justice
Faculty of Arts**

Summary of External Review, March 2024

Key Findings of the Review Committee:

- *Growth in the number of Institute faculty has included some of the most well-regarded scholars in the fields of critical race and gender and sexuality studies. The strong demand for the faculty members' expertise in JEDI initiatives contributes to the Institute's growing positive reputation, but also places pressure on faculty labor in terms of the scope and consistency of their teaching and service for the Institute.*
- *There has been an expansion of course offerings in several areas and GRSJ is a vibrant hub for many affiliates and postdoctoral scholars across the UBC campus who are invested in social justice.*
- *The Department has articulated an urgent need in the area of Indigenous studies, and the committee had questions about the potential impact of the current teaching and service workload on such a hire.*

Key Recommendations of the Review Committee:

- *A substantive overhaul of the curriculum at both the undergraduate and graduate levels is recommended, which takes into account the areas of pedagogical strength of the current faculty, and especially the tenured senior faculty, in both the research and educational leadership streams.*
- *Appointing a new Director who can take over the leadership when the term of the current Director ends in 2025.*
- *The Department should establish clear and equitable parameters around faculty workload and leaves, at both the junior and senior levels, including a more transparent and equitable process of teaching and service assignments. Requests for research leave and secondments to upper administrative positions and other programs should be staggered so that the core teaching mission is not detrimentally affected and teaching and service is not borne disproportionately by untenured and recently tenured faculty members.*
- *The committee recommended a review, and possible reconsideration of admissions to, the minor in Critical Studies in Sexuality as well as the master's and doctoral programs, in order to allow Department faculty to reconceptualize and renew the courses of study and determine which faculty will take responsibility for teaching the core courses and mentoring the graduate students.*

Department's Response:

- The Institute agrees with and supports the Review Report's recommendation to address (1) curricular clarity and coherence, and (2) reliable and equitable staffing of instructors for the core courses. The Institute is currently undertaking a substantive redesign of Undergraduate Curriculum.
- The Institute has been working on smooth leadership transition, as there is no shortage of colleagues willing to serve in major service roles, including Head of Department.
- The Institute agrees with the Review Report's recommendation regarding the need for equitable workload, course release policy and practices for taking personal or study leaves. We will follow UBC ARTS policy of discussing leave applications through our Leave/Merit/PSA Committee and public

posting of all Committee Assignments. The Department will continue the practice of signing up and discussing freely future Committee Service role assignments during the annual Faculty Retreat.

- The Institute accepts that the CSIS Minor, and masters' and PhD programs need curricular review and revision, but strongly feels that they are vital programs of study that serve students well. The Institute has reinvigorated its Graduate Program Committee, is engaged in review of the MA and PhD curriculum, and will circulate and present their proposals to the faculty and the Graduate Student Association for feedback next year.
- The Institute would like to hire two new Indigenous faculty members to meet student demand for teaching in Indigenous studies.

Faculty's Response to Requests:

- The Faculty of Arts welcomes the Institute's plans to conduct a careful examination of issues of equitable workload and teaching, particularly with regard to service provided by junior faculty members.
- The Faculty also welcomes the Institute's plans to review the undergraduate and graduate curricula and assignment of teaching. It will be important to ensure that the mission of the master's program is clearly articulated and supported by the curriculum.
- Requests for faculty hires will be reviewed following the processes established in the Faculty of Arts.

School of Information

Faculty of Arts

Summary of External Review, March 2023

Key Findings of the Review Committee:

- *Master of Library and Information Studies (MLIS): Despite progress in diversifying coursework and focusing on six areas, students expressed concerns about irregular course offerings, long waitlists, and course cancellations, which hinder their ability to consistently pursue their chosen pathways.*
- *The success and growth of the Informatics program has led to pressures on faculty capacity and lab resources.*
- *The review team noted declining enrollment in the MAS program and the insufficient integration of EDI and Indigenous perspectives in the curriculum which has discouraged some Indigenous and equity-deserving students from completing the program.*
- *iSchool could leverage the uniqueness and importance of First National Curriculum Concentration (FNCC) centres on Indigenous knowledge in collaboration with local Indigenous communities.*

Key Recommendations of the Review Committee:

- *The School should enhance course offering transparency, expand registration opportunities, better align faculty advisors with student interests, increase diversity, and continue supporting the University's Indigenous Strategic Plan.*
- *Additional faculty and lab resources will be required to meet increasing enrollment and course demand.*
- *Evaluate the sustainability and alignment of the MAS degree program with its priorities, potentially adjust core courses like ARS 500, introduce new courses on Indigenous memory-keeping systems, and ensure sufficient technological infrastructure to support student learning in archival technology and digital preservation.*
- *Implement consistent ISP commitments in the learning outcomes, admissions, recruitment, professional development, and tenure processes across all School programs.*

Department's Response:

- To address recommendations regarding teaching, the School will capitalize on current interest in Informatics and data-intensive topics among undergraduate students; and create marketing and promotion strategies to help grow the iSchool Minor in Informatics.
- Since the External Review in March 2023, two faculty hires of Indigenous and BIPOC scholars were approved and are currently underway.
- To build a strong, forward-looking vision and strategic plan the School will reassess its mission, goals, and objectives; align future hires with areas of strategic importance to the iSchool; and create an Advisory Board that helps direct the School's vision and strategic direction.
- The School asks that a comprehensive plan be made together with Arts ISIT to explore creating proper lab spaces in the iSchool.
- The School will recommit to the ISP by aligning graduate programs with ISP recommendations regarding increasing Indigenous representation of staff and faculty; establishing and growing

partnerships with Indigenous communities; ensuring that core courses across programs incorporate learning outcomes, readings, and topics pertaining to Indigenous ways of knowing; exploring and implementing equitable admissions policies to broaden and strengthen the recruitment of Indigenous students; and ensuring that Indigenous ways of knowing, research, and dissemination are recognized and incorporated into tenure and promotion assessments.

School of Journalism, Writing and Media
Faculty of Arts
Summary of External Review, March 2024

Key Findings of the Review Committee:

- *JWaM's graduate program in Journalism is robust and challenging, marked by a strong faculty team; its Global Reporting Centre has become a hallmark of UBC's commitment to leading in global journalism education and practice.*
- *Recent faculty hires in the Writing Studies research stream marks a positive step towards diversifying the faculty and building a disciplinary foundation in Writing Studies. There is a need to support these members to sustain a robust research agenda and provide adequate resources and support structures to nurture their research careers.*
- *The amalgamation of the Journalism and Writing Studies departments has sought to foster interdisciplinary collaboration but has also highlighted cultural and operational differences between the two units. Strategic efforts are needed to ensure successful integration in ways that promote mutual enrichment and respect the unique contributions of each discipline.*
- *JWaM stands out for its educational quality, innovative approaches and commitment to inclusivity. Strengthening its support structures for new faculty, addressing equity and labour concerns robustly and refining its administrative framework are essential steps toward enhancing the program's internal cohesion and effectiveness.*

Key Recommendations of the Review Committee:

- *Create a five-year strategic plan for JWaM, including strategic plans for each division that are then used to collectively to identify overlaps and incorporate distinctions. Use the shared mission and stated commitment to justice, inclusion, equity, and understanding of power to articulate concrete actions and shared governance across both divisions.*
- *Reimagine the Department's leadership model by preparing for leadership succession, considering the pros and cons of a co-director model and consider the need for an associate director who would oversee cross-unit coordination and communication.*
- *Address faculty concerns about the equitable distribution of resources, including access to equipment and technology.*
- *Build inclusivity into governance and decision-making that reflects the diversity and interests of all department members.*

Department's Response:

- The School is committed to working with the Dean's office, Faculty Association and the Provost office to alleviate some of the structural inequities, particularly in WRDS. A reduction in the teaching load of lecturers and reduced class sizes is necessary to bring the WRDS program in alignment with writing programs at peer institutions.

- The Department will continue to grow and develop program offerings across both units and at the undergraduate and graduate levels, including the Minor in Writing and Communication and the Minor in Journalism and Social Change, and the development of a Master's degree (with aspirations for a phased-in doctoral program) in Writing and Communication offered by WRDS.
- The Department will leverage its publication and teaching excellence toward developing a higher profile nationally and internationally. Finding ways to draw more attention to our unique attributes and promoting the work of faculty in national and international circles (academic or media) will be central in JWaM's strategic planning.

Faculty's Response:

- The Faculty is pleased with the review team's positive assessment of the quality of research and teaching in the Journalism and WRDS program, and agrees that the recent addition of research stream faculty in WRDS adds an important new component to that program.
- The Faculty will work with the unit to ensure appropriate mentoring and support for junior research stream faculty members in WRDS.
- The Faculty will continue to support efforts underway in JWAM to better integrate the two programs and to build a culture of collegiality and inclusivity.
- Proposals for changes to the teaching load in the WRDS program and the further development of graduate programs will be considered, subject to budgetary constraints in JWAM and the Faculty of Arts.

Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy
Faculty of Education
Summary of External Review, November 2023

Key Findings of the Review Committee:

- *“The department’s strength lies in its people. EDCP is a vibrant department that includes talented and passionate faculty members, sessional instructors and staff who are deeply committed to the student experience. This commitment is evident in the department’s stellar achievements in teaching, research, and service and undergraduate and graduate students invigorate the department with new ideas and a passion for learning.”*
- *“In our opinion, the barriers to moving forward on department goals lie primarily in the ongoing tensions between the department and the Teacher Education Office (TEO), the Professional Development and Community Engagement Office (PDCE), and the Dean’s Office. These tensions are not new but they need to be resolved in order for the department to be able to move forward and flourish.”*
- *“A major concern raised several times throughout the site visit is the issue of graduate student funding. In 2018, UBC implemented a minimum funding policy for Ph.D. students. ... As a result, the number of Ph.D. students admitted to EDCP has dropped from 13 admissions in 2016 to 6 admissions for the 2023-24 academic year. This reduction has happened despite the fact that the department received a large number (n=70) of applications and faculty members have both the desire and the capacity to supervise doctoral students.”*
- *“When we spoke to students, most were happy with their experiences in the department. However, some felt that communications to students about such issues as funding and navigating the faculty bureaucracy could be improved. Although some had advisors who sought out opportunities for them to work together, others seemed not to be as fortunate.”*

Key Recommendations of the Review Committee:

- *“Plan a series of discussions between the department and the Teacher Education Office (TEO), the Professional Development and Community Engagement (PDCE) Office, and the Dean’s Office to explore ways to arrive at shared vision and goals.”*
- *“Plan a retreat to determine the department’s strategic plan, including vision, mission, and program coherence, for the next 5-10 years.”*
- *“Prioritize strategies for strengthening the department’s graduate student community.”*
- *“Involve sessional instructors in the community of the department.”*
- *“Include all of the area coordinators on the Undergraduate Advisory Committee to facilitate greater communication between areas.”*
- *“Revisit and re-engage with the department’s commitment to decolonization articulated in the 2019-2024 Strategic Plan.”*
- *“Work with the Dean’s Office and department leadership to make the department-level budget process more transparent.”*
- *“Engage in long range planning to identify graduate cohorts that will be supported by the department so that they are more likely to be successful.”*

Department's Response:

- A [Department] retreat was held on May 10, 2024. Department members discussed both the response to the External Reviewers' report and possibilities for the content of a five-year draft strategic plan at that time. The strategic plan is in progress.
- Decolonization will be a significant element in the EDCP 2025-2030 Strategic Plan. This plan will align with the UBC Indigenous Strategic Plan and its [Action Plan](#).
- The Department will organize a series of regularly scheduled meetings involving EDCP, the Dean's Office (DNSO) and Professional Development and Community Engagement (PDCE) with the goals of [1] reaching a point where the Department would exercise autonomy over its own M.Ed. cohorts [from PDCE, and]" ... "[2] transparency from the Dean's office around the re-allocation of salary funds when department members retire".
- Graduate student sense of community will be a priority through graduate student peer-advisors, broadening the mandate of the seminar committee, developing virtual seminars regarding the doctoral program, revising webpages and online presence, and exploring strategies to increase funding for PhD students, graduate student research, and teaching assistants.
- Involving sessional instructors in the community of the Department will include creative thinking and regular communications to identify pathways for involvement and to make sessional instructors aware of these pathways.

UBC Djavad Mowafaghian Centre for Brain Health
Faculty of Medicine
Summary of External Review, January 2024

Key Findings of the Review Committee:

- *The Djavad Mowafaghian Centre for Brain Health (DMCBH) is internationally recognized for its outstanding neuroscience research as well as its multidisciplinary neuroscience training program, which is a source of pride in its members and trainees. The Centre brings together international leaders from multiple disciplines to advance research in brain health and patient care. The research programs are highly innovative, very well-funded through external grant support and show a high level of productivity.*
- *There is a tremendous opportunity for future growth in ‘state-of-the-art’ multidisciplinary research and educational programs in neuroscience, which continue to expand as they advance groundbreaking research and education in brain health. The current leaders have shown exemplary leadership, and together with DMCBH members have created a bold and exciting strategic plan to lead the centre to global leadership in neuroscience research and education. The DMCBH is well positioned for future growth and global leadership in neuroscience research and education.*
- *Despite the internationally recognized programs and the outstanding leadership provided by the directors, there was a pervasive expression of concern for the future of the DMCBH, which is facing a number of significant challenges. While the directors have created an effective organizational structure, the DMCBH faces challenges regarding long-term sustainability as well as succession planning which will require support from the faculty, the university, and the VCH to resolve. It will be critical to address the challenges in recruitment as well as the long-term sustainability of the facilities on a cost recovery basis to maintain the momentum, and to deliver a ‘state-of-the-art’ program in neuroscience. To address the key concerns, we present some recommendations.*

Key Recommendations of the Review Committee:

1. *Build and strengthen the relationship with Vancouver Coastal Health, VCHRI/hospitals and DMCBH to facilitate the exchange of resources and enable access to clinical/patient resources. This will also support translational research.*
2. *Creation of an Interdisciplinary School of Neuroscience, by working with VP Academic and Faculties to develop an action plan (based on recently established Schools at UBC) to create an internationally leading training program.*
3. *Legacy agreements should be renegotiated and re-evaluated based on the present climate.*

Response to the Recommendations:

- **Response to recommendation 1:** To strengthen the relationship between the DMCBH and VCH, the Director has been appointed to the VCH Board, and will build strong communication with the new

VCHRI Executive Director, a champion of health-related data science. A stronger relationship with VCHRI will facilitate access to large data sets based at VCH, supporting translational brain health research at the DMCBH. The Director will also build a relationship between DMCBH and Providence Health Research Institute, to increase synergy with translational researchers in cardiovascular health, which is closely aligned with brain health. Additionally, the Director will develop the relationship between DMCBH and the Centre for Advancing Health Outcomes to advance new health care delivery models and best practices in brain health. We are also beginning to build close collaborations between neuro-imaging research groups at DMCBH and BC Children's Hospital Research Institute (BCCHRI). In 2023, DMCBH leadership established a joint kickstart grant competition with BCCHRI in collaboration with the UBC Head of Pediatrics. The first round of this joint kickstart competition successfully fostered a new collaboration among a group of researchers from both BCCHRI and DMCBH, spanning the departments of pediatrics, ophthalmology, psychology and psychiatry. Further work will be spearheaded by new DMCBH Biobank directors to increase visibility and collaboration between hospital researchers and the DMCBH Biobank, thereby expanding the research repository.

- Response to recommendation 2: Together with the Head and Interim Head of the new UBC Neuroscience undergraduate program, DMCBH leadership has developed a draft proposal for a School of Neuroscience and has begun discussions with key partners. The formation of the School will address two significant needs: 1) to recruit junior faculty with research programs that advance DMCBH strategic priorities and whose teaching is dedicated to the undergraduate and graduate neuroscience training programs and 2) formalize structure to enable delivery of both undergraduate and graduate Neuroscience curricula.
- Response to recommendation 3: The External Reviewers noted the irregularity of a Centre having to cover costs on outdated and unsustainable legacy agreements. The DMCBH leadership proposes to work with the Dean's Office to find another source of funding to support Building Occupancy Costs for the DMCBH in order to pursue our research mandate, create new opportunities for growth and innovation, and fund pilot collaborations that will leverage additional funds for research.

Department of Family Practice
Faculty of Medicine
Summary of External Review, April 2024

Key Findings of the Review Committee:

- *Leadership and Strategic Direction: The review acknowledges the challenges faced by the Department due to leadership instability in the past. The Head of the Department (HOD) has made significant contributions, including stabilizing the Department's finances and improving administrative operations. However, there is a need for a formal strategic plan to guide the Department's direction and structure in teaching, research, and clinical work for the next 5 years with appropriate resources.*
- *Resources and Support: The review identified that additional resources would be required for the DFP to deliver its current mandate within the context of the expanding undergraduate and postgraduate programs (including Midwifery), salary support for hiring new academic faculty, and to deliver on the objectives of a new strategic plan.*
- *Engagement and Cohesiveness: The review highlights the need for improved engagement with clinical faculty, particularly those in distributed locations. The Department should focus on enhancing communication, providing mentorship opportunities, and recognizing the contributions of clinical faculty to improve engagement and cohesiveness within the unit.*
- *Research and Innovation: The DFP has been successful in attracting research funding and awards, with faculty members receiving grants from local, national, and international funding agencies. The review suggests exploring new research themes, such as practice-based research, emerging technologies, health systems, and service needs, and fostering interdisciplinary collaboration to enhance the Department's research impact and excellence, and to strengthen the integration and collaboration between researchers within the Department.*
- *Indigenous Engagement: The DFP has made significant efforts to embed respect, diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of research and education related to Indigenous health. The Department has implemented an Indigenous health curriculum, Indigenous Cultural Safety training, and engaged Indigenous Elders as part of the faculty. However, the Department should continue to work with Indigenous peoples, communities, and organizations to strengthen partnerships, contribute to improving health outcomes for Indigenous populations, address Indigenous health inequities, and advance reconciliation.*
- *Health Care Delivery: There are challenges related to faculty shortages and access to family doctors due to the current primary care crisis. The Department should explore innovative models of care, embrace telemedicine and digital health technologies, and collaborate with other healthcare organizations to drive health system innovation.*

Key Recommendations of the Review Committee:

- *Recommendation 1: Initiate a formal strategic planning exercise with staff, faculty, learners, Midwifery, and partners to develop a shared mission, vision, values, and strategic objectives to guide the Department over the next 5 years.*
- *Recommendation 2: Continue to work to enhance communication and engagement with staff, faculty, and key partners. Particular emphasis should be given to optimizing communication with distributed clinical faculty.*
- *Recommendation 3: Examine the distribution of resources within the administrative staff of DFP programs to assess balance and adequacy with respect to workload. Advocating and exploring*

additional support for under-resourced administration in recognition of the growing undergraduate and postgraduate programs in the DFP.

- *Recommendation 4: Continue to build on the work and mandate of the JEDI committee to align with FOM and UBC strategic objectives related to EDI.*

Response to the Recommendations:

- Response to recommendation 1: It remains an overarching recommendation to undertake strategic planning and the Department intends to do so, and we have started the process already which will lead to a full Strategic Planning process in the fall. The HOD implemented a Strategic Planning “Check-in” process in the fall of 2022 whereby 4 astute Emeriti from Family Medicine and Midwifery set about one-on-one consultations with DFP Leadership to explore their wellness and their priorities for the DFP as we started to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic. In all, 20 consultations were done and the responses were assessed and shared to create common emerging themes. These themes were then used to create a faculty survey sent in early 2023 to all clinical and academic faculty to probe and identify any new themes that might emerge. The findings were shared with the DFP Executive Committee for consideration and response in spring 2023. Overall, there was support for these themes including “finding solutions to support centralizing funding for more administrative and faculty needs”, creating a “Research Office”, creating a “Clinical Faculty Liaison”, and building a common scholarly initiative such as “Centre of Excellence” for Team-Based Care. New Strategic Planning should revisit these earlier themes in the process of a renewed and refreshed Department strategy.
- Response to recommendation 2: We agree with this recommendation and have undertaken some steps to address communication and engagement among faculty, staff, learners, and partners. While challenges attracting new learners to Family Medicine at UBC have not been as acute as in other parts of the country, nevertheless we can do better. One approach has been the launch of our MedZero program which introduces incoming medical students to family medicine in a face-to-face format with many of our faculty leaders. Introduced 2 years ago, we are tracking the impact of this program on those seeking family medicine as a career but will also be looking at new ways to continue the engagement in years 1, 2, 3, and 4 (i.e., Med1, Med 2, Med3, Med4). We have introduced new strategies among our social media channels, newsletter, awards/recognition, and pilot projects such as team-based learning to improve and enhance communications and engagement. Town Halls were initiated early in the term of the HOD, disrupted by COVID-19, and will be initiated again including visits to distributed teaching sites.
- Response to recommendation 3: A comprehensive plan to examine the distribution of resources within the Department's administrative staff will be underway and the Department is committed to ensuring an adequate and balanced workload for our department administrative staff, including advocating for additional funding and reviewing resource distribution within programs in the Department. HOD and the Director of Administration have been and will continue to engage in dialogues with the Faculty of Medicine and UBC to actively explore opportunities in addressing resources and support pertaining to the Department's current and growing needs.
- Response to recommendation 4: The creation of the JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion) committee in 2022 has positively impacted many aspects of the Department including hiring of staff and faculty, research, training, and our social contract with the communities we serve. We are committed to further growth at the community level, working alongside First Nations communities and Elders with whom we have the opportunity for connection through our distributed program.

UBC Centre for Health Services and Policy Research
Faculty of Medicine
Summary of External Review, December 2023

Key Findings of the Review Committee:

CHSPR retains a strong recognizable brand as a research unit and it is clear that the Centre not only has a strong academic reputation with significant academic output but is successful at gaining research grants and has extensive system links at provincial and federal levels. The faculty's primary departmental affiliations include three schools: the School of Population and Public Health (in the Faculty of Medicine), the School of Nursing (in the Faculty of Applied Sciences), and the Faculty of Land and Food Systems.

Key Recommendations of the Review Committee:

Underpinning the key recommendations is that given the outstanding reputation and significant potential, the Centre should be revitalized and be able to continue to advance its core mission relating to its strengths in creating a rich and vibrant environment for career development and research training.

Immediate actions (to be completed by end of 2024):

1. *The Centre should build higher visibility as a hub for specialized graduate training. This could include:*
 - a. *CHSPR to invest in marketing its strengths and faculty (e.g. through its own and SPPH website)*
 - b. *More could be made of the roles/work of the non-faculty post staff – researchers etc. to present the Centre as more than just the individual faculty members. Having fuller profiles of all staff on the website.*
 - c. *Designating a pathway in the SPPH MSc in health services research and policy analysis that captures the core training areas covered by CHSPR Faculty and provide opportunities for Indigenous students.*
 - d. *Holding more regular and defined activities for faculty and students in the Centre and in other health services and policy research groups to refresh the interdisciplinary environment.*
2. *We suggest key areas of activity for CHSPR should include:*
 - a. *Allocate resources for marketing and communications to develop the web presence, support engagement activities etc.*
 - b. *Developing opportunities for engaging external policy makers and local communities through seminars or 'policy rounds' where faculty within the centre and faculty from SPPH, FoM and the wider University can discuss policy and health system issues.*
 - c. *Invest in additional student support such as a student leadership group or society that can organize their own activities supported by centre faculty and staff.*

Medium term (to be completed by end of 2026):

3. *SPPH/FoM should lead an initiative to strengthen UBC's reputation in health services and policy research by improving coherence and visibility of its existing separate cognate Centres (and unaffiliated faculty). The aim should be to clarify the distinctive but complementary areas of strength in relation to the rich array of health services and policy research entities across UBC/Vancouver and build on synergies across all relevant groups (e.g., CHSPR, C2E2, CORE, CAHO). The CHSPR Director should play a key role in the development of this initiative.*
4. *The Centre should build more robust connections with policy makers (beyond the annual conference) for the following purposes:*
 - *to provide skill building/career development opportunities for trainees (e.g., exposure to how policy makers think; learning how to engage with them around policy problems)*

- *to provide recruitment opportunities for policy folks (exposure to future talent pool)*
5. *Designating a pathway in the SPPH MSc or PhD in health services research and policy analysis/evaluation methods that captures the core training areas covered by CHSPR Faculty fully supported by SPPH and the FoM.*

Response to the Recommendations:

1. a. To increase CHSPR's visibility, we will engage in a number of activities to market the strengths of its health services and policy research, its complement of faculty, trainees and research staff. This will include
 - Refreshing our website and expanding social media activities by creating a clear staff role.
 - Extending marketing of CHSPR's faculty, trainees, and research staff expertise and experience.
 - Seeking new opportunities to highlight the activities of CHSPR's faculty, trainees, and research staff.
- b. CHSPR should enhance the visibility of the outstanding accomplishments and contributions of its trainees and research staff.
- c. This recommendation has a number of dimensions that we address below:
 - CHSPR agrees that to be recognized as a hub for specialized training of health services and policy research, it should develop a concentration in health services and policy research in SPPH.
 - CHSPR will also seek to ensure that courses and teaching of health services and policy are aligned with other faculties at UBC.
 - CHSPR will align its activities with UBC's recently launched Indigenous Strategic Plan to better advertise CHSPR's activities with Indigenous communities and pursue new opportunities to attract Indigenous scholars.
- d. CHSPR will undertake a number of activities to promote visibility:
 - Better advertise its current seminar series among other academic units across the university.
 - Provide support for build student community, mentorship and support.
 - Organize quarterly research half days to bring people together to hear about working progress, opportunities for collaboration, and important directions in health services and policy research.
2. a. CHSPR acknowledges that it does not currently have formally dedicated resources to support marketing and communication for its students, trainees and faculty. CHSPR agrees with this recommendation, and note this aligns with recommendations around marketing and website.
- b. CHSPR will use its resources and its research days described above to emphasize external collaborations and focus on policy makers' participation.
- c. CHSPR supports student, trainee and staff development and we will develop a transparent approach to continue to do so.
3. The CHSPR faculty will look for opportunities to engage with SPPH, the FoM and UBC to explore options to strengthen reputation, visibility and productivity of UBC's health services and policy research community.
4. Each CHSPR faculty regularly interacts and collaborates with multiple B.C. government Ministries, Health Authorities in B.C., Health Canada, the Public Health Agency of Canada, the Canadian Institute of Health Information, CADTH, and others. We agree that these connections could be more visible to students, trainees, and staff.
5. CHSPR will seek a pathway for establishing concentrations within SPPH's Division educational programs.

Department of Medicine
Faculty of Medicine
Summary of External Review, January 2024

Key Findings of the Review Committee:

- *Financial Challenges: A comprehensive financial strategic plan is necessary to address key issues such as faculty remuneration, community inclusion, and academic priorities. This review should discuss budget models, including using reserves and competitive processes for creating new faculty positions when appropriate and feasible. It is recommended that the Department adopt a less conservative perspective on its financial position.*
- *Faculty Composition: The Department is supported by full-time faculty and clinical faculty. Clinical faculty members play a crucial role in departmental productivity.*
- *Geographical Distribution: The widespread distribution of faculty and sites creates challenges in fostering a unified department culture and effective communication. The Department Head was widely recognized for investing considerable time and energy into engaging faculty in distributed sites, yet there remains an “us and them” philosophy in some distributed sites. Faculty at distributed sites valued their engagement with the University, noting that resident presence fostered a greater focus on evidence-based practice and more engagement from clinicians.*
- *Government Relations & Academic-Clinical Balance: There is a disconnect between the Department’s academic priorities and government priorities focused on clinical care, leading to challenges in rationalizing academic and clinical responsibilities, particularly with evolving funding models and faculty roles.*

Key Recommendations of the Review Committee:

- *Financial and Structural Reforms: Address financial challenges by developing a comprehensive departmental practice plan and diversifying funding sources. Consider how the base salary transferred from the University is spent and adopt a less conservative budgeting strategy to allow for more real-time expenditure. Continue discussions concerning an alternate funding arrangement, but do not make this the focus of the Department’s fiscal sustainability. Review and revise policies and procedures regarding faculty recruitment, with enhanced clarity regarding full-time and clinical needs and goals. Enhance the role of the Department Head in these decisions. Centralization of administrative support that is currently disseminated to the Divisions is recommended to allow efficiency gains and because it would reinforce a unified strategic direction and enhance coherence in achieving the Department’s overarching goals.*
- *Faculty Development and Support: To foster growth and retention and enhance faculty development programs, especially for non-tenured and distributed site faculty, consider surveying and developing strategies to enhance the relationship between tenured and non-tenured faculty and to equalize the resources that tenured and non-tenured faculty can access, particularly for the academic mission.*
- *Determine the location of the Experimental Medicine Program: Develop and implement a cohesive, comprehensive strategic plan to determine where this program should be housed. If it remains within the Department of Medicine, develop the administrative infrastructure required to make it sustainable.*

- *Responding to Geographical Challenges: Implement initiatives to overcome the challenges posed by the geographical distribution of faculty and sites, such as increased site visits and fostering a more inclusive community. Continue the excellent work that has been done on building electronic communication and teaching tools that allow faculty and distributed sites to have a sense of belonging to the central campus.*

Department's Response:

- **Financial and Structural Reforms:** The Department of Medicine agrees with the recommendation to adopt a less conservative budgeting strategy and there may be opportunities for the Department to diversify other non-recurring operating funds that are within the Department's control. The Department of Medicine does not believe it is feasible in the current environment to develop a department wide comprehensive practice plan because the composition and distribution of faculty varies greatly from division to division. The Department of Medicine is in consultation with its divisions and sites to explore the creation of an academic enhancement funding competition to support clinical faculty who wish to engage in academic initiatives to further the Department's academic mission. The Department hopes this funding competition, if viable, will be a starting point to equalize the available resources which clinical faculty can access.
- **Faculty Development and Support:** The Department of Medicine recognizes the differences in support, resources, and access. The Department will lean into the Distributed Site Representatives on its Executive Committee to better understand the needs and concerns of its distributed sites and how the Department can better support the relationship between full-time faculty and clinical faculty.
- **Determine the location of the Experimental Medicine Program:** The Department of Medicine intends to partner with Faculty of Medicine's Graduate and Postdoctoral Education Office to determine whether the Experimental Medicine Graduate Program should continue to reside within the Department of Medicine or if it should reside within the Faculty of Medicine given the composition of students and faculty members within the program who are outside of the Department of Medicine is greater than 50%. If it is decided that the program will remain in the Department of Medicine, a sustainable plan must be developed.
- **Responding to Geographical Challenges:** The Department of Medicine plans on continuing yearly visits to the distributed sites. In addition to the Department Head and Associate Head of Education visiting, different members of the Department of Medicine's Executive Committee and managers in the Administration Office will be invited to attend the site visits too. With more of the Department's leadership participating in site visits, the Department hopes to foster a stronger connection to UBC with clinical faculty members located in the distributed sites. If distributed sites are interested, the Department would also offer faculty development as part of each visit. As of 2023, the Department of Medicine created two new departmental awards to specifically recognize clinical faculty who are contributing to the academic mission. The recipients are announced at the Department of Medicine's annual Awards event. The Department will also be announcing long service recognition awardees, which include clinical faculty at distributed sites, at its annual Awards event starting in 2024.

UBC Centre for Molecular Medicine and Therapeutics
Faculty of Medicine
Summary of External Review, January 2024

Key Findings of the Review Committee:

- *The Centre for Molecular Medicine and Therapeutics (CMMT) was founded in 1993 and approved as a UBC Centre by the Senate, and now has a 30+ year history of scientific excellence. The CMMT functions as a semi-autonomous unit within the BC Children’s Hospital Research Institute (BCCHR) and UBC, similar in many respects to the other ~20 UBC Centres at other teaching hospital sites. The faculty of the CMMT have appointments in UBC departments and while teaching, promotion, and scholarly activities are conducted within the department structure, the Centre is partly housed in defined space and has used its own infrastructure and administrative support in varying degrees over the last three decades.*
- *The CMMT remains an internationally recognized research centre at UBC and increases the reputation and visibility of the Faculty of Medicine and the University. The quality of the faculty and research productivity is excellent. This needs to be both recognized and appreciated. The current Director of the CMMT has provided vision and stability. The Director of the CMMT reports to Vice Dean Research, Faculty of Medicine, and co-reports the Executive Director of the BCCHR and should continue to work together to assess and co-ordinate appropriate funding to allow both stabilization and growth.*

Key Recommendations of the Review Committee:

- *Partnership with BCCHR – Recommendations 1, 10, 12: The development of the next strategic plan for CMMT should integrate and reflect some of the priorities of the strategic plan for BCCHR, ensuring closer ties of CMMT to BCCHR. An administrative support strategy, co-developed with the BCCHR, needs to address the financial short-fall and gaps in support for CMMT scientists and their research programs as well as the cores. A strategy for the improvement, maintenance, and financial sustainability of the CMMT cores in partnership with the BCCHR should be developed. The CMMT should be an integral partner to the BCCHR core facility review to sort out how to integrate the CMMT cores into an overarching core facility plan with appropriate financial support to assure optimal function. It is essential to ensure that the financial models used to support the core services and platforms on the site, both those run by CMMT and BCCHR, are fair and transparent, and include the inevitable need for equipment replacement.*
- *Large-scale Initiatives and Programs – Recommendations 2, 3: CMMT should put forward proposals for large-scale funding for operating and infrastructure, in particular CFI to update the outdated equipment in their cores. The CMMT should develop a cross-cutting program that BCCHR can leverage as part of their strategic plan and funding opportunities. The CMMT program could then be readily linked to large-scale applications for operating and infrastructure support from granting agencies and the BCCHF for fund-raising.*

- *Growth and Recruitment – Recommendations 6, 8: The CMMT should be supported to recruit 2-3 scientists over the next 5 years, ensuring a strong membership in the Centre. At least one of these recruitments should be a clinician scientist in recognition that the first generation of CMMT scientists are transitioning to a newer generation.*

Response to the Recommendations:

- Response to recommendations 1, 10, 12: CMMT is in agreement with this recommendation. CMMT completed its most recent strategic plan in 2022 and is planning a refresh of this strategic plan in 2-3 years. In its next strategic plan, and in the implementation of its current strategic plan, CMMT is keen to build more bridges and partnerships between CMMT and BCCHR, in alignment with BCCHR priorities. CMMT has met with BCCHR to initiate discussions on ways that CMMT and BCCHR can partner and better align, and they have agreed to regular meetings to enhance integration. CMMT will continue to explore partnerships with BCCHR to ensure maintained and enhanced administrative support for CMMT. CMMT will look to partner with UBC FoM and BCCHR in developing a strategy for financial sustainability of CMMT Cores, including a request for BCCHR financial support of CMMT Cores and an application for core support through CFI. CMMT has met with the BCCHR to discuss ways in which BCCHR can support CMMT Cores and by which CMMT Cores can be better integrated with BCCHR Cores.
- Response to recommendations 2, 3: CMMT is in agreement with this recommendation and will aggressively pursue available opportunities for operating and infrastructure funding. These could include, but are not limited to, (i) participation of CMMT faculty in larger scale CFI proposals (ii) UBC FoM SIFs, and (iii) BCCH Foundation (BCCHF) CHIPs (Child Health Integrative Partnership Strategy). CMMT fully supports this recommendation and has begun internal discussions to take a leadership role in a major cross-cutting initiative at BCCHR, for example in moving gene therapy, cell therapy, and/or nanomedicine therapeutics to clinical trial at BCCH.
- Response to recommendations 6, 8: CMMT is in agreement with this recommendation and will work towards obtaining support for the recruitment of 2-3 scientists to CMMT.

**Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability
Faculty of Science**

Summary of External Review, May 2024

Key Findings/Highlights of the Review Committee:

- *The review committee was impressed with the significant contributions of IRES in terms of its research, teaching, and policy engagement.*
- *IRES' interdisciplinary scholarship has earned it a positive national and international reputation.*
- *IRES has fostered a healthy and positive working environment for students, faculty, and staff.*
- *IRES is at an important juncture and considering different options for growth in order to maintain and expand its faculty complement.*

Key Recommendations of the Review Committee:

- *Advocate for increases in IRES graduate student funding.*
- *Explore possibilities for new revenue streams, such as an undergraduate major, master's course-based/professional program.*
- *Engage more actively with faculty associates across the UBC campus.*
- *Prioritize the potential hire of an Indigenous faculty member at the pre-tenure level.*
- *Develop a strategic plan to help build resilience as well as agree on collective visioning.*

Institute's Response:

- We will certainly continue to advocate for increased graduate student support, including urging UBC to increase the value of the doctoral Four-Year Fellowships to match the Federal standards. We will explore other means to increase funding for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows, including through working with UBC Development.
- Expansion of the ENVR undergraduate program, if successful, will bring increased revenue to IRES. Over the next year, we will re-activate conversations about a potential professional master's program that would generate revenue, or other such possibilities (e.g., micro-certificates, executive education, etc.).
- We have already gathered ideas to engage faculty associates, including inviting them to deliver seminars, highlighting their work through our newsletter and social media platforms, inviting them to social events, and integrating them more fully into annual research/social events.
- The Dean of Science has suggested that he will start discussions on the idea of recruiting an Indigenous scholar to IRES within the next few years.
- We already undertook some strategic visioning as part of our self-study, including updating our mission statement as well as collectively brainstorming the six major questions posed at the end of our self-study report. Also, in IRES, we already have many strategic conversations and visioning exercises as part of our twice-a-year longer strategy meetings or faculty retreats. We will collectively discuss whether a more formal and guided strategic planning process is needed; we will organize one if a substantial majority would like it. Otherwise, we will continue to prioritize strategic visioning as part of our strategy meetings and retreats.

Michael Smith Laboratories
Faculty of Science
Summary of External Review, April 2024

Key Findings/Highlights of the Review Committee:

- *MSL continues to demonstrate outstanding scientific excellence and productivity.*
- *The unique interdisciplinary nature of MSL brings great benefits to the UBC academic ecosystem.*
- *The review team lauded MSL's career development training, lab & outreach training opportunities for graduate students, openness of the leadership, and exceptional IT support.*
- *The committee was very impressed with the AMBL [Advanced Molecular Biology Laboratory] an innovative outreach program headed by Dave Ng for over two decades.*
- *The committee noted that it will be essential for the UBC administration to make sufficient resources available in order to make sure that all the new faculty hires anticipated in the coming years will have state-of-the-art laboratory space.*

Key Recommendations of the Review Committee:

- *The committee highly recommends that MSL leadership work to integrate Canada's Michael Smith Genome Sciences Centre (GSC) into the University, within the MSL.*
- *The committee endorses a plan to work with departments to recruit the very best junior scientists working in emerging areas of relevance to MSL. MSL should consider a recruitment in Chemical Biology to create better links with the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences.*
- *The committee recommends convening a working group to consider renovating and updating the Pilot Plant/BioProcessing facility to make it compatible with advanced biomanufacturing.*
- *The review committee recommends establishment of a standing Scientific Advisory Committee.*

Unit's Response:

- The MSL Director is serving on the GSC Scientific Leadership Group, helping define a renewed mandate and structure, including roles for GSC faculty. Furthermore, the Director has been invited to join the GSC Governance Committee.
- In the near term, we have identified strategically important areas for hiring. Our goal is to continue to attract the very best candidates, particularly junior faculty. To this end, we propose forming a committee tasked with building on our existing hiring plan and identifying key strategic areas. This committee will ensure an inclusive approach, allowing junior faculty to have a strong voice in the recruitment process.
- Over the past year, we have convened exploratory meetings with stakeholders to discuss renovating the BioProcessing facility. A general consensus from these initial discussions highlighted the need to support non-human health related biomanufacturing on campus while remaining closely linked with existing human health biomanufacturing investments.
- We concur with the recommendation to enhance AMBL through strategic hiring of a faculty member in the Educational Leadership stream.
- We support the recommendation to establish a Scientific Advisory Board recognizing the challenge of representing the diverse range of scientific disciplines within the MSL; this will be discussed at our next faculty retreat to ensure comprehensive representation and inclusivity.