SCHOOL OF PLANNING REPORT TO FACULTY OF ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL

PERIOD 2018 – 2019

People

Once again this past year, our School staff and faculty complement delivered outstanding performance to our many stakeholder groups. Janice Barry, a renowned scholar in key dimensions of Indigenous Planning joined us in July of 2018. The School’s faculty continues to support the Faculty of Environment and institution in many ways, including serving in administrative positions: Jeff Casello as Associate Provost Graduate Studies, Michael Drescher is the Director of the Heritage Resources Center, and Dawn Parker as director of WICI. Our congratulations to Carrie Mitchell who earned tenure and promotion to Associate Professor – a recognition of her excellence in research and teaching.

For the past year Dana Anderson was appointed Planner-in-Residence – teaching a core 4th year course as well as contributing to a number of other classes. Dana is a Partner with MHBC Planning, Urban Design and Landscape Architecture in the Burlington office. She is a fellow of the Canadian Institute of Planners, a Registered Professional Planner, member of Lambda Alpha, and a champion of the Urban Land Institute’s Women’s Leadership Initiative. Dana also teaches a core course in our graduate program which leverages her impressive experience in community planning.

The School wishes to acknowledge the teaching contributions of the following individuals from the professional ranks: Denise Baker Plan 471, Amy Cervenan Plan 362, Wayne Caston, Sean Hertel Plan/Cive 484, Marcus Létourneau Plan 414/REC 425 Nancy Smith Plan 471, Jeff Solly Plan 483 Olga Semenovych Plan 346 Dana Anderson Plan 721, Bob Lehman Plan 721, Nancy Adler Plan 721. Evan Truong and Martina Braunstein supported the delivery of the design studio component for Plan 210. The following School PhD students taught courses in support of their academic career development: Katherine Laycock Plan 704, Xing Su Plan/Geog 349.

The School is such a success year after year because of the exceptional efforts of our dedicated staff led by Sheree Solomon Academic Services Manager. Kelly Heald-Oliver accepted a secondment in the GSPA in September 2018 and has subsequently accepted a permanent position as Manager of Records. We are very pleased that Alison Frayne has stepped into the Graduate Administrator role. Taylor Ertel left the School in October 2017 and joined the Registrar Office as a Student Service Specialist; she has since completed training at the Ontario Police College and has now joined the Waterloo Regional Police. Tiffany Chen, Administrative Coordinator; Jessica Debrouwer, Undergraduate Advisor and Program Administrator and Shelley Knischewsky, Event and External Relations Coordinator round out the team. Each delivers high quality service in their respective areas of responsibility and works collectively to make sure that we never seem to miss a beat! It is a great team to work with and we are fortunate to share an accomplished year of performance with them.

Programs

Graduate Studies

Joe Qian has stepped into the role of Associate Director Graduate Studies for the School. In 2018 – 2019 the School admitted 17 PhD candidates, 31 into the MA and MES programs, 10 into the MPlan and 3 into
the GDip program. During spring and fall convocations, a combined total of 28 students graduated including 24 Masters and 4 Ph.D. students.

Notable awards garnered by our students include:

Bob Graham Memorial Scholarship  
David Johnston International Experience Awards  
Doctoral Thesis Completion Award  
Ontario Graduate Scholarship  
Ontario Trillium Scholarship  
Pragma Council Graduate Student Award – Spring 2018 – Edward Donato  
Pragma Council Graduate Student Award – Fall 2018 Nick Revington  
SSHRC J. Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarship-Doctoral  
NSERC- Canada Graduate Scholarship-  
Master’s SSHRC Canada Graduate Scholarship  
SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship  
UW Provost Graduate Scholarship  
UW Scholarship – Associate Dean of Graduate Studies – Chen Yang

Our AGP (Association of Graduate Planners) has been very busy this past year with a number of important initiatives. The AGP has worked hard to revise their constitution and they ran a very successful seminar series. The continue to be a key part of the School community alongside their undergraduate counterparts in the PSA.

Undergraduate Studies

In 2018-19, the School admitted our eighth co-op only cohort of 120 students into first year, including two internal transfer students. Our program count during the Fall 2018 term was 564 students! During spring and fall convocations, a combined total of 104 students graduated, including many with Dean’s Honours List distinction. Our undergraduate students also were recognized with many awards throughout the past year.

This past year we also continued to enjoy outside support for our course delivery from a number of professional groups. UWPAT (University of Waterloo Planning Alumni of Toronto), the Building Industry and Land Development Association BILD Ontario, and The Ontario Aggregate Resources Corporation (TOARC) – all help to deliver important courses in our core program.

Our international dimension this year featured our Annual Oxford Brookes University field course to the UK (led by Mark Seasons)

The Planning Student Association contributes significantly to the community spirit in the School. Their extensive list of events from term to term includes things like games nights and professional outreach events. This past year it was their turn to host the annual Ryerson-Waterloo student conference which they did an amazing job with and also won the coveted “golden bulldozer”. They also volunteer and support events such as “World Town Planning Day” – working alongside staff and faculty.

Michael Drescher continues in the role of Undergraduate Officer and Jessica Debrouwer remains central as the Undergraduate Advisor and Program Administrator.
Ongoing Activities

Research and Outreach
Faculty in the School continues to be successful in ongoing research activities including the securing of new funding from various sources. The scholarly output by our faculty complement last year was over 100 units of output including book chapters, peer reviewed articles, reports, conference papers and presentations. Throughout the year, our Faculty members are active organizers and participants in a wide range of events related to their scholarship. While this is an important part of academic life, it is particularly important to a professional planning school with stated aims to integrate our scholarly activity with the broader communities with whom we interact.

Special Events

A distinguishing feature of the School of Planning is our vibrant and vital connection with the practice world of professional planning. Shelley Knischewsky, through her role as Events Coordinator, is an essential contributor to the success of that connection. The major events are listed below but there are also many throughout the year; from supporting visiting reviewers in a project class to day long efforts with students like World Town Planning Day; Shelley keeps us on track and delivering quality events!

Pragma Council
Two Pragma conference meetings were held this past year and Students and Faculty from the School were involved in many aspects of both. The Spring event was reported on in our last annual report – it focused on housing affordability issues. The Fall 2018 event: Growth Planning in Ontario: Retrospective, Impacts, and Prospects, featured Cordelia Clarke-Julien Assistant Deputy Minister, Ontario Growth Secretariat as one of many impressive speakers, and a keynote address offered by the dynamic duo of Bob Lehman and Dana Anderson.

Toronto Alumni Dinner
The 28th Annual Toronto Alumni Dinner was held at the Fairmount Royal York Hotel and was attended by approximately 1000 guests. Mitchell J. Silver, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation gave an outstanding and inspirational presentation and attendance from the School and its supporters was strong.

Induction Ceremony
First-year undergraduates and graduate students again participated in the annual Induction Ceremony held in the Fall. This past year, Bruce Curtis, an executive member with Ontario Professional Planners Institute council offered an inspiring message to the over 200 guests in attendance. Jennifer Dean provided a keynote research address connecting issues with planning research and practice. Our industry partners MHBC generously provided a donation to Habitat for Humanity in the name of the incoming class.

Graduation Ceremony and Lunch
Before spring convocation, the School hosted a luncheon and ceremony where we celebrated the accomplishments of our undergraduate and graduate students. Class representatives Yuchen Tang and Audrey Jamal spoke about their time at UW and many students in the group proudly received school rings. It was a wonderful opportunity to connect with students and their supporters one last time.

Submitted by Clarence Woudsma, Director, School of Planning