



School of Public Policy



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Strategic Plan, 2023-26

Preface: Purpose of this Strategic Plan

The School of Public Policy (SPP) is entering our 9th year of training students to be public policy leaders. Our inaugural cohort of Master of Public Policy (MPP) students began in the fall of 2015 and our undergraduate Bachelor of Arts in Public Policy moved from the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (CHASS) into SPP in 2018. In January of this year, Mark Long became dean of SPP, following the very successful tenure of Founding Dean, Anil Deolalikar. This spring, we enacted a major revision to our BA degree requirements which emphasized deepening students' abilities to conduct quantitative analyses of public policies and shifting emphasis towards students taking elective courses taught by SPP faculty.

As we approach the conclusion of our first decade, it is an opportune time to take stock and to find means to improve our program and increase our impact.

Dean Long began the strategic planning process in February 2023 with a pair of planning meetings with the faculty. This was followed by a planning meeting with the staff, focus group meetings with undergraduate and graduate students, and a meeting with the SPP Advisory Board to discuss our progress in developing the strategic plan. Next, smaller meetings with senior faculty and staff leadership were held to review Dean Long's drafts of the strategic plan. We culminated the strategic planning process with a three-day faculty and staff retreat at Lake Arrowhead. At this retreat, we focused our discussion on goals for SPP's growth (voted on by faculty and staff), changes to the MPP curriculum (voted on by faculty), changes to SPP's physical infrastructure (discussed by faculty and staff), research seminar schedule (voted on by faculty), requirements for staff presence on campus (discussed by staff), and faculty bylaws and governance (discussed by faculty).

A major theme that runs through our strategic plan is **strengthening community--within SPP, as well as throughout the UCR campus, and beyond with local, state, national, and global stakeholders**. It focuses on actions that we will take over the course of the next three years with an eye towards our goals for growing the school over the next nine years. We plan to conduct a review and renewal of this strategic plan during the 2026-27 school year.

Who is the UCR School of Public Policy?

In our first strategic planning meeting in February 2023, the SPP faculty created the following sentences to reflect our purpose, vision, mission, values, and motto.

Purpose:

We exist together to advance excellent public policies.

Vision:

We will improve the lives of residents of the Inland Empire, California, the U.S., and the world.

Mission:

We promote solutions to public policy and governance challenges by conducting research, educating undergraduate and graduate students, and collaborating with community members and local, national, and international leaders.

Values:

We value public policies that promote efficiency, equity, prosperity, and justice.

Motto:

Solutions for the region, solutions for the world.

Summary of Actions SPP will Take

Knowledge Production: Identifying solutions to public policy and governance challenges.

SPP will take the following actions to improve our production of knowledge and acquisition of wisdom to identify solutions for public policy and governance challenges:

- Hire excellent public policy scholars;
- Enhance scholarly dialog and collaboration between faculty members;
- Free faculty time for research, teaching, and community engagement by reducing internal service and clarifying expectations for faculty presence at school events;
- Continue excellence in research administration, grant management, and grant-writing; and
- Improve computing infrastructure and access to IT support.

Knowledge Sharing: Promoting solutions to public policy and governance challenges ...

... through scholarly communication.

SPP will take the following actions to improve our sharing of knowledge and wisdom with public policy and other scholars:

- Hold a twice-monthly research seminar that is hosted at a fixed time, and which features speakers drawn from the SPP faculty, other UCR faculty and graduate students, and public policy scholars from California and beyond;
- Make all research produced by SPP faculty easily accessible;
- Make all data associated with SPP faculty research easily accessible to help ensure that research is replicable;
- Create a bulletin board to feature faculty members' most recent research publications; and
- Use SPP and UCR resources to publicize SPP faculty's research findings.

... through teaching.

SPP will take the following actions to improve our sharing of knowledge and wisdom with undergraduate and graduate students:

- Implement and monitor changes to undergraduate bachelor's program as approved in 2022-23. Add a charge to the Curriculum Committee to consider optionality in the

- undergraduate major (e.g., two track BS/BA degrees) and incorporating qualitative methods for implementation in 2024-25. Enhance integration of BA and MPP programs;
- Improve the MPP program by considering a series of proposed changes to the core course offerings during the fall of 2023 and shifting the course scheduling to concentrated days during daytime hours;
 - Increase integration of the Science to Policy program into SPP;
 - Provide better physical infrastructure for students to study, collaborate, convene, and connect with faculty; and
 - Reorganize student affairs staff to integrate undergraduate and graduate programs, add staff resources to promote student retention, raise alumni connection, improve connections with employers and job placement, and add a staff member who is focused on student recruitment.

... through community engagement.

SPP will take the following actions to improve our sharing of knowledge and wisdom with the community and the world:

- Regularly meet with elected officials and community leaders, identify and respond to their needs for insight and workforce development, and share the findings of SPP policy scholars;
- Improve the accessibility of SPP faculty to state and federal legislators and policymakers;
- Through SPP centers, host “Policy Solutions” gatherings for the local community;
- Enhance our connections to SPP alumni; and
- Improve our website to clarify mission, programs, and relations of SPP centers to SPP.

Grow the School.

SPP will seek to foster robust growth in our number of students, faculty, and staff. SPP will create physical spaces that augment excellent programs and operations. Specifically, SPP will:

- Reconfigure our current allocated spaces in the CHASS Interdisciplinary buildings (INTN and INTS) to create spaces for classes, seminars, faculty meetings, and better spaces for students to study and collaborate;
- Open up new office space in Olmsted Hall; and
- Seek opportunities for new space once existing spaces in Olmsted, INTN, and INTS are insufficient for SPP's needs.

Why, How, Who, When, and Where: Details and Rationales

Knowledge Production

Why:

The mission of the University of California, Riverside is as follows:

“To transform the lives of the diverse people of California, the nation, and the world through the discovery, communication, translation, application, and preservation of knowledge – thereby enriching the state’s economic, social, cultural, and environmental future.”

Discovery of knowledge is central to UCR, as it is to any excellent research university. SPP’s more specific goal is to produce knowledge and acquire wisdom in order to identify solutions to public policy and governance challenges. It is thus critical that we create the conditions that allow knowledge to be produced and discovered.

How:

SPP has a truly outstanding faculty that are excellent public policy scholars. As we continue to grow over the coming years and as faculty move or retire, we must continue to maintain that research excellence. In 2023, we will hire one new Assistant Professor. This search will be open with respect to disciplinary training and scholarly area, but with a preference for scholars working in the area of energy and environmental policy, housing policy, and immigration policy. This strategy of having a more open search may increase the pool of applicants and, hopefully, increase our chances of hiring one of the best public policy scholars on the market this year. We anticipate that this form of search will be a role model for our searches in future years.

Enhancing Computing Capacity

In order to boost our IT capacity, SPP’s Dean and UCR’s Chief Information Officer have negotiated a new IT structure that will add an onsite ITS “Bear Help” technician located at INTN and access, on a case-by-case basis, to ITS services, including help with data security, privacy, data sharing agreements, and efficiency of working with large data. This new agreement will essentially outsource SPP’s IT support to UCR’s ITS in order to enhance faculty computing work and data processing.

Maintaining Excellence in Research Administration

SPP has achieved excellence in research administration, grant management, and grant-writing. Our organization needs to maintain that excellence. To make research discoveries often requires funding for data collection and acquisition, research assistants, postdoctoral scholars, travel, etc. Having excellence in research administration staffing is crucial to identify sources of funding, aid in writing grant applications, and managing awards our faculty obtain.

Promoting Faculty Research Productivity

Faculty need time to conduct their impactful, high-profile research. As such, they have expressed concern that high service commitments to SPP can diminish their research productivity. Internal service to SPP can be somewhat reduced by making committees smaller and reducing the number of committees. SPP's Associate Dean prepared edits to our bylaws as well as "SPP's Administrative Governance and Procedures" which clarify expectations and streamline internal service. These bylaw revisions and governance document were discussed at the fall 2023 strategic planning retreat and will be voted upon later this fall.

Further, faculty have expressed concerns that expectations to attend too many school events may lessen their productivity. To clarify expectations, we have developed a guideline to identify the events at which faculty attendance is "expected", "desired", and "welcome, but not expected". This guideline will be included on the school's intranet.

Who:

Roles and Responsibilities?

For Knowledge Production, the Dean and Associate Dean are responsible for creating the conditions that allow our researchers to thrive in consultation with our faculty. Our faculty, research assistants, and postdoctoral scholars are responsible for creating the research. Our fiscal and research administration staff are responsible for helping secure and managing grant funding. Our IT staff are responsible for maintaining and supporting computing needs and data management.

Where:

Knowledge production and discovery can be enhanced by chance encounters between faculty members, impromptu shared lunches, and a general sense of accessibility and community of scholars. This community will be more developed when faculty members are present on campus.

Knowledge Sharing ... *through scholarly communication*

Why:

It is important that faculty at the School see themselves as part of a community of public policy scholars, rather than a collection of scholars with disparate topical interests and disciplinary training. What brings us together in this school, rather than elsewhere in the academic sphere, is a common interest in public policy. To that end, it is important that we regularly convene to hear about each other's research as well as the findings of prominent scholars in the field. Such research seminars can also serve the School as an aid in our faculty recruitment as well as improving the reputation of the School.

The dissemination of the new knowledge created by our faculty's research findings is useless if it is not shared. Traditionally, research findings have been shared through publications in books and scholarly journals and the process of going through referees and journals has served as an important mechanism for improving the quality and reliability of scholarly findings. In recent decades, social media has become an equally, if not more important means of communicating results. Social media can amplify the reach of findings published in books and articles. For example, Chan et al. (2023) find that "The existence of one tweet, as opposed to none, leads to 16–25% more citations" and "Doubling the overall Twitter engagement generates up to 16% more citations".¹ Perhaps because of this availability of the summarized findings on social media and the readily available pre-print working papers posted on websites, demand for free "open" access to journal articles has soared. Making the research produced by SPP faculty easily accessible is both good for the impact our research can produce but also consistent with the expectations of the scholarly community and the public.

Recently, scholars have been concerned about the credibility of social science research and these concerns have been amplified by widespread failures to replicate findings as well as findings of fraud and data manipulation. Freese et al. (2022) note "Worries about a 'credibility crisis' besieging science have ignited interest in research transparency and reproducibility as ways of restoring trust in published research" and "discuss several ... developments, including preregistration, data-sharing, formal infrastructure in the form of resources and policies, open access to research, and specificity regarding research contributions."² The School of Public Policy can provide leadership and improve the credibility of its research by making all research produced by SPP faculty and associated data easily accessible and helping to improve the likelihood that SPP faculty research is replicable.

¹ Chan, Önder, Schweitzer, and Torgler (2023). "Twitter and Citations", *Economics Letters* 231. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econlet.2023.111270>. Note: Dean Long heard about the existence of this articles on Twitter (i.e., x.com), consistent with the point of the article.

² Freese, Rauf, & Voelkel (2022). "Advances in Transparency and Reproducibility in the Social Sciences", *Social Science Research* 107. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2022.102770>.

How:

Research Seminars

Beginning in the winter quarter of 2024 (and henceforth during the 9-month academic year), the school will host twice-monthly research seminars at a fixed time each week. These seminars (and faculty meetings) will be held in INTN 4023. Schedule permitting, these seminars will be held during lunchtime and food will be provided by SPP. For non-UCR scholars, we will coordinate a series of 30-minute meetings before and/or after their seminar presentation to allow the external visitor to get to know our faculty and postdocs. We may also host the scholar for dinner, depending on travel plans. On a case-by-case basis, we may have external scholars present their research by Zoom rather than in-person. On these occasions, we will broadcast the Zoom session in INTN 4023 and set-up individual meetings by Zoom. In all cases, we will livestream and/or record video of our seminars for broader reach. Seminars will be advertised and open to the rest of campus and the broader community and relevant stakeholders.

The seminar schedule will be put on hold during the period during which we are doing faculty recruitment.

At the fall 2023 strategic planning retreat, faculty voted to adopt this research seminar schedule.

SPP Faculty Research Visibility

We will make research produced by SPP faculty easily accessible by taking the following steps:

- We will urge faculty to post their new articles and working papers on their personal faculty webpages.
- We will urge faculty to create a Google Scholar Profile for people to easily access their scholarship.
- Twice a year, SPP staff will go through each faculty member's Google Scholar Profile page, identify new articles, post links to these new articles on our SPP webpage, and alert faculty to add newly identified articles to their personal faculty webpages.
- We will urge faculty to adhere to the principles laid out in the American Economic Association's Data and Code Availability Policy.³ That is, that published journal articles and books "that contain empirical work, simulations, or experimental work" should provide "information about the data, programs, and other details of the computations sufficient to permit replication, as well as information about access to data and programs". We will further urge faculty, when possible, to post data for replication in a publicly available data repository. Scholars should follow UC policy requirements, which

³ <https://www.aeaweb.org/journals/data/data-code-policy>

expands the ability of faculty to share their research data.⁴ University Librarian Steven Mandeville-Gamble notes:

“UC Libraries through the California Digital Library have co-invested with Dryad to create a win-win, where UC researchers can upload their research data to Dryad, and Dryad gets the expertise of California Digital Library [CDL] staff to enhance the Dryad platform. <https://cdlib.org/services/uc3/dryad/>. Further, CDL has a team referred to as ‘UC3’, short for University of California Curation Center dedicated to the long-term preservation of research data. <https://uc3.cdlib.org/category/data/>”

To advertise our research to our internal community and stimulate conversation amongst scholars and students, we will post a display case along the hall in INTN which will feature one recent article from each faculty member.

To advertise our research to our external community, we will use various forms of social media to promote newly published and/or “in press” books and articles. We will further reach out to traditional media (e.g., newspapers, TV, radio) and utilize the services of UCR’s media office. We will encourage our scholars to produce written versions of their scholarship for lay audiences and engage in public forums, op-eds, *The Conversation* pieces, SPP podcasts, etc.

Who:

With input from the faculty, the Dean will invite speakers to present at the SPP Research Seminars. The Dean’s Executive Assistant (EA) will coordinate research seminar schedules and speaker travel and reimbursement.

The Dean’s Executive Assistant will organize the research display case and work with student support staff to keep it updated.

SPP’s Digital Marketing Specialist (DM Specialist) will maintain the SPP research webpages and will work with the Dean’s EA and student support staff to do twice yearly refreshes of the journal articles and books that are posted on our website. Faculty are encouraged to let the DM Specialist know about the existence of newly published and/or “in press” books and articles for faster dissemination. The DM Specialist will advertise our research findings using social media.

⁴ <https://policy.ucop.edu/doc/2500700/ResearchData>

Knowledge Sharing ... *through teaching*

Why:

Master of Public Policy Curriculum and Structure

During conversations between the faculty and the Dean, the second strategic meeting with faculty, and with the Dean's focus groups with students, concerns have been raised about the MPP curriculum. One concern is that the program is meant to be "full-time" and at the same time compatible for students who work full-time during the daytime hours. Working full-time during the day and being a full-time student during the evenings is daunting.

In light of this discussion of student work-life demands, some faculty have also expressed concern that nighttime classes are challenging and negatively affect their own work-life balance. Moreover, faculty commuting to campus to teach nighttime courses may mean less hours of overlap with the schedules of faculty who work during the day, lessening the research synergies that can emerge from having a community of scholars present for each other who share a more standard work day. Below we discuss proposed changes to our MPP curriculum and structure.

Undergraduate Curriculum

This past spring, we made major changes to our undergraduate bachelor's degree program. These changes include:

- Dropping the following requirements:
 - one course chosen from HIST 017B, HIST 020, HIST 020W, SOC 015 or SOC 020.
 - one course chosen from PSYC 011, SOC 005, STAT 004, STAT 008, STAT 010 or POSC 114S.
 - "Ten courses chosen from two tracks, with no more than seven courses from one track."
- Adding the following requirements:
 - MATH 004 (Introduction to College Mathematics for Business and the Social Sciences), CS 005 (Introduction to Computer Programming) or CS 009A (Data Oriented Introduction to Computing I), PBPL 100A & 100B (Data Analysis for Public Policy I, II)
 - "Upper Division Electives [8 courses required (at least 32 units)] PBPL 102, PBPL 103, PBPL 127, PBPL 130, PBPL 132, PBPL 150, PBPL 155, PBPL 157, PBPL 160, PBPL 162, PBPL 164, PBPL 167, PBPL 170, PBPL 171, PBPL 172, PBPL 180, PBPL 182, PBPL 185, PBPL 186".

In the justification for this proposal, we stated:

"The proposed changes in the Public Policy major will align our curriculum with the stated objectives of the major ... Rigorous and insightful analysis of public policies requires a combination of empirical analysis, institutional knowledge, and decision

theory. The current curriculum overemphasizes institutional knowledge and underemphasizes empirical analysis. The proposed changes to the core curriculum will teach Public Policy students the common empirical methods routinely used by policy analysts who want to understand the societal impacts of policy."

Given that these are major changes to the undergraduate degree, it is important that we monitor these changes to see how they impact students. Furthermore, in discussing these changes, several faculty members advocated for inclusion of qualitative methods of policy analysis be added to the core of the bachelor's degree. This idea should be considered and developed.

Proposed Future PhD Program, Science to Policy, and Connections with Doctoral Students

Several faculty members have expressed support for the school moving towards having a PhD degree offered. A strong reason for this suggestion was a desire by faculty to work with PhD students and help them develop their research careers. At present, we lack the scale to make a PhD program viable. However, UCR's Science to Policy (S2P) program provides an opportunity for engagement of policy faculty with UCR PhD students in the sciences, including social sciences (<https://sciencetopolicy.ucr.edu/>). S2P works with UCR PhD students in the sciences to bridge their scientific discoveries with impacting public policy:

"Our mission is to train graduate students to be active and trusted members of the public policy community through the use of sharing research and analytical skills developed in their respective fields. We provide early-career scientists with hands-on training and a platform to practice the skills necessary to navigate and engage in the policy world as scientists, communicators, legislative advisors, and/or science advocates. We strive to empower UCR graduate students to participate in science policy by providing a suite of experiences and opportunities to learn from and engage with public policy experts before they graduate to encourage the development of science policy as a career path."

Greater involvement by SPP faculty with the training provided by S2P would enhance the training S2P students receive and provide SPP faculty with a vehicle to satisfy their desire to mentor PhD students. Thus, we support greater engagement of SPP with S2P. To that end, SPP will co-host the National Science Policy Network's Annual National Science Policy Symposium in April 2024.

An additional mechanism for UCR doctoral students to engage with SPP and SPP faculty is through the Designated Emphasis in Public Policy program (<https://spp.ucr.edu/de-pp>). This program involves the student taking three MPP courses (including two core courses). We highly encourage that this program be widely promoted.

Physical Space for Students

Our physical infrastructure for students to study, collaborate, convene, and connect with faculty can be improved. We currently provide a lounge for MPP students, but we do not offer something comparable for undergraduate students. Furthermore, students have requested places for them to gather and work as groups as well as access to computers and printing. In the next section, we outline changes that we will make to improve our physical infrastructure.

Student Affairs Staff

With the introduction of the 4+1 BA/MPP degree, it's imperative that the undergraduate and graduate programs are more integrated and have staff that span the programs. SPP plans to create a Student Affairs Staff position, who will principally focus on student recruitment and secondarily boost our advising capacity.

How:

At the fall 2023 strategic planning retreat, faculty considered several proposals to strengthen the core of the MPP curriculum. Faculty voted unanimously in favor of the following actions:

- Dropping the following course from the MPP core: "PBPL 206 State Governments as Laboratories of Change".
- Adding to the Curriculum Committee's charge that they should work with faculty to develop a description and an exemplary syllabus for a new course titled "Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Public Policy". This course would welcome faculty with graduate training in different disciplines and with different methodological approaches to public policy scholarship to introduce students to these perspectives. One possible design for such a course would be to have a different guest speaker each week. This course description and syllabus, once developed, will be brought to the full faculty for a vote, preferably this fall. Upon successful approval, the course will be added to the MPP core and replace "PBPL 200 Introduction to Policy Analysis".
- Adding to the Curriculum Committee's charge that they should work with faculty to develop descriptions and exemplary syllabi for a three-course sequence. These course descriptions and syllabi, once developed, will be brought to the full faculty for a vote. Upon successful approval, this three-course sequence will be added to the MPP core and replace "PBPL 210 Quantitative Methods For Public Policy Analysis" and "PBPL 220 Policy Evaluation". These three courses should cover a good portion of the following topics:
 - Research design and techniques for writing graduate-level research papers, including research question formulation, literature reviews, sampling, experimental and quasi-experimental designs, survey research and instrumentation, field research, and research using available data.
 - Descriptive statistics, expectations, univariate distribution, probability, covariance and correlations, statistical independence, random sampling, estimators,

unbiasedness and efficiency, statistical inference, confidence intervals, and hypothesis testing.

- Introduction to data processing and elementary data analysis techniques. Use of statistical software to manage, analyze, and create data visualizations to communicate policy-relevant data. Introduction to common packages for statistical programming, including Stata, R, and Python.
- Linear regression models as well as generalized linear models for binary dependent variables (i.e., logit and probit). Impact of common violations of standard regression assumptions on estimated regression coefficient—including omitted variables, measurement error, and non-constant variance—as well as strategies used by policy analysts to overcome these violations.
- Common statistical methods and research design principles used to establish causality when evaluating policy impacts and applications to current policy issues, including randomized control trials, instrumental variables, regression discontinuity design, difference-in-differences, and matching methods. Students will learn to apply appropriate statistical techniques with data to evaluate the impacts of policy.

Additionally, at the fall retreat, faculty discussed the prospect of adding PBPL 273 (Geographic Information Systems for Public Policy) to the MPP core and replacing “PBPL 214 Applied Microeconomics For Public Policy” with a two-course sequence. There was insufficient time at the retreat to fully consider these proposals. The Dean suggested that interested faculty develop these ideas further and bring these ideas forward for consideration concurrently with the new courses described above.

Several faculty members expressed support for the vision that our MPP core curriculum be considered as a jointly produced product and that it be continuously evaluated and improved, if necessary. A strong theme in our conversations was the desire that the MPP core curriculum fully capture the range of our faculty members' varying perspectives on public policy and that a healthy community reflects respect for this diversity of approach to public policy challenges. Further, there was strong support for a core curriculum that allows students to integrate these varying perspectives and understand how these different approaches both build upon each other and provide valuable critiques.

At the retreat, faculty voted in favor of shifting the delivery of the MPP from evening to daytime classes. This change will go into effect for the MPP cohort that begins in the fall of 2025.

Regarding the undergraduate program, in the context of plans for robust growth in student enrollment and in light of the new requirements added to the undergraduate major, faculty and staff voted unanimously in favor of adding a charge to the Curriculum Committee to consider optionality in the undergraduate major (e.g., two track BS/BA degrees) and incorporating qualitative methods for implementation in 2024-25. Faculty and staff further voted in favor of adding staff resources to promote student retention.

Who:

The 2023-24 Curriculum Committee, consisting of Prof. Ran Wei (chair), Prof. Kevin Esterling, Prof. Cecilia Ayón, and Prof. Andy Crosby, will be critical to the success of maintaining momentum on these curricular reform efforts. In particular, the committee chair will work with interested faculty to develop the syllabi described above. The Director of Graduate Studies will be charged with fleshing out the proposed changes to the graduate program and seeking the necessary approvals for changing the requirements for the MPP. The Director of Undergraduate Studies will be charged with monitoring the implementation of the changes to the bachelor's degree program, developing the idea for optionality in the undergraduate major, and incorporating qualitative methods as a major requirement.

The Dean and Director of Graduate Studies will convene with staff of the Graduate Division to evaluate methods for students to pursue the MPP degree in a more work-compatible, part-time manner.

The Dean will work with leadership of the Science to Policy program to secure greater integration of SPP and S2P.

The Dean and Associate Dean Babcock will work with our Student Affairs staff (Deisy Vaca, Jolene Sedita, and Laura Sosa) to integrate our staff support for the undergraduate and graduate programs, raise alumni connection, improve connections with employers and job placement, and boost student recruitment.

The Dean will work with SPP's Chief Financial and Administrative Officer (CFAO) to improve the physical infrastructure, as discussed in greater detail below.

The Dean and Associate Dean will work with our Student Affairs staff to integrate our staff support for the undergraduate and graduate programs.

When:

We plan to have the changes to the MPP curriculum approved by the end of 2023 and implemented for the incoming students in fall 2024. We aim to switch the program from evening to daytime hours for the incoming cohort in fall 2025. Doing so will require marketing the change to potential applicants in fall 2024 and winter 2025.

Knowledge Sharing ... *through community engagement*

Why:

As a school of public policy, we have a special duty to share our knowledge and wisdom with community leaders and to thereby improve the community in which we reside.

Our mission statement includes community engagement as an equal component to our research and teaching components:

“We promote solutions to public policy and governance challenges by ... collaborating with community members and local, national, and international leaders.”

How:

Meeting with Local Government Officials and Community Stakeholders

We will achieve this mission by regularly meeting with government officials and community leaders. We will identify and respond to their needs for insight and workforce development. We will further take steps to facilitate our faculty having more engagement with California state policymakers. We will continue these conversations and make connections where appropriate as well as encourage our faculty to independently make connections with policymakers and legislators who are interested in their expertise. We value this form of service and see it as a critical component of *research* communication. Notably, research communication to the community is valued in the field of public policy in ways that might be as important in other academic disciplines. Consequently, we will value such research communication in our evaluation of faculty merit and promotion.

SPP's research centers are a key vehicle for knowledge sharing through community engagement. These centers regularly host gatherings for the local community, policymakers, administrators, and elected officials. When it's not too cumbersome, these centers will use "Policy Solutions" in the titles of their gatherings and/or feature the phrase in their communications. This will be done for two reasons. First, we will seek to maintain focus on our motto of "solutions for the region, solutions for the world", which is positive in its orientation. In public policy work, it can be easy to fixate on what does not work. Inserting "policy solutions" in the title and/or framing will remind speakers and participants that we are seeking to identify policies that *do* work. (Of course, this can sometimes be achieved by identifying what does not. In such cases, it is our responsibility to suggest alternatives). Second, inserting "policy solutions" into the gathering's title and/or framing will help with SPP brand identification and increase clarity that all center events are SPP events. (To that end, all center events and publications should include SPP branding and logos).

Website Enhancement

We are currently overhauling the design of our School's website. We will include "Engagement" as one of our pulldown menus, giving this area prominence in how we represent the School to visitors. This "Engagement" menu will include our research centers and further emphasize the centers as a key part of SPP and a vital vehicle for SPP's community engagement.

Alumni Database

We will develop and maintain a database of contact information and employment information for our alumni. We will ask our alumni if they would be willing to be contacted by current students who are seeking employment and general advice. We will open this restricted database to our students and encourage our current students to make connections with these alumni.

Who:

The Dean and SPP faculty will maintain connections with the other UC schools of public policy, staff at the UC Center Sacramento, and staff at the California Research Bureau.

The Dean, the Director of External Engagement, and our Dean's Ambassadors will regularly meet with local elected officials, administrators, and community leaders and invite them to participate in our events and be interviewed for our podcast. The Dean will ask these persons about workforce development needs and the skills that we should be imparting to our students and The Dean will share these conversations with our curriculum committee for consideration of course development.

Center directors will be responsible for continuing to host gatherings for the local community, policymakers, administrators, and elected officials; framing events as featuring "Policy Solutions"; and using SPP branding.

SPP's Digital Marketing Specialist will be responsible for overhauling the School's website and featuring "engagement" as a key component of the school.

Student Affairs staff will be responsible for creating, maintaining, and publicizing the alumni database.

Grow the School

At the fall 2023 strategic planning retreat, the faculty and staff, as a collective whole, voted to pursue robust growth in the size of the school over the course of the next nine years.

Why:

Our vision is that SPP will improve the lives of residents of the Inland Empire, California, the U.S., and the world. This vision can be accomplished only to the extent that our school is large enough to have a meaningful impact on the world. Secondly, our continued viability as one of UCR's schools depends on SPP being a scale that warrants it existing as a separate school and not as a department within a larger college.

Growing our number of non-resident and international MPP students has multiple advantages including:

- Higher revenue per student,
- Greater diversity of backgrounds, which will benefit all students' education, and
- Likely greater geographic span of our subsequent alumni network.

How:

Growth must fit with the budgetary model of UCR. At our strategic planning retreat this fall, we outlined a path of growth that is financially viable.

Over the course of the coming months, we will consider raising the MPP degree's Professional Degree Supplemental Tuition from its current level of \$1,984. PDST levels for 2023-24 were as follows for other UC public policy graduate programs⁵: \$3,078 per quarter (UC-Irvine), \$3,568 per quarter (UC-San Diego), \$3,769 per quarter (UCLA), and \$6,221 per semester (UC-Berkeley, equivalent to \$4,147 per quarter). Each of these institutions are at the end of their 3-year cycles for approved PDST levels and there has been 18.3% inflation over these three years.⁶

Notably, each new student brings in substantial revenue. For example, a new California resident BA major spending all four years at UCR and in our program nets over \$17,000 in revenue to SPP during the student's UCR enrollment. Given these large sums, hiring a staff member who will focus on recruitment is *very* likely to pay off as such a staff person only has to add a modest number of new students to our enrollment to completely pay for the staff member's salary and benefits.

This new staff member will be encouraged to focus on three areas:

- Boosting the number of undergraduate applications and yield rate (i.e., number of enrollees / number of admitted students).
- Boosting the applications of MPP students.
- Boosting applications of out-of-state and international MPP students.

Who:

The Dean will be charged with creating the conditions for school growth. Specifically, the Dean will work with Student Affairs staff to boost recruitment of students and the Associate Dean and Director of the undergraduate and graduate programs to improve the quality of our educational programs, thus making the school more attractive to potential students. The Dean will work with the Director of Advancement to seek out additional fundraising opportunities, which will further facilitate SPP growth. The Dean and Associate Dean will consider

⁵ https://www.ucop.edu/operating-budget/_files/fees/202324/2023-24.pdf

⁶ <https://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl>

possibilities of collaborations with foreign schools of public policy for possible student exchanges or joint master's degree programs.

Where:

Growing the school will require a new consideration of physical space availability and use. We will need to grow our campus footprint in order to grow the size of our students, faculty, and staff. We notably lack fixed rooms for seminars, classroom space, and faculty meetings. These deficiencies will be addressed in the coming years.

Currently, SPP is located on the fourth floor of INTS, two rooms on the fourth floor of INTN, and a suite in the Tomás Rivera Library containing the Center for Geospatial Sciences. The Dean has negotiated access to INTN 4023. This room, which is currently empty, will be converted into a seminar room / classroom that will hold up to 30 attendees. We will be able to use this room for faculty meetings. If we demonstrate to the provost that we are using this room regularly, it will be permanently reassigned from CHASS to SPP. In addition, the Dean has negotiated access to new space on the east side of the third floor of Olmsted Hall. This space, which includes 2,700 square feet, will be used in part to facilitate the movement of the Center for Geospatial Sciences out of the library (as the provost has other uses for the library suite housing the center).

Given this new allocation of space, it is appropriate to reconsider how space is allocated. At the fall strategic planning retreat, we discussed various configurations for our spaces in INTS, INTN, and Olmsted Hall. The central principles discussed included making sure that we remain deeply connected with each other while physically separated across campus, that we provide appropriate spaces for advising students, that we minimize the amount of relocation to the extent possible, and that we put students into closer contact with faculty and to help students identify SPP as a gathering place, study space, and home.

In response to this feedback and discussion, the Dean and CFAO will convene with the appropriate persons from UCR Facilities Services and furniture vendors, develop a space plan, and produce cost estimates. The Dean will present this plan to the faculty and staff and will conduct a vote on this plan during the fall of this year.

When:

Hiring of a new staff member to focus on recruitment and a new Director of Advancement will be concluded this fall. Conversion of INTN 4023 into a seminar room will be completed in early fall. Renovation of the offices in Olmsted Hall will be completed by the end of this fall. Movement into Olmsted Hall by SPP will occur in Winter, 2024. Renovation of other spaces in INTS will commence in Summer 2024.

Key Metrics

The following are the key metrics that we will use to measure our success and growth.

- *To measure success:*
 - Graduation rates for undergraduates who began college at UCR⁷:
 - 4-year graduation rate for undergraduate public policy majors:
 - First-year in college at UCR in fall 2018 (graduate by spring 2022): 83%
 - 5-year graduation rate for undergraduate public policy majors
 - 6-year graduation rate for undergraduate public policy majors
 - Graduation rates for undergraduates who transferred to UCR:
 - 2-year graduation rate for undergraduate public policy majors
 - Transferred to UCR in fall 2018 (graduate by spring 2020): 68%
 - Transferred to UCR in fall 2019 (graduate by spring 2021): 55%
 - Transferred to UCR in fall 2020 (graduate by spring 2022): 47%
 - 3-year graduation rate for undergraduate public policy majors
 - Transferred to UCR in fall 2018 (graduate by spring 2020): 95%
 - Transferred to UCR in fall 2019 (graduate by spring 2021): 70%
 - 4-year graduation rate for undergraduate public policy majors
 - Transferred to UCR in fall 2018 (graduate by spring 2020): 95%
 - Graduation rates for graduate students:
 - 2-year graduation rate for MPP students:
 - Fall 2019 entrants (graduate by spring 2021): 94%
 - Fall 2018 entrants (graduate by spring 2020): 95%
 - Fall 2017 entrants (graduate by spring 2019): 80%
 - Fall 2016 entrants (graduate by spring 2018): 100%
 - Fall 2015 entrants (graduate by spring 2017): 86%
 - 3-year graduation rate for MPP students:
 - Fall 2018 entrants (graduate by spring 2021): 95%
 - Fall 2017 entrants (graduate by spring 2020): 85%
 - Fall 2016 entrants (graduate by spring 2019): 100%
 - Fall 2015 entrants (graduate by spring 2018): 93%
 - Total number of citations to faculty research, via Google Scholar:
 - 2023 (projected from 8/21/2023 to end of year): 15,505
 - 2022: 16,347
 - 2021: 15,815
 - Median faculty member's number of citations, via Google Scholar:
 - 2023 (projected from 8/21/2023 to end of year): 420
 - 2022: 373
 - 2021: 440

⁷ Compiled from https://ir.ucr.edu/academic_data_dashboard

- US News Ranking in Public Affairs and Public Policy Analysis:
 - 2023: 85 & Unranked
 - 2022: 102 & Unranked
- Number of national and international awards received by faculty (e.g., NSF career awards, Fulbright Scholar, National Academy awards):
 - 2022-23: Kurt Schwabe (Fulbright U.S. Scholar for 2023-2024 for Australia),
 - 2020-21: Ran Wei (Chuck ReVelle Rising Star Award from INFORMS)
- Total research grant dollars given to SPP faculty as principal or co-principal investigator:
 - 2022-23: \$7,973,816
 - 2021-22: \$9,211,909
 - 2020-21: \$6,436,413
- Average research grant dollars given to SPP faculty as principal or co-principal investigator:
 - 2022-23: \$486,208 (Faculty FTE: 16.40)
 - 2021-22: \$690,548 (Faculty FTE: 13.34)
 - 2020-21: \$583,008 (Faculty FTE: 11.04)
- Number of website page sessions:
 - 2022-23: 49,647
 - 2021-22: 37,368
 - 2020-21: 34,094
- Social Media Followers:
 - Facebook
 - 2022-2023: 1,733
 - 2021-2022: 1,702
 - Instagram
 - 2022-2023: 1,580
 - 2021-2022: 1,421
 - Twitter/X
 - 2022-2023: 1,251
 - 2021-2022: 1,203
 - LinkedIn
 - 2022-2023: 493
 - 2021-2022: 382
 - YouTube
 - 2022-2023: 504
 - 2021-2022: 425
- *To measure growth:*
 - FTE faculty:
 - Fall, 2023: 18.75
 - Fall, 2022: 17.75
 - Fall, 2021: 17.25

- FTE lecturers and visiting assistant professors (9 courses = 1 FTE):
 - 2022-23: 1.6
 - 2021-22: 1.9
- FTE teaching assistants:
 - 2022-23: 3.33
 - 2021-22: 3.33
- FTE staff:
 - Fall, 2023: 25.11
 - Fall, 2022: 23
 - Fall, 2021: 23
- FTE staff excluding centers:
 - Fall, 2023: 13.73
 - Fall, 2022: 12
 - Fall, 2021: 9
- FTE staff of centers:
 - Fall, 2023: 11.38
 - Fall, 2022: 11
 - Fall, 2021: 14
- Number of applications to our BA program:
 - 2022-23: 794 (467 excluding “referrals”, i.e., students who applied to another UC campus in a related discipline, who were not admitted to that campus, and were referred to UCR’s School of Public Policy for consideration of admission.)
 - 2021-22: 413
- Number of applications to our MPP program:
 - 2022-23: 52
- Number of bachelor’s degrees awarded:
 - 2022-23: 63 (excluding summer 2023)
 - 2021-22: 96
 - 2020-21: 90
- Number of minors awarded:
 - 2022-23: 15 (excluding summer 2023)
 - 2021-22: 26
 - 2020-21: 16
- Number of MPP degrees awarded:
 - 2022-23: 28
 - 2021-22: 27
 - 2020-21: 19
- Number of new students enrolling in the BA-MPP program:
 - 2023-24: 9
 - 2022-23: 6