TO: Dr. Lynn Pardie, Provost & Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs  
FROM: Pinky S. Wassenberg, Dean  
College of Public Affairs and Administration  
DATE: 2 November 2012  
RE: Dean’s recommendations based on LES MA Program Review

I agree with the assessment articulated in the memo from the College of Public Affairs and Administration Curriculum Committee on 23 October 2012. The Legal Studies Program has undergone significant changes in their faculty during the review period. Only one faculty member who currently serves on the faculty was a member of the department at the time of the last review. This turnover placed strain on the department but the department was able to make important improvements in the graduate program in spite of it.

The department has made great strides with the graduate program since the last review period. The faculty has worked very hard and taken an innovative policy-oriented approach to its curriculum. At the last review, the program was flagged for follow-up because of consistently low enrollments and insufficient distinction between the graduate and undergraduate curricula. During this review period, the department has made significant curricular revisions to address the distinction issue. It has added an online version of the degree and placed sufficient courses online that the degree can also be completed in a blended format. It has gone from low enrollments to the enviable position of having more applicants than there are spaces for in the online program.

The College of Public Affairs and Administration Curriculum Committee suggested discussion of additional faculty lines in the department to accommodate growth in the graduate program. The number of graduate majors has grown steadily since 2007. However, since 2010, there has been a slight decline in undergraduate majors in the department. Overall headcount majors in the department are a bit lower now than they were 2 years ago so it is premature to begin a discussion of new faculty lines. However, continued growth in the graduate program and stable headcount in the undergraduate program could lead to a need for that discussion before the next review.

I concur with the College of Public Affairs and Administration Curriculum Committee recommendation that the department continue its multimodal efforts to recruit highly qualified graduate students to its online and on ground programs. The work of the Online Coordinator will continue to be central to success in this area.

I encourage Legal Studies to continue working on the assessment of student learning across students. Such assessment can provide useful information to reflect on the changes in the curriculum during this review period.