

SUMMARY

External Reviewer's Recommendations for the Institute of Island Studies University of Prince Edward Island

The three IIS reviewers met in Toronto on September 4, 2013 to review their findings. Their recommendations were submitted jointly on September 10, 2013. A summary of the recommendations subsequently was developed and is provided below.

Reviewers: Dr. Liette Vasseur
Dr. Graham Whitelaw
Hon David MacDonald

1. Overarching recommendations

- 1.1. The Institute of Island Studies (IIS) should continue to exist.
- 1.2. The mandate of the IIS, as it currently exists, should remain.
- 1.3. Activities such as policy forums and positioning the IIS as an honest broker should be reinstated.
- 1.4. The Island Studies Press and the International Journal of Island Studies, both of which are functioning well, should remain part of the IIS mandate.
- 1.5. Considering the size of the university and the interdisciplinary nature of some units such as the IIS, environmental studies, MAIS, and Climate Lab, UPEI should continue to examine the possibility of a School of Island Studies and Sustainability and develop a three to five year plan to make the School a reality.
- 1.6. UPEI should maintain an active, transparent and open line of communication with the internal and external communities with regard to the process being completed under this review and future changes in the organization and structure of the IIS.
- 1.7. Discussions with the province should take place relatively soon to develop a potential agreement for policy relevant research activities.

2. Administration

- 2.1. The Director of IIS should be a faculty member, employed for a specified term and with a clear mandate.
- 2.2. If the IIS remains independent, as it is currently, reporting should be done not only through the Dean of Arts, but also through the Vice President, Research and Graduate Studies.
- 2.3. The Director should not become a member of all the various associations that are interested in having the IIS as a member. It may be more appropriate for the Director to be involved as an observer.

3. Governance

3.1. Given that the current governance structure does not position the IIS to be strategic in terms of activities and involvement of faculty members, the IIS should adopt a governance structure consisting of: 1) an Advisory Council; 2) an Executive Committee or Board of Directors, and; 3) Members

3.2. The Executive committee (or Board of Directors) should include at least (but not limited to) the coordinator of MAIS, a student representative, and two faculty members from the membership.

3.3. Three levels of membership are suggested: internal, associate, and affiliate.

3.3. With a strong Membership and an Executive Committee, the Advisory Council should then be able to play its appropriate role of advising the IIS mainly through strategic planning.

3.4. Faculty members should be encouraged to become active internal members or associates of the IIS and to participate in various projects.

3.5. Incentives (e.g., recognition as project lead and sharing of overheads) should be provided to faculty members engaged in research relevant to the IIS.

4. Educational Initiatives

4.1. MAIS students should be invited to become associates or affiliates of the IIS and activities should be organised by the MAIS coordinator in collaboration with members of the IIS. The Director should be invited to teach at least one course in order to maintain his/her connection with the students.

4.2. UPEI should examine the possibility of developing collaborative degree programs at the international level with other island universities.

4.3. The new initiatives implemented by UPEI regarding space allocation and resource support for the MAIS program, which are most welcome, should be sustained.

4.4. The IIS should partner with the UPEI administration to reintegrate continuing education as one of the activities of the IIS.

5. Administrative and Financial Support

5.1. IIS should be allocated a budget to cover, at a minimum, a course release for the Director, the salary for a full time administrative assistant who would provide support for the IIS and the Island Press, funding to accomplish a few activities and administrative funds for 3-5 years.

5.2. If and when the School of Island Studies and Sustainability becomes a reality, two administrative assistants should be supported to ensure functionality: one for the teaching components and one for the research and outreach components.

5.3. Advancement should work closely with the Director and the Executive Committee of the IIS to develop a fundraising strategy and to ensure that endowed funds be secured for the IIS.

5.4. The continuing education program should be structured in such a way as to be a revenue generating operation.

5.5. Although seeking funding through grants will remain a large component of the IIS, this role should not be limited to the Director.

5.6. Technical support should be provided, ideally under the coordination of a communication committee of the IIS, to update the website as soon as possible.

6. Canada Research and UNESCO Chairs

6.1. The CRC Tier 1 opportunity should be revised to focus on Island Studies and the CRC advertisement should be posted as soon as possible.

6.2. The proposed terms of reference for the CRC in sustainability and global environmental change should focus on islands as a major vulnerability point for environmental, climate and sustainability issues. Moreover, they should reemphasize the interdisciplinary nature of the position and indicate the high potential of connecting with the IIS, Climate Lab, MAIS and environmental studies.

6.3. UPEI should explore the possibility of nominating a faculty member as a UNESCO Chair in Island Studies.