The Graduate School of Public Policy (GSPP) has developed an internship program that will help the government of Saskatchewan find its next generation of leaders.

The Master’s of Public Administration Internship matches full-time students nearing the end of their program with Saskatchewan deputy ministers for an eight-month work period.

The deputy ministers serve as the interns’ coach and work with them as they gain direct experience with activities such as planning and policy development, budget development, program delivery and strategic planning and reporting.

So far, four students have gone through the program and six are currently in jobs with government departments including Advanced Education and Employment, Environment, Learning, Government Relations and Health.

Jill Raddysh is in her third month of an internship with Deputy Health Minister John Wright. Within the first two months of her internship Raddysh travelled to each of the regional health authorities in the province with Wright for the budget tour.

This, along with working on various research projects for the department, has helped her quickly develop insight into the day-to-day operations of government and the pace of life that comes with the job.

“I had high-heel shoes and had to buy flats because it’s literally running,” said Raddysh.

“(Wright) travels a lot, has incredible energy and even as a young person, I had to struggle to catch up with him, to get at that level.”

With the hectic schedule comes valuable learning opportunities.

“What was surprising was how open things were to me,” said Raddysh. “Anything that goes across John (Wright)’s desk I have access to. If there is a meeting I want to go to I am more than welcome to come. There are no boundaries. To me that is pretty surprising.”

“It’s honestly life-changing, career changing. If you want a good taste of the government of Saskatchewan, it’s the internship to apply for.”

Wright, who is also an adjunct professor in the Faculty of Graduate Studies and

L to R: GSPP interns Reiko Nakatsuchi, Advanced Education and Employment; Maria Chinichian, Learning; Brad Williams, Environment; Jill Raddysh, Health; and Alyssa Peel, Executive Council.

Missing: Kelsey Beach, Government Relations.

The fresh perspective they bring is especially sought when dealing with items such as training and leadership development, he added.

“It's not a naive perspective because of their background and training. To have a perspective from somebody who is younger is really great because you get different ways of looking at things.”

According to GSPP Director Ken Rasmussen, crown corporations have taken notice and are keen to develop similar partnerships with the school.

“It’s quite a unique program,” said Rasmussen. “It’s

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Discovering Knowledge ... Sharing a Path program begins

A team of six in-house facilitators has begun offering the new Discovering Knowledge ... Sharing a Path program to faculty and staff across campus.

The team spent three days in November with trainers from Saskatchewan Association of Healthcare Organizations (SAHO) learning how to deliver the half-day workshop which involves interactive teaching techniques such as group work and games.

The program was adapted for the U of R from one successfully delivered by SAHO to thousands of individuals in health care across the province. This is the first time the model has been used outside the health sector.

Nancy Kaziel was among the facilitators trained to deliver the program on campus.

“Aboriginal awareness training will help the University become a committed champion as an organization that can recruit, engage and sustain a representative workforce,” said Kaziel, an organizational development consultant in Human Resources.

Other members of the facilitator team include Jason Bird and Sabrina Sparvier from

Student Affairs and Crystal Lawrek, Delephine Gall and Brenda Kerr from Human Resources.

Gall, who is the Aboriginal and diversity consultant in Human Resources, said consistency is one of the benefits of training in-house facilitators.

The people taking the training in November 2006, for example, will receive the same training as those who take it three years from now.

The program is also designed to recognize the diverse community at the U of R.

“The most important consideration, when choosing an awareness program, was the diverse audience that we have here at the University,” said Gall.

“We wanted it to be relevant to everyone, from entry level to senior administration.

Research, understands the importance of giving students an opportunity to apply their knowledge, and that a well-deserved foot in the door not only broadens their education, it makes a valuable contribution to the provincial government.

“It is ensuring the revitalization of the public service,” said Wright. “There are an awful lot of retirements happening in the next number of years and the sooner we can get people in, particularly those who have a graduate degree, the better off we are going to be.”

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Discovering Knowledge ... Sharing a Path training team included (L to R) Nancy Kaziel, Wayne Neigpor (SAHO), Sabrina Sparvier, Crystal Lawrek, Jason Bird, Brenda Kerr, Jason Yuzicapi (SAHO) and Delephine Gall.

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In the winter of 1999, I was invited to apply for a vice-presidential position at the University of Regina. All were available. At that time the University was ranked last in its category in Maclean’s and seemed to have many challenges, but during the interview I felt a sense of optimism and excitement for the future. Nevertheless, when I accepted the position of Vice-President (Academic) I did not anticipate what an extraordinary opportunity I had been offered and what an extraordinary group of people I would come to know and learn from.

From the beginning, our senior team committed to work from a set of principles. We would respect ourselves and one another, be unfailid to show care, face difficult situations together and deal with them, challenge one another, value alternative perspectives and, at all times speak honestly and openly with support and encourage-ment. We believed that in an environment of co-operation, respect and values, staff, faculty and students would ensure the institution’s success. Of course we didn’t always get it right. We made mistakes and at times we dis-appointed ourselves and others. But the University and its people succeeded and suc-ceeded beyond our, and per-haps even their, expectations.

The visible evidence of success is all around us: new buildings, better infrastructure, new academic and sup-port units, more grant and contract dollars, increased numbers of international and graduate students. We tell this story in our annual reports and promotional materials. But the story I want to tell is less visible. It is of the success we don’t see when we simply count. When I told people I was moving to Regina, I heard: “Why would you go there, people come from Regina they don’t go to it.” On arriv- ing, I heard of faculty as- ashamed to be working here. Then, a couple of years ago, two things happened. A sen-ior colleague said: “I walked across the Green today and I looked around and thought: ‘We look like a real university – I’m proud to be here.’” A new faculty member told his colleagues: “This is a great place – I’m proud of being here.” I cannot tell you how proud I am of this institution and its people and their accomplishments. Across the campus I have watched creative ideas emerge as people began to dream and to strive for what they might once have thought beyond reach. Not all were successful but as a friend once said: “If you never fail you aren’t reach-ing high enough.” We reach high.

All universities now commit to being interdisciplinary in teaching and research. For several years we provided small grants to help support collaboration across disciplines and with First Nations University. One day I heard a faculty member tell others: “In most places there are silos around the disciplines, but here there are fences and you can climb over them.” In addition to successful projects, I have observed respect and trust grow across and beyond the campus, and especially with our First Nations and francopho-ne partners and colleagues. We continue to learn from and with one another.

Thank you for all your support over the last seven years and for your many, many contributions to one another and to our University. This is a place where people truly do believe in working together, where the focus is on the good of the institution, where people care about and support one another, and where we can make almost anything happen. This is a community; it is a community that sees itself as “One Who Serves.”

We’re Large is written by campus leaders and is intended to challenge readers to engage with and learn about the various ‘parts’ that make up the wider University of Regina community and connect us to the world. If you have a topic suggestion for We’re Large, please send communications@uregina.ca and include your contact information.

We welcome your comments and suggestions. Please send them to communications@uregina.ca, and include “U of R Report” in the e-mail subject line.
Celebrate and learn from the world on our doorstep

Jamaican ginger beer, plantain chips and photos from far-away places at the Faculty of Business Administration, mini-language lessons taught by ESL students, and an evening of cultural entertainment. These were among the events marking International Education Week on campus, but they illustrate only a fraction of the potential to fully engage with the global community in our midst.

With 967 international students at the U of R from 57 countries, plus numerous students, faculty and staff crossing international boundaries for academic exchanges or teaching and research collaborations, the University community is a rich global learning environment.

Australian-born doctoral student Peta White knows first-hand the benefits of cross-cultural exchange. Supported by a Churchill Fellowship she received in Australia, White has traveled across North America to investigate environmental education and how schools link with communities to increase the longevity of their programs. Along the way, she met U of R education professor Paul Hart and quickly realized that research does not conform to geographical boundaries.

“The influence that each society has on another is significant ... therefore crossing boundaries to look for alternative ways of doing and knowing seems obvious,” said White.

Now studying at the U of R, White has looked at both the field of environmental education and at herself from a different perspective.

“It set me up to really experience my home in a different way. It’s about having the opportunity to reflect on not only who you are and your situation but also your country and what it means to you and what it means to other people.”

Computer science undergraduate Chris Madden learned a valuable lesson in adaptation on a four-month work term in 2004 in China with CVIC, a software engineering company in Jinan, the capital of Shandong Province. He worked on technical writing, started in a TV commercial, taught English and made a few new friends touring the sights.

“It shows you are willing to deal with new challenges,” said Madden.

“There are a lot of different realms of change that you are dealing with -- the multicultural aspects. It was good in that way. It really forced me out of my box.”

While travel is one way to experience other cultures, adult education associate professor Rosetta Khalideen also sees an opportunity to enhance educational exchanges here by better integrating international students into the U of R community.

“These students are here to learn from Canadians but they also have a lot to offer in terms of educating Canadians about the rest of the world,” said Khalideen, who organized the Celebrating Internationalization event on campus.

“Many Canadians have not travelled beyond their provincial borders. (These events) allow all to critically reflect on how we can capitalize on our similarities and use our differences as strengths to build a more peaceful and healthy world.”

According to Khalideen there are many ways staff and students can promote internationalism. For example, researchers can gain anecdotal information about a particular region by connecting with international students from the area. They can contact students by going through the Office of International Cooperation and Development, she said.

As well, lectures could incorporate perspectives of students who have lived under different systems and in different cultures.

Other suggestions include:

• Become involved with the local multicultural community organizations.

• Create partnership programs and research projects with overseas institutions.

• Find creative ways to learn from the experiences of international students.

• Become involved in the University’s mentorship and homestay programs.

• Take advantage of funding support for approved exchange programs.

Making emergency preparation a top priority

Saskatchewan is one of the safest places in the world, but no place, including the University of Regina, is exempt from disaster. Be it a fire or explosion, life threatening chemical spill, tornado, blizzard, pandemic virus or terrorist acts, disasters can happen here, putting education, research and, most importantly, lives in jeopardy. To help minimize the impact of disasters, the University has developed and is implementing its emergency management policy, plan and procedures (EMP).

The plan and procedures include assignment of responsibilities to staff, emergency notification and communication systems, identification of resources, specific emergency response procedures, the relationship with City of Regina emergency response agencies and maintenance of an emergency warden system comprising more than 250 individuals on campus trained in fire prevention, building evacuation and other emergency responses.

As part of implementing the EMP, the training session “A Trained University” is under-way and being offered across campus. Key employees including the University’s executive emergency warden are already trained; however, all employees will be required to attend a session.

Holly Hastie, the University’s emergency planning co-ordinator, encourages all employees to sign up for the session offered through Human Resources as soon as possible, regardless of their faculty, department or type of work, because emergencies can have a major impact anywhere on campus.

“When we do our presentation we talk about two recent fires at UBC where, during one of the laboratory fires, one of the researchers lost their life’s research,” said Hastie.

The University of Regina hasn’t been lucky and hasn’t had a major incident, but we have had our share of near misses, said Hastie.

For example, a paraffin pot left unattended on a hot plate started on fire and a wet paper towel was used to put out the flames, quickly spreading the blaze to the walls and ceiling. The incident might have escalated had it not been for the quick action of someone with a fire extinguisher.

The pressure of an emergency situation can prevent the common sense from prevailing, said Hastie adding that a little preparation can greatly improve the odds of an appropriate and effective response.

“Everyone has responsibilities for safety. Everyone has responsibilities when it comes to an emergency. It is important to understand what those responsibilities are.”

In addition to taking the program, Hastie encourages employees to become familiar with the University’s Emergency Response Preparedness and Procedures brochure. The bright green and gold brochure was distributed to all employees on campus and should be kept close at hand for quick reference.

Emergency preparedness consultant Dave Quick said it’s easy to become complacent because we live in a relatively safe community. Quick, a former police officer with Regina Police Service and commander of the police exploasive disposal unit, was the first co-ordinator of emergency planning for the City of Regina. He helped the University develop its own plans, and he emphasizes that everyone has to take responsibility and the initiative to become informed and prepare for the unexpected.

“If you go to Afghanistan or Iraq they know what to do because it’s dependent on their daily life,” said Quick. “But, as we are here so safe, it’s when the abnormal occurs, the one that might be a once-in-a-lifetime occurrence. But, you still have to know how to react.”

For more information on emergency policy and procedures at the U of R, including an online version of the Emergency Preparedness and Procedures brochure, please go to http://www.uregina.ca/hs/ OHs/Policies_Programs/Em erg_Procedures.html.
Snapshot 2006...
A look at the year that was