



THE SCHOOL
OF PUBLIC POLICY

2017

Serious

Problems

Real World

Solutions

2017-18 Annual Report

2018

2017

Effecting change in public policy



Pierre-Gerlier Forest, PhD

Professor and Director
James S. and Barbara A. Palmer
Chair in Public Policy

Dear Partner in Policy,

All policies, it is said, are sectoral — economic policy, fiscal policy, transportation policy, farming policy, energy policy or social policy. At The School, we cover all of those sectors and more, whether in our research, in our teaching or in our numerous public events. Because of the quality of our work and its relevance to everyone seeking evidence to support crucial public or private decisions, The School is widely recognized as the leading institution in its category in Canada.

Politics, on the other hand, is inherently multisectoral. The government budgetary process, for example, weaves together the interests and values of multiple groups. It may take months for some to become aware that their fate was sealed by measures taken on behalf of others. Good policy advice cannot ignore politics and the linkages that occur as a result.

Between policy and politics, it is not always easy to find a balance. If The School were to lean too much in the first direction, it would be perceived as mostly “academic”, producing evidence for evidence’s sake, far from the real problems faced by real people. Yet, if The School were to lean too much in the second direction, it might be said that we serve the interests of a given group or that we follow a particular ideology, instead of aiming at the common good.

Our solution to this problem can be summed up in a few words. In all our endeavours, we abide by the following pivotal principles:

- Practicality – our research is applied not only because it aims at real life issues, but because it is informed by the practical needs of those it impacts.
- Integrity – rigorous methodologies guide our work, without shortcuts or compromises, from the formulation of the problem to the validation of the results.
- Value-sensitive – policy is made by human beings for human beings and advice that ignores a community’s preferences and values will always be disregarded.
- Originality – new and viable solutions are developed when research teams can build on diverse experiences and perspectives to inform their work, an approach facilitated by the broad network of experts associated with The School.
- Timeliness – policy work is time-sensitive. A perfect analysis that comes after the decision is already made is useless.

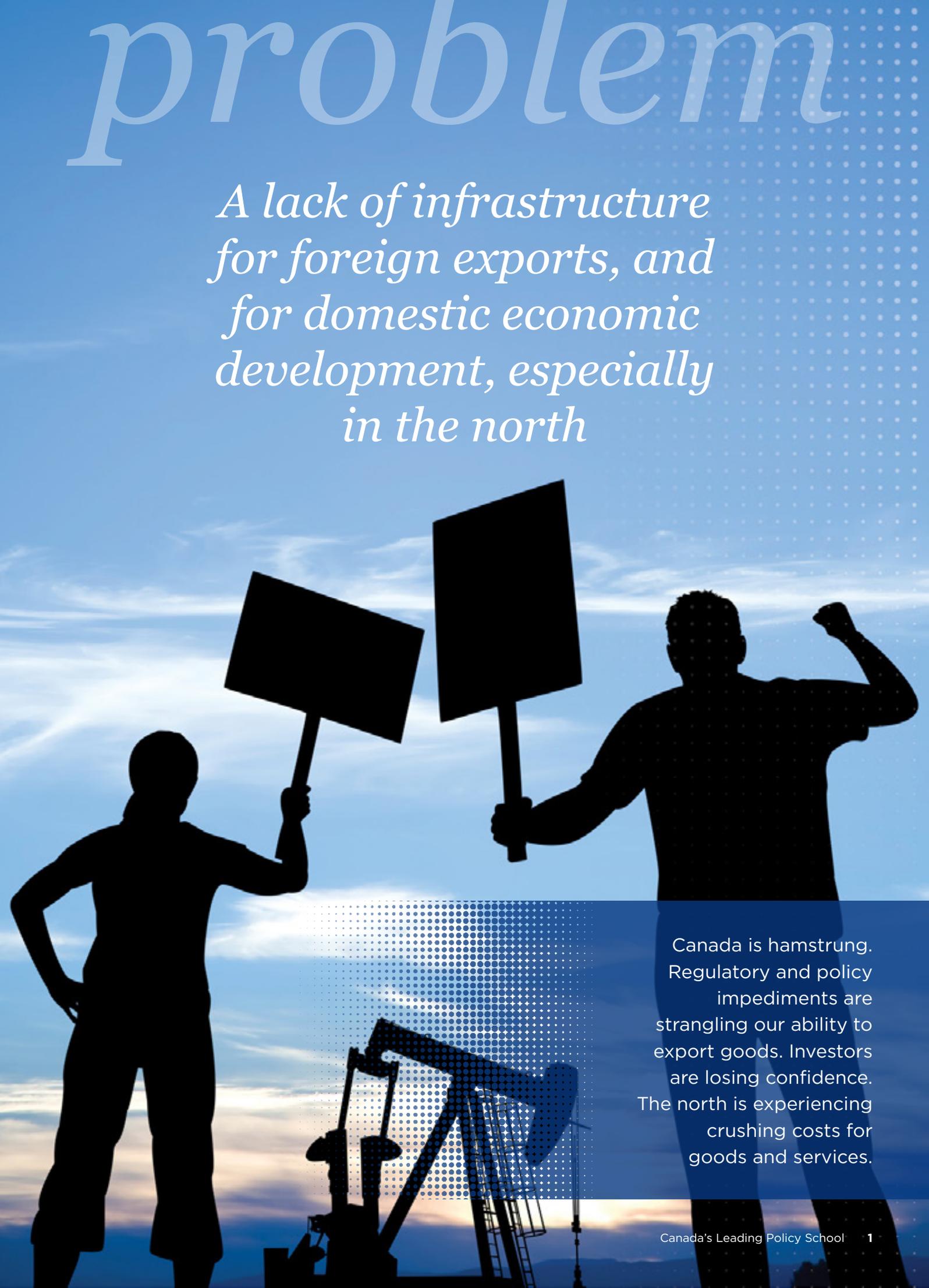
Despite the stereotype that university-based social and economic research is out of touch with reality — and thanks to its principled approach — The School has established its reputation by providing solutions to some of the most pressing problems faced by Alberta and Canada. This annual report speaks volumes for the commitment of our faculty and our staff to this important effort. It also underlines the essential support provided by our donors and stakeholders.

To all, a heartfelt thank-you!

2018

problem

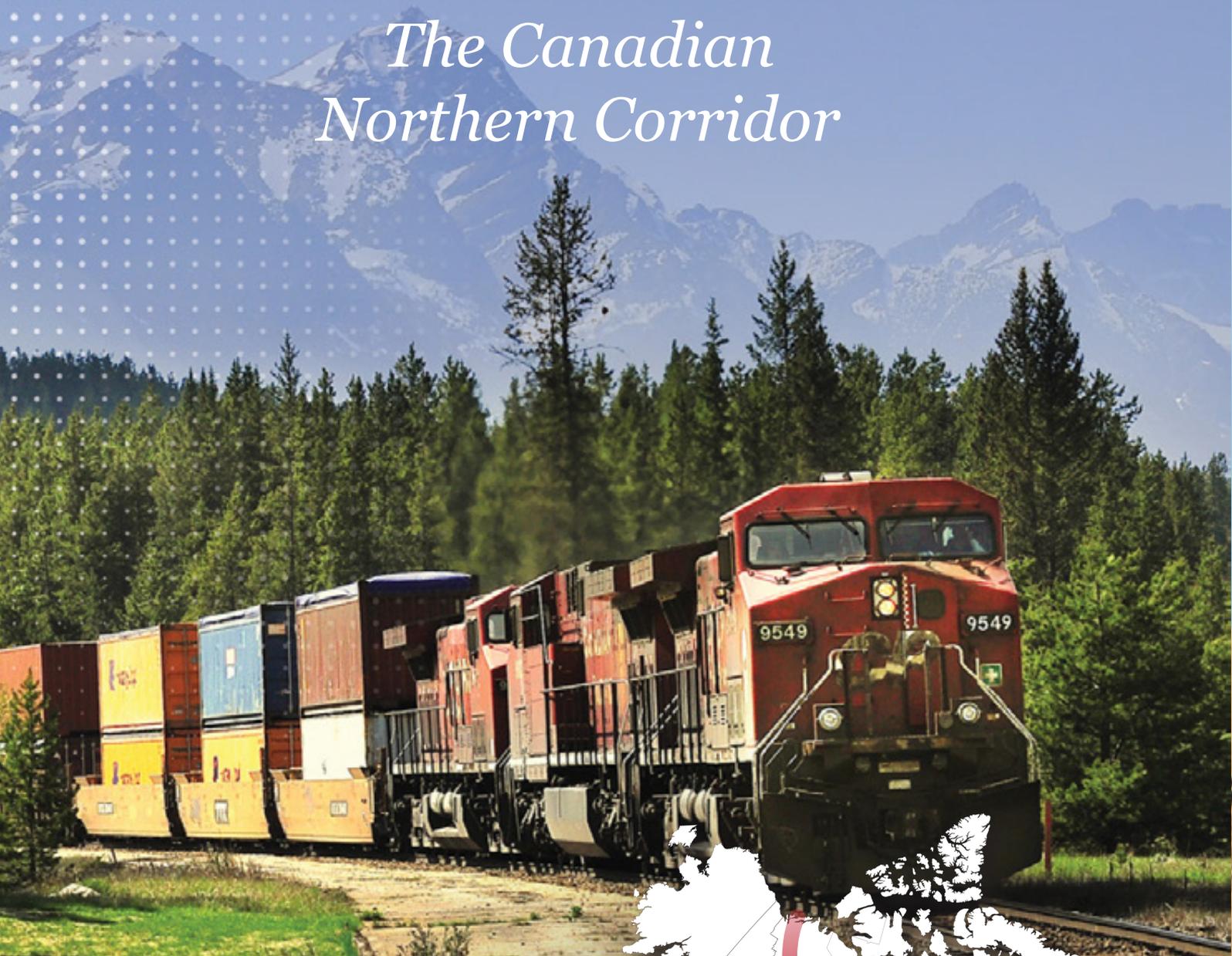
*A lack of infrastructure
for foreign exports, and
for domestic economic
development, especially
in the north*

The background of the entire page is a blue sky with a sunset or sunrise glow. In the foreground, there are silhouettes of two people holding up rectangular signs, and a construction crane. A semi-transparent blue box with a white dot pattern is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing text.

Canada is hamstrung. Regulatory and policy impediments are strangling our ability to export goods. Investors are losing confidence. The north is experiencing crushing costs for goods and services.

solution

The Canadian Northern Corridor



 Notional Corridor
 Existing Corridor

A multi-modal right-of-way crossing mid-Canada and Canada's North. The Corridor will dramatically reduce the regulatory hurdles and improve the economics of infrastructure development. This will encourage the private sector to invest in roads, rail, communications and pipeline infrastructure to diversify our international markets, support northern and Indigenous development, enhance security and expand inter-regional and international trade. This knowledge platform is endorsed by the Senate of Canada and the federal Minister of Transportation.

problem

Low prices for Canadian energy exports



The School analyzed the loss Canada takes on its trapped energy exports. Lack of pipeline transportation access to crude oil markets other than the U.S. means a loss of over \$6 per barrel. This year, Canada will leave about \$14 billion on the table.

solution

Partial upgrading of bitumen

The School ran the numbers on the feasibility of partial upgrading to reduce the cost of transporting oilsands bitumen. We determined that partial upgrading was a feasible and economic solution. Early in 2018, the Government of Alberta took that advice and announced an investment in partial upgrading.

problem

Homelessness



Alleviating homelessness has been a stubbornly difficult problem for jurisdictions across Canada. Myriad programs have failed to significantly reduce homeless numbers.

solution



*Determine the end game,
focus on where the problem
exists and understand
the root causes*

The School of Public Policy has undertaken a ground-breaking new approach to social issues: Applying economic analysis to the study of large data sets from government and social agencies. The result? A definition of what an end to homelessness actually means. The findings? Homelessness is most prevalent in cities that restrict housing stock; homelessness is more a problem of poverty than a problem of addiction or mental illness; and the causes of poverty and homelessness are local in nature.

Real world problems Trusted and fact-based solutions

more solutions

Medical care for vulnerable populations

SOLUTION

The Canadian Medical Association cites research by lead author Dutton et al., in its announcement of a fourth level of focus on vulnerable populations.

The role of pan-Canadian health organizations— are they still relevant?

SOLUTION

The federal government tapped The School's Director, Prof. Pierre-Gerlier Forest, to co-author a report on the future of these organizations.



Lack of policy capacity in Canada's North

SOLUTION

The Yukon government asked Profs. Ronald Kneebone and Trevor Tombe to advise on its finances.

Taxation and finances in British Columbia

SOLUTION

The B.C. government recruited Prof. Lindsay Tedds to advise it on tax reform.

leaders

Why we are Canada's leading policy school

The School's research is respected because it is independent, credible and based on hard data. Its influence is reflected by its wide dissemination among policy-makers, business leaders and the media. Indeed, The School is Canada's most cited policy school, both within traditional media and academic publications.

63

research publications
this year

KEY PUBLICATIONS

Gains from trade for Canada's North: The case for a northern infrastructure corridor

*G. Kent Fellows and Trevor Tombe—
March 27, 2018*

Energy and Environmental Policy Trends: The invisible cost of pipeline constraints

G. Kent Fellows—March 6, 2018

Alberta's changing industrial structure: Implications for output and income volatility

*Bev Dahlby and Mukesh Khanal—
January 18, 2018*

Social Policy Trends:

The energy boom and income

Ronald Kneebone and Margarita Wilkins—January 17, 2018

Policy brief—Why is uptake of the Disability Tax Credit low in Canada? Exploring possible barriers to access

*Stephanie Dunn and
Jennifer Zwicker—January 11, 2018*

Whether it is the U.S. House or Senate tax cut plan—it's trouble for Canadian competitiveness

*Jack Mintz and Philip Bazel—
November 16, 2017*

Indigenous policy conference summary report: Beyond reconciliation

*Sophie Lorefice, Brendan Boyd and
Gaétan Caron—October 24, 2017*

Social Policy Trends: Housing affordability for families with low incomes across Canada

Ronald Kneebone and Margarita Wilkins—June 29, 2017

The incidence of the corporate income tax on wages: Evidence from Canadian provinces

*Kenneth McKenzie and
Ergete Ferede—April 20, 2017*

HEADLINES

Alberta government losing billions of dollars in oil revenue annually: report

Global News—By Spencer Gallichan-Lowe—March 6, 2018

More early trauma intervention needed to greatly reduce chronic homelessness: study

*Calgary Herald—By Bill Kaufmann—
February 28, 2018*

Despite Alberta's climate efforts, no go on pipeline, says Berman

*Edmonton Journal—
By Chris Varcoe—February 17, 2018*

Don't tell Albertans, but Ontario is benefiting from a big loophole in the equalization formula

*National Post—By Stuart Thomson—
February 4, 2018*

Canada must rethink health spending strategy

*The Globe and Mail—
By André Picard—January 22, 2018*

What can Canada learn from Obamacare's near death experience?

*The Star—By Andrew Boozary—
August 21, 2017*

Toronto home affordability hits worst level on record

*Huffington Post—By Daniel Tencer—
June 30, 2017*

Study finds link between domestic violence and some sporting events

*CTV News—By Lauren Krugel—
June 8, 2017*

Calgary's population on the rise while affordable rental housing declines

*Calgary Herald—By Anna Junker—
May 11, 2017*

Events *outreach*

45

events
in 2017

2,838

attendees
in 2017

225

speakers
in 2017

16

public
events

11

research
symposia

14

MPP
events

4

by
invitation

SCHOOL
OF PUBLIC POLICY
POLICY SCHOOL



David Frum speaks to an audience of more than 500 people at the 13th James S. Palmer Lecture Series hosted by The School of Public Policy.

awards

Distinguished Policy Fellows

The Distinguished Policy Fellowships are awarded on an annual basis to individuals with an exemplary record as leaders in public policy research, education, development, implementation or advocacy. In its inaugural year, The School appointed The Right Honourable Stephen J. Harper, P.C. and Tom Jenkins, O.C. on December 4th. Harper and Jenkins were recognized for their lifetime commitment to the betterment of public policy in Canada.



Allison Robins, MPP'15, presents the Distinguished Policy Fellow award to The Rt. Hon. Stephen J. Harper, P.C.



David Frum speaks at the inaugural Distinguished Policy Fellow Awards Dinner and Ceremony.



Tom Jenkins, O.C. accepts his Distinguished Policy Fellow award from Sunny Kullar, MPP'15.

students

Master of Public Policy

Students develop a comprehensive skill set that enables them to collaborate with senior policy leaders from government, business and the community to address issues in a practical, focused and global manner. This 12-month program fosters in students an appreciation of the importance of effective institutions, efficient regulation and the role that markets play in democracies.



Master of Public Policy class of 2017-18.

95%

of Master of Public Policy graduates are employed in a policy-related role or are undertaking further education.

Current Master of Public Policy (MPP) students have begun and advanced their careers with organizations such as Alberta Energy Regulator, Canadian Geothermal Association, Devon Energy, Environment and Climate Change Canada, Finance Canada, Global Public Affairs, Icon West Construction Corporation, Statistics Canada, the U.S. Department of Commerce and Western Economic Diversification.

\$500,000+

in scholarships awarded annually to our 50-person student cohort.



10

funded research assistantships awarded annually where students work in conjunction with a full-time faculty member.



“The Master of Public Policy Alumni Council (MPPAC) strives to sustain an active exchange of information between MPP alumni and The School to enhance and inspire the student and alumni experience. We focus on key areas of engagement within the alumni community, including awards, communications, events, networking and scholarships. The MPPAC is the only one of its kind across any public policy school in Canada; we work to connect graduates to one another while actively contributing to MPP students’ career and professional development.”

“The school has allowed me the space and support to develop my policy passions into skills. I can now go into a future career confident that I am able to address the challenges of today to create a better tomorrow.”

+30%

Applicants to the 2018-2019 MPP program are up 30% from last year with the average incoming GPA remaining at 3.6, as in years prior. Over 80% of admission offers made to students in 2018 were accepted. This is a testament to our outstanding curriculum and our extraordinary policy-specific job placement rate.

Andrew Rodych
MPP'12 & MPPAC Chair

Benjamin Neff
MPP Student Association
President, 2017-2018

research

Research divisions



SOCIAL POLICY AND HEALTH

The Social Policy and Health research division aims to improve the lives of Canadians by employing an objective, evidence-based approach to assessing existing and proposed public policies. We identify practical solutions that cut through rhetoric designed to polarize debate and freeze policy-makers into inaction.

Scientific Director:
Ronald Kneebone



ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Through disciplined research and analysis, the Energy and Environmental Policy research division provides practical solutions to Canada's challenging energy and environmental policy problems. We do this by injecting evidence into policy debates, and by engaging with decision-makers, stakeholders and the public to create a forum for open and meaningful dialogue among different perspectives.

Scientific Director:
Jennifer Winter



FISCAL AND ECONOMIC POLICY

The Fiscal and Economic Policy research division evaluates the fiscal, economic and regulatory policies of the federal, provincial and municipal governments and proposes alternative policies that improve the lives of Canadians. We provide evidence-based policy analysis and advice to governments, the business sector and the general public on how policies can be reformed to meet the challenges that we face today and in the future.

Scientific Director:
Bev Dahlby



INTERNATIONAL POLICY AND TRADE

The International Policy and Trade research division conducts and disseminates the highest quality research and analysis in order to improve Canada's position in the global economy, and enhance Canada's influence in bilateral, international and multilateral settings. We focus on the economics of international policy, in particular issues related to trade policy, commerce and Canada's ties to emerging markets.

Acting Scientific Director:
David Bercuson

Our experts on the issues that matter most to Canada

Uzi Arad

National security and defence policy

Deborah Archibald

Community engagement and resource development policy

Matt Ayres

Energy and environmental policy

Philip Bazel

Fiscal and social policy

Eugene Beaulieu

International trade

Vivian Bercovici

Foreign policy and business

David Bercuson, O.C.

Military policy and national defence

Patrick Berrigan

Health economics

Brian Bietz

Energy and environmental policy

Paul Boothe

Economic and environmental policy

Brendan Boyd

Climate change policy

John Carruthers

Energy and Indigenous partnerships

Margaret Clarke

Child health and family policy

James Coleman

Energy, trade and transport policy

Daria Crisan

Tax analysis

Philip Cross

Business cycles and labour markets

John Curtis

International trade and finance

Bev Dahlby

Tax policy and fiscal federalism

Laura Dawson

Economic policy and U.S.-Canada relations

Jim Dilay

Resource extraction policy

Sarah Dobson

Resource taxation frameworks

Wendy Dobson

International policy, trade and finance

Stephanie Dunn

Disability and social policy

Serge Dupont

Natural resources and international finance

Daniel Dutton

Social determinants of health

Herbert Emery

Regional economics

Judit Fabian

Global governance

Kent Fellows

Energy and regulatory policy

Brittany Finlay

Disability policy

Thomas Flanagan

Politics and Indigenous issues

Robert Fonberg

Trade, security and cyber-issues

Pierre-Gerlier Forest

Health reform and federalism

Robert Hage

Foreign affairs and international trade

Ron Hallman

Environmental assessment

The Rt. Hon. Stephen Harper, P.C.

22nd Prime Minister of Canada

Eddy Isaacs

Energy and environmental technologies

Ali Jadidzadeh

Social policy and homelessness

Tom Jenkins, O.C.

Innovation and economic development policy

Najlaa Kallousa

Tax and accounting policy

Mukesh Khanal

Regional economic policy

Akram Khayatza-deh-Mahani

Population health

Ron Kneebone

Fiscal and social policy

Sheila Leggett

Extractive resource governance

Myles Leslie

Health quality and senior care

John Lester

Tax, innovation and entrepreneurship

Brian Livingston

Energy policy and law

Jack Lucas

Municipal politics

Janice MacKinnon

Fiscal policy and federal-provincial relations

Robert Mansell

Resource economics and regional policy

Richard Masson

Energy project development

Dan McFadyen

Extractive resource governance

Kenneth McKenzie

Energy, taxation and fiscal policy

Jack Mintz, C.M.

Tax policy

Michal Moore

Resource and energy economics

Ted Morton

Politics and energy policy

Lucija Muehlenbachs

Water, resource and energy policy

Norma Nielson

Financial markets policy

Eric Noël

Foresight and long-term policies

Martin Olszynski

Environmental law

Maya Papineau

Economics of climate change

Jean-Sébastien Rioux

International conflict and foreign policy

Nicholas Rivers

Environmental and renewable energy policy

Colin Robertson

International relations and defence, security and trade

Matthew Russell

Neurodevelopmental policy

Francisco Salazar

Energy regulatory policy

Lawrie Savage

Financial regulation, insurance and risk management

Anthony Sayers

Electoral policy

Wayne Simpson

Labour and urban policy

Robert Skinner

History and geopolitics of energy policy

Michael Smart

Tax and fiscal policy

Colum Smith

Health networks and cancer policy

Hugh Stephens

International trade and Canada-Asia relations

Leah Stokes

Energy and environmental policy

Andrei Sulzenko

National infrastructure and trade policy

Almos Tassonyi

Municipal and urban policy

Lindsay Tedds

Tax and economic policy

Trevor Tombe

Trade and economic policy

Alina Turner

Homelessness and affordable housing

Hussein Warsame

Tax planning and accounting policy

Lana Wells

Social policy and violence prevention

Jean-François Wen

Taxation and social insurance

Scott Wilkie

International taxation and tax treaties

Margarita Wilkins

Social policy indicators

Tom Wilson

Forecasting, fiscal and tax policy

Jennifer Winter

Energy and environmental policy

Krystle Wittevrongel

Disabilities and employment barriers

Joel Wood

Environmental economics

Jennifer Zwicker

Economics of health interventions

partners

Become a Partner in Policy

Our programs are made possible because of the generosity of our community, which has helped to establish The School of Public Policy as Canada's leading policy school. To learn about how you or your organization can play a part in our success and the improvement of policy in Canada, please contact us.

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