

Actions Taken and Changes Made as Result of Assessment, 2002-2006

Results of Assessment:

As a result of the exit survey and these other assessment activities, the Program has taken many steps to improve our curriculum and overall Program. The faculty:

2005-2006

1. Beginning in Spring 2006, the Program began to offer professional skills and career development workshops to students. The initial offerings included resume development and public speaking.
2. Decided that, with the approval of new faculty arriving in Fall 2007, the Program would develop its own internship course and procedures and would use part of the new faculty resources to provide better focus upon community service learning.
3. Updated the Student Learning Outcomes Portfolio to ensure that new skills and knowledge is included in the curriculum.
4. Instruction in Excel, SPSS and PowerPoint has been significantly upgraded to incorporate new tools and critiques about the use of these tools. Instruction is now benchmarked to industry certification standards for users. Dr. Stowers created a workbook for the use of Excel in budgeting and finance applications and is currently working on a significant revision of the exercises in that workbook.
5. The content in the two information management classes (PA 755: Managing Information in the Public Sector and PA 757: E-Government) is of course continually updated and upgraded.
6. The faculty have planned for and worked towards to incorporating concepts of information technology and management throughout our courses, as required by the NASPAA standard.

2004-2005

1. Changed the computer skills content taught for Excel, PowerPoint and SPSS (in the methods / statistics course) to ensure that students receive added value in computer skills in their degree program. Currently, the specific skills being taught in Excel and PowerPoint would enable students to test for and receive an Expert rating in the Microsoft Office Certification process; they include Excel PivotTables and PivotCharts, macros in Excel, statistical analysis in Excel, and use of advanced animation in PowerPoint.
2. Each semester, have discussed the effectiveness of each case used in PA 800 based upon subjective and now objective assessment data, and have agreed to change the cases so that those selected would be best suited for the purposes of the Strategic Assessment Memorandum process.
3. The faculty have also discussed at some length how to improve student's knowledge of public administration subfields, as seen in the Strategic Assessment Memoranda. A crucial result of the assessment process is the inclusion of one additional elective course in the degree curriculum.
4. The Program also made a proposal to fund a pilot PDA (Personal Data Assistant) / Handheld Computer lab from University Instructional Equipment funds. The proposal was approved, although the funds have now been cut. The Dean has stated he will fund the proposal out of College funds. This would provide students with experience in M-Government (or, Mobile Government), the next step after e-government.
5. The faculty have planned for and worked towards to incorporating concepts of information technology and management throughout our courses, as required by the NASPAA standard.

6. With student and alumni input, conducted a complete curriculum review. As a result of this review and our assessment information, the following changes have been made in the curriculum:
 - The research methods and statistics prerequisites were deleted;
 - The introductory course was substantially revised to cover additional needed material on basic American Government, public administration concepts, writing and oral presentations;
 - The graduate level research methods course was changed from one 4 unit course to two 3 unit courses to cover the material in the deleted prerequisites;
 - Two units were added to the number of elective units required so students will be taking 4 elective classes instead of 3;
 - All 4 unit courses were reduced to 3 units (some also were reclassified to maintain their 4 hours of instruction);
 - The total number of units for the degree were increased from 37 - 41 to 39 – 43 although the number of units (when including prerequisites) was decreased by 6 units and the total number of courses remain the same; and,
 - Elective emphases were updated to incorporate new courses.

2003-2004

1. Created additional electives for new faculty to teach—this resulted in significant changes in urban administration and nonprofit administration offerings.
2. Began to reduce size of classes by restricting admissions.
3. To ensure students learn online learning and communication tools, Blackboard and iLearn learning systems were used more frequently within classes as faculty make use of the hybrid model (in-class supplemented with online learning) for their classes.
4. Continued to formally emphasize various kinds of writing throughout our curriculum.

2002-2003

1. Adopted a Program citation standard to ensure more accurate research citations by students and more effective writing.
2. Required new (and graduating) students to purchase writing texts to ensure that all students had access to information about professional writing standards.
3. Further emphasized writing throughout our courses by requiring additional writing assignments, basing grading partially upon writing and providing feedback on writing and writing effectiveness.
4. To enhance our career guidance efforts, we added a focus upon careers and career guidance in the (then) new PA 800: Capstone course, worked with the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences Student Services Center to have the Director there give workshops to our students on career issues and made sure our jobs listserv was frequently listing new job opportunities.
5. Improved advising by enhancing record-keeping, calling in students who have not been advised (after record-keeping allowed us to determine who those were), redid the Program website with additional advising resources easily available on each page, improved the Program orientation, and sought to quickly answer emailed advising questions.