

San Francisco State University Public Administration Program

Annual Report
Academic Year 2004-2005



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Summary Data

Table 1: Overall Summary Data

Item	Number
Number of completed Applications (for accredited degree program <i>only</i>) received for current academic year	141
No. of New Admissions (regular & probationary) to program for current academic year	79
Number of Full-Time and Part-Time New Enrollments for current academic year	
Full-time	n/a
Part-time	53
Number of program degrees granted last academic year (03-04) (number of students who applied for graduation during 04-05: 57)	29
Number of Core Faculty (based on the definition you used in your last self study)	7

Table 2: Itemized Core Faculty

Name	<i>% of teaching load allocated to courses in the program</i>	Dept. (of their tenure)
Corey Cook	50%	Political Science
Sheldon Gen	67%	Public Administration
Richard LeGates	50%	Urban Studies
Debbie LeVeen	50%	Urban Studies
Kathy Naff	100%	Public Administration
Laurie Paarlberg	100%	Public Administration
Genie Stowers	100%	Public Administration

Table 3: Budgetary Data

Budget for the accredited degree program (not the school or dept.)	
Total for program, including salaries	\$311,912: travel and research support are not in Program budgets
Salaries of instructional faculty and staff <i>only</i>	\$301,649

Standard 1.0 Eligibility for Peer Review

There have been no changes in the San Francisco State University's Public Administration Program eligibility for peer review.

Standard 2.0 Program Mission

The mission of the Public Administration Program is to train students in the governance, policy, and administration of the public and nonprofit sectors through intellectual and practical interdisciplinary education. Through excellence and innovation in teaching, the ultimate goal of the Program is to prepare students to work in and manage the organization of tomorrow.

The Public Administration Program follows and supports the mission of the University in:

- Attracting, retaining, and graduating a highly diverse student body of public administration students;
- Providing a disciplinary and interdisciplinary professional education in public administration that is academically rigorous and intellectually challenging;
- Providing a public administration curriculum that reflects all dimensions of human diversity, and that encourages critical thinking and social and cultural awareness;
- Fostering a collegial and cooperative intellectual environment for students and faculty that includes recognition and appreciation of differing viewpoints and promotes academic freedom within the Program community; and
- Serving the communities with which public administration students and faculty are engaged.

Strategic Plan

The Public Administration Program continues to work to update its strategic plan and to implement our strategic process. This year, the Program is planning a major update of our Plan. In preparation for that process, we began by surveying 600 alumni and community employers about the knowledge, skills and abilities they believe are important in today's MPA graduates. This information will form the basis for a comprehensive update of our Student Learning Outcomes Portfolio, which is in turn the basis for our student learning goals, an important component of our strategic plan. Out of 641 surveys mailed out, we received 159 completed surveys, a completion rate of 24.8 percent. These will be analyzed over the summer in preparation for making changes in the contents of the required Portfolio.

In addition, this semester the PA 742: Strategic Management class utilized the Public Administration Program as their case project for developing a strategic vision and plan. As part of that process, they surveyed all of the Public Administration Program students (receiving 57 responses out of 160 current students) about technology issues. They also developed a SWOT analysis based upon a student perspective, engaged in a visioning exercise (extrapolating possible 5 year visions for the Program) and developed some benchmarks and did comparison research for the Program. The results of their

efforts were presented to the faculty at the faculty's May 16 meeting and will be utilized in updating the Strategic Plan.

At a late May meeting, the faculty will decide upon a process for completing the update of the Program's Strategic Plan. This process will involve additional surveys and focus groups of students, alumni and community employers as well as work by the faculty.

Portfolio

The work of building interest in our nationally recognized Student Learning Outcomes Portfolio has continued with great success. This was accomplished by folding the Portfolio into our PA 800: Capstone course, where the students have to produce the documents and projects to be part of their portfolio and write an accompanying introduction to the Portfolio. This document serves as an introduction to a potential employer of what they have learned and accomplished during their degree program. Therefore, we now have a very rich group of portfolios to examine and learn from.

Exit Survey / Learning Assessment

Finally, the Program has conducted an exit survey to assess students' perceptions of their learning achievement each term for four semesters now. We analyze these both separately and cumulatively each time they are given and discuss issues that arise each semester. Then, we use these results to address immediate concerns among the students and to assess how well we are achieving our Student Learning Goals.

From the cumulative results, it was apparent that only 44 percent of our graduates felt that the Program had contributed to advancing their computer skills to a great extent. While this is still a high number, it was by far the smallest proportion of students who felt the Program had contributed to any area. Even more surprising was that we had always felt that this was one of the strengths of the Program. Our hypothesis is that more students today come in with higher skill levels and therefore, we are able to teach them less than we could, previously, when some arrived with virtually no skills. To assist us in assessing this hypothesis, the students in PA 742 chose this area to survey their classmates this semester and we are looking forward to seeing those results.

Nevertheless, the faculty members have been including more "high-end", advanced skills in their instruction of Excel, PowerPoint, and SPSS and have been discussing ways to provide more advanced instruction (possible topics—GIS, desktop publishing, advanced web design, and more database instruction).

Standard 3.0 Program Jurisdiction

There were some changes in the organizational arrangements and program administration of the Public Administration Program during this past year. Due to

budget cuts in the University and College of Behavioral and Social Sciences, the Center for Interdisciplinary Programs (CIP) was shut down and the interdisciplinary programs administratively housed there were distributed among other units in the College.

The Public Administration Program agreed to share our administrative space with the Criminal Justice and Labor Studies Program **in exchange** for increasing our shared staff time from .50 to 1.0 and receiving 40 hours per week of work study student time. This change was then implemented during August 2004.

Thanks to the excellent staff work of our Office Coordinator, Bridget McCracken, this arrangement has been most beneficial for Public Administration Program faculty and students. Rather than having the office staffed 20 hours per week and only one night per week, the office is now staffed 45 hours per week and is open until 7 p.m. four nights per week. When students and faculty call the office, a person answers who is able to answer questions and the voice mail and email is answered quickly. The result is that an arrangement which had potential risks for those involved has, in fact, paid off enormously for everyone. All are in agreement that it has been a success in terms of improved service.

Standard 4.0 Curriculum

This year, we made additional changes to our MPA curriculum and these were approved by the College and the University. These changes, in effect Fall 2005, were:

- Two prerequisites (upper division research methods and upper division statistics) were deleted, leaving only a basic course in microeconomics;
- The introductory course (PA 700) 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 a 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 (12 units) instead of 3 (10 units);
- All 4 unit courses were reduced to 3 units (some also will be reclassified so courses like PA 730: Managing Budgets and PA 755: Managing Information will still have labs and be four hours long);
- The total number of units for the degree were increased from 37 - 41 to 39 – 43 although the number of units when including prerequisites were actually decreased by 6 units and the total number of courses will remain the same; and,
- Elective emphases course options were updated to incorporate new courses.

This results in a degree which has been increased from 37 to 39 units in nominal terms (41 to 43 units if a student has to take the internship); in real terms (with the reduction in the prerequisites), the degree will be reduced from 48 to 42 units (52 to 46 if the internship is included).

Table 4: Summary of Approved Curricular Changes

	Existing	Proposed
<i>Core Courses</i>	24 units / 7 courses	24 units / 8 courses
<i>Electives</i>	10 units / 3 courses	12 units / 4 courses
<i>Culminating Experience</i>	3 units / 1 course	3 units / 1 course
<i>Internship</i>	4 units (may be waived) / 1 course	4 units (may be waived) / 1 course
Total Units	37 – 41 units	39 – 43 units
Total Courses	11 – 12 courses	13 – 14 courses
Prerequisite Units	11 units (if needed) / 3 courses	3 units (if needed) / 1 course
Total Units With Prerequisites	48 – 52 units	42 – 46 units (a reduction in <u>6</u> real units)
Total Courses with Prerequisites	14 – 15 courses	14 – 15 courses

This year was a transition for the implementation of these changes. Spring 2005 was the last time that PA 705 was taught in its current format. The Program sent out letters, emails, made announcements, and put out flyers to ensure that all students who still needed the course would take it during Spring 2005. We were able to obtain resources and approval to teach two sections to accommodate the 44 students who still needed the course under the old scheme so that they would not have to take an additional course, PA 706, as well. The new sequence of methods / data analysis courses (PA 705 and PA 706) will be taught for the first time during the 2005-2006 Academic Year.

The previous year's changes to the culminating experience have gone extremely well. The students and faculty are very satisfied with the new PA 800: Capstone course with the accompanying Strategic Assessment Memo (Written Comprehensive Examination) and PA 898: Master's Thesis option. These replaced the PA 890: Master's Case Study Analysis, PA 895: Master's Project, and PA 898: Master's Thesis options. Students feel the new capstone and written comprehensive examination option is intellectually challenging, meaningful to their career goals, and interesting. They appreciate being able to synthesize their degree work and feel it prepares them well for their career choices.

One new course, PA 748: NGO Administration in an International Context, was developed and will be taught during the 2005-2006 Academic Year.

Standard 5.0 Faculty

There were significant changes in faculty during the 2004-2005 Academic Year. Our new faculty had successfully completed their first year and the two who had not yet completed their dissertations did so and successfully defended. They will be appointed assistant professors next year.

And, sadly, more of our original, interdisciplinary faculty who founded our Program 25 years ago retired.

- Marjorie Seashore, Sociology, fully retired in August 2004.
- Lilly Berry, Psychology but not a founding faculty member, fully retired in August 2004.
- Rufus Browning, Political Science and the Program's founding Director, fully retired in June 2004.
- Professor Jack Osman, Economics, completed his FERP (Faculty Early Retirement Program) in December 2004 and fully retired.
- Professor Rich DeLeon, Political Science, will complete his FERP at the end of Spring 2005 and fully retire.

Discussions ensued with the Economics Department to ensure that the PA 710: Microeconomic Applications for Public Administration, would still be taught. Professor Michael Potepan, Economics, taught the course in Fall 2004 and Spring 2005 and Professor Anousha Chaudhuri, Economics, will teach the course in Fall 2005.

The Program received College and Dean approval for a new faculty position to be hired in 2005-2006 in Emergency Management, to be housed in Public Administration and courses shared with the Geography Department and Criminal Justice Program. We are currently waiting to hear if this will be approved for funding with University level resources. In addition, a proposal for another position (Comparative and NGO Administration) is on the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences Hiring Plan to be hired during the 2006-2007 Academic Year.

Standard 6.0 Admission of Students

The number of classified students (i.e., the number of students enrolled in classes during any one semester) in the Program remained relatively steady but again at a record number of 144 students registered for classes in Fall 2004. This has kept the Public Administration Program as the largest graduate program in the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences and the 6th largest graduate program in the University.

Applications for admission continued to grow as well as did the quality of new students admitted. In fact, the Program is quite proud that we have made a successful transition to a growing, vibrant program with highly competitive admissions and outstanding students.

There were 103 applications in Fall 2004 with another 38 in the Spring. We admitted 57 students in the Fall (for a 55.3 percent acceptance rate) and 22 in the Spring (57.9 percent acceptance rate). Of those who were admitted, 37 enrolled in the Fall (64.9 percent enrollment rate) and 18 in the Spring (81.8 percent enrollment rate).

As can be seen, in an effort to keep our class sizes manageable and maintain a high quality experience for our students, the faculty felt the need to reduce our growth and the increasing numbers of new students and began to do so in Fall 2004. Tentatively, we are seeking a program with between 150 and 175 students. This has resulted in a much more highly competitive program with students who arrive with an average incoming grade point average of 3.5 to 3.6.

It is clear that SFSU's Public Administration Program has become a viable alternative to those seeking admission to the highest ranked universities, including UC Berkeley's School of Public Policy and to Stanford. Students seeking admission include more and more students from various University of California campuses and highly ranked universities from out of state.

Standard 7.0 Student Services

Our students continued to excel this year. The Program is very pleased to have had four Presidential Management Fellow finalists this year: Jennifer Brown, Nancy Gilbert, Robin Melrose Berman, and Thomas Wei. This was by far the most PMF Finalists of any California State University public administration program (the next highest was one finalist). Jessica McCracken participated in two statewide research competitions with her work on the public policies of street performers and will continue to develop her work in future classes.

We continued our significantly enhanced end of year reception with increased emphasis upon student recognition and networking with community members.

Since the new faculty had successfully navigated their first year, more advising was shifted from the Program Director to other faculty, according to a student's chosen field of emphasis.

Finally, the Public Administration Program, in its 25th year, graduated a record number of students during the 2004-2005 Academic Year: 57 students applied for graduation.

Standard 8.0 Support Services and Facilities

The level of supplies and services funding remained stable, similar to last year's budget. The Program has been able to supplement this funding successfully through increased levels of Concurrent Enrollment funds (funds from the tuition from non-matriculated students). These funds were used for a new multipurpose scanner / fax /

copier, to subsidize student tickets for the year-end reception, and to greatly supplement faculty travel funds.

The Program had much success with courses offered at SFSU's Downtown Center but the University is cutting back on its space there and it is unclear whether or not this will continue.

However, the quantity and quality of support services increased dramatically with the advent of our new administrative arrangement. Program faculty and students now enjoy a full-time Office Coordinator and a fully staffed office (9 am to 7 pm Monday – Thursday, 12 to 5 Fridays), as compared to 20 hours per week staffing and only one evening prior to this year.

The Program faculty approved a Equipment proposal for a new PDA / Handheld Computer pilot project for next year. This proposal was then approved by the College Methodology and Technology Committee and is being considered by the Provost's Office. If approved, up to 10 PDAs and handhelds will be purchased and used to develop class and research applications. If the pilot is successful, more units and software will then be purchased and these will then be utilized to create a mobile PDA lab for the use of the Public Administration Program and other units within the College.

Finally, planning began this year for a proposed new building which would house the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences, including the Public Administration Program. The proposed new building will be on the CSU bond issue on the March 2006 ballot. If approved and built, it will include separate offices for each faculty member, enhanced office and staff space, a student resource room for each graduate program in the College, space for community meetings and room for a Program computer lab.

Standard 9.0 Off-Campus Programs and Distance Education

The Program continues to offer mixed-mode (online and traditional) courses this year but did not offer any completely online courses.