

Public Administration M.P.A.

Expanded Statement of Institutional Purpose

Institutional Mission Reference

The Master of Public Administration Program offers graduate students a high quality degree program in Public Administration that meets national standards of excellence. Program faculty are committed to quality teaching and the discovery of new knowledge. The Master of Public Administration Program supports the University's mission of providing advanced professional education for the Hampton Roads area and the Commonwealth.

Institutional Goal(s) Supported

The Master of Public Administration Program supports the University goals of (a) quality graduate academic programs, (b) quality teaching, (c) discovery of new knowledge and (community service). (See pages 3-4 of the Old Dominion University Catalog and pages 7-11 vol. I of the NASPAA Self-Study Report). The Master of Public Administration Program also supports Strategic Initiative 2 (Excellent Graduate Programs). (See the Old Dominion University Strategic Plan).

Intended Educational (Student) Outcomes, Methods for Assessment, Criteria for Success, Assessment Results, and Use of Results

Intended Outcome 1

To create a vibrant and challenging learning environment where students can develop the theoretical knowledge and applied skills to better meet the challenges posed by a rapidly changing and dynamic environment and are sought out by public employers to become their future leaders.

Method for Assessing Outcome 1 and Criterion for Success: * annual alumni focus groups* satisfaction with job opportunities

Summary of Assessment Data Collected for Outcome 1: Focus groups conducted at the end of each academic year indicate a high level of satisfaction with promotional and other job opportunities.

Use of Assessment Results from Intended Outcome 1 to Improve Academic Program: No changes are contemplated at this time as a result of assessment data for outcome number one.

Intended Outcome 2

To enhance the knowledge and competencies of mid-career practitioners who seek professional development and growth in federal, state and local government, along with other non-profit organizations.

Method for Assessing Outcome 2 and Criterion for Success: * completion rates for core courses

Summary of Assessment Data Collected for Outcome 2: Completion rates for core MPA courses remain high. More than 95% of the students taking the core courses complete these courses with a grade of B or better.

Summary of Assessment Data Collected, Alternate Method for Outcome 2: No changes are contemplated at this time as a result of assessment data for outcome number two.

Intended Outcome 3

To provide students with a firm grounding in the responsibilities, values and ethical concerns of public service in order to better meet the needs of a diverse and multicultural society.

Method for Assessing Outcome 3 and Criterion for Success: * annual students surveys* students display knowledge of the importance of ethical concerns in their answers

Summary of Assessment Data Collected for Outcome 3: Feedback from the relevant focus groups did provide sufficient information concerning student views on ethical issues.

Use of Assessment Results from Intended Outcome 3 to Improve Academic Program: The method for assessing results of outcome number three must be revised. It is our intention to use student feedback (provided in student evaluations) from specific courses in ethics management as well as ethical issues discussed in core courses.

Intended Outcome 4

To conduct theoretical and applied public sector research.

Method for Assessing Outcome 4 and Criterion for Success:

* student knowledge of research methods, program evaluation and policy analysis

* large majority of students received grade of B or better

Summary of Assessment Data Collected for Outcome 4: The large majority of students taking research methods, program evaluation and policy analysis have completed the courses with a grade of B or better. However, the lowest student grade point average of any core course occurs with the research methods course.

Use of Assessment Results from Intended Outcome 4 to Improve Academic Program: At this time, no changes are contemplated to the program evaluation and policy analysis core courses. The research methods core course is being carefully reviewed to determine whether course materials (including SPSS), instructional techniques and quantitative methods covered are appropriate for the purposes of the course.