

Assessment Plan
Master of Public Administration Program
Eastern Kentucky University

The MPA Assessment Plan is designed to evaluate the program's ability to carry out its mission.

Section I: Program Strategic Management focuses on the appropriateness of the mission itself, and on whether an overall assessment plan is in place and is adequate to collect the necessary data to inform decision making and improve the program in governance, administration, program outreach, and teaching and learning. Program diversity efforts and outcomes are included here.

Section II: Administrative and Governance Capacity evaluates whether the program inputs (budget, faculty, administration, and operating autonomy) are sufficient to deliver an MPA program that accomplishes our mission.

Section III: Faculty Performance assesses the extent to which faculty professional and community service and scholarly and applied research are appropriate to carry out our mission.

Section IV: Students and Student Support Services evaluates the program's practices and outcomes with regard to recruitment and admissions, advising, internships, career counseling and placement efforts.

Section V: Teaching and Learning assesses the required Universal Competencies defined by the program and the actions taken based on this assessment to improve the program.

Regular Assessment Methods:

- **Current student survey:** 2 year cycle, conducted in POL 879 (spring semester). Survey items cover: mission/goals/values; recruitment information; internship placement information; student services information including career services and placements; teaching and learning competencies; Last conducted: Spring 2010. Next assessment due: Spring 2012
- **Graduating student survey:** every semester, required of all students who graduate. Survey items cover overall assessment of program, student learning, internship and career placement services
- **Advisory Committee:** 2 year cycle, in summer following current student survey. Committee reviews, revises, affirms mission/goals/values; reviews program demographic data; reviews and advises program on changes to program, curriculum, and governance practices. Last held: August 2010. Next meeting: Summer 2012. Subcommittees will meet as needed. Next meeting: Spring 2010 to approve 2011 – 1015 MPA Strategic Plan, meet with COPRA Site Visit Team if requested
- **Alumni survey:** 3 year cycle. Survey items will cover: mission/goals/values; career placements; teaching and learning competencies. Last conducted: Spring 2010. Next assessment due: Fall 2013 (in POL 800)
- **Employer survey:** The program uses Internship Supervisors as a proxy for employers.
- **Internship Supervisor survey:** every semester. Assesses professional conduct, key skills, knowledge, and capacity
- **Required Competencies assessments:** annual (see Section V)

Section I: Program Strategic Management

Purpose: To ensure the program has implemented regular, systematic, effective assessment of its Mission, Goals, and Values to determine if they are appropriate, clear, and achievable. To ensure the program has implemented a strategic planning process that examines program design, governance and administrative capacity, student services, faculty performance, and teaching and learning. The assessment must result in programmatic information that can be used to improve performance.				
What we are Assessing	Assessment Activities	Performance Indicator	Analysis of Results	Action Based on Results
Mission, Goals, Values: are they appropriate for current and potential students' career needs; employer needs; University mission; accreditation requirements? Are revisions needed?	Annual faculty review – first faculty meeting in fall	M, G, V appropriate to student population, employer demand; address accreditation standards	M, G did not address accreditation standards; Program had no formal Public Service Values	Faculty revised M, G. Faculty drafted Public Service Values Nov. 18, 2009
	Current student survey, Alumni survey		Students, alumni found M, G, appropriate	N/A
	Biennial Advisory Committee		Members wanted mention of program's national reputation; shorter goal statements	Faculty revised M, G, based on Ad. Com. review. Committee affirmed M, G, V, 8/20/2010
Strategic Plan: does program have 5-year plan; does program review plan, assess outcomes annually?	Strategic planning 5-year cycle; 2006-2011 in place (extended 1 year by University)	Program is meeting goals as measured by KPIs	New plan must be written in Spring 2011 for 2011-2015	Current plan not well suited to new standards, new program assessment plan or Grad School SLOs. Re-write new plan in Spring 2011, review w/ Ad. Com; revise as needed.
	Faculty review in fall 2009			
Program diversity efforts: does program promote inclusiveness?	Current student survey, Alumni survey	80% of students, alumni report "excellent", "above average" on diversity items	Benchmark data collected spring 2010; Current students average 84%; alumni average 75%	As part of competency assessment faculty will review course coverage, assignments; older alumni reflecting different program emphasis
	Analysis of faculty, student diversity data	Program exceeds state average for overall diversity	In 09_10 and 08_09 student diversity rate 14%. Core faculty diversity rate 20%	KPI exceeded, continue diversity efforts re: student recruitment, faculty recruitment
Efficacy of Universal Competencies Assessment: is plan in place? Implemented appropriately? Evaluated? Does it inform program improvement?	See Section V for specific competency assessments.	Student Learning Assessment based on Universal Competencies is implemented, program monitors scope of competency attainment, uses results to improve course content, assignments, etc. as needed	Plan developed, adopted by faculty, full assessment cycle done for analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions; deadline set for assessment cycle for other 4 competencies to be fully implemented	Continue to review, improve competency assessment rubric, simplify where possible, implement data analysis and use of all competencies by deadline of Spring 2012

Section II: Administrative and Governance Capacity

Purpose: To ensure program has implemented a regular, systematic, effective assessment of program inputs (budget, faculty, administration, and operating autonomy) to determine if they are sufficient to deliver an MPA program that accomplishes our mission.

What we are Assessing	Assessment Activities	Performance Indicator	Analysis of Results	Action Based on Results
Program budget	Annual review by MPA director, annual report to faculty (Annual Report implemented in Spring 2012)	Dedicated PA Funds at least 90% of previous year	Fall 2010 PA Fund Account 98% of Fall 2009; CMLG Account 95% of previous fall	Short-term: no action needed. Long-term: discuss fundraising opportunities with Ad. Com.
		Salaries, benefits in line with overall University increases (decreases)	MPA Faculty aligned with University	No action needed
Program Faculty	Annual review by MPA director, annual report to faculty	Program maintains at least 5 nucleus faculty substantially involved in program governance	Five faculty rule met.	Short-term: no action needed. Long-term: discuss Paul Foote (Adm Law) joining core faculty; nonprofit faculty needs
Administrative Capacity	Annual review by MPA director, annual report to faculty	Program administrative assistant: position filled, annual performance review Excellent or Above Average on all measures	Teresa Howard in position (in 20 th year); 2009-10 performance review KPI met	Short-term: no action needed. Long-term: discuss appropriate training for web design, data base management
MPA Program Review	Review with Advisory Committee current program design, required course offerings, optional tracks. Determine if changes needed.	Program design appropriate to support mission, needs of students	24% of current students intend to work in nonprofits; majority of internships, job placements in 2008-09 and 2009-10 in nonprofit organizations	Students find lack of nonprofit track a serious weakness. Advisory Committee recommends developing nonprofit track and certificate program. Program will develop proposal, review with/seek approval from dept., college, Graduate School, and University.
	Current student survey Alumni survey Internship placements Career Placements	Program design appropriate to support mission, needs of students		

Section III: Faculty Performance

Purpose: To ensure core faculty teaching effectiveness is assessed and any problems are addressed; that faculty are engaged in professional service and outreach appropriate to program mission; that faculty applied and scholarly research productivity is appropriate to achieve our mission. To ensure that all adjuncts and part-time faculty possess academic and/or professional credentials directly related to courses they teach in the curriculum.				
What we are Assessing	Assessment Activities	Performance Indicator	Analysis of Results	Action Based on Results
Teaching Effectiveness	Syllabi review by all MPA faculty annually in spring. To be implemented spring 2012	Faculty consensus that syllabi are appropriate to achieve student learning objectives	N/A	N/A
	Student evaluations reviewed by faculty member and MPA director each semester. (New student eval implemented fall 2011; assessment not comparable to past evaluations). To be given fall 2011	All MPA faculty at department average or above; All MPA faculty review their student evaluations for issues that should be addressed.	N/A	N/A
Faculty Applied and Academic Research Productivity; Faculty Outreach and Professional Service	Annual Merit Application (all MPA faculty)	All MPA faculty assessed as "Meeting Expectation" (Chair provides aggregate data; merit scores are confidential)	Will begin Spring 2012	N/A
	Annual Self-evaluation (all untenured faculty)	Department P&T Committee assesses all untenured faculty as meeting expectations (Chair provides aggregate data; evaluations are confidential)	Will begin Fall 2011	N/A
	MPA director annual review of faculty Curriculum Vita in spring semester	Annual evidence of applied or academic research; annual evidence of service to profession	All MPA faculty had scholarly activity appropriate to mission. 80% of faculty had service appropriate to mission.	No action needed re research. Colleague w/o service is developing plan for service to Estill County's Leadership project.
Adjunct and part-time faculty are properly credentialed, and productive in research and service as appropriate to their positions and fields	MPA director review of vita	Professional or academic credentials as appropriate; evidence of research in their field; evidence of service to profession	Analysis conducted spring 2010; all adjunct or part-time faculty appropriately credentialed with records of appropriate service & research	No action needed.

Section IV: Students and Student Support Services

Purpose: To evaluate the program's practices and outcomes with regard to recruitment and admissions, advising, internships, career counseling and placement efforts.				
What we are Assessing	Assessment Activities	Performance Indicator	Analysis of Results	Action Based on Results
Student recruitment efforts and results	MPA director annual review of Recruitment plan to determine appropriateness to mission, to population of potential students	Recruitment plan implemented, plan review determines activities appropriate to mission, potential students	2008_09, 2009_10 plan review: recruitment fairs, letters to practitioners, prospective students carried out.	Short term: No change to recruitment plan at this time. Long-term: Seek grant funds from Graduate School for 2012_2013 recruitment plan
Student applications, admissions, enrolled students	Annual review by MPA director, annual report to MPA faculty	60 Completed Applications 40 Admissions 30 Enrolled Students	08-09 09-10 Completed Apps: 39 38 Admissions 34 28 Enrolled Students 28 15 2010-11 Estimates: Completed Apps 38 Admissions 34 Enrolled Students 27	Short-term: meet with EKU enrollment mgmt staff on recruitment strategies. Survey admits who don't enroll. Long-term: implement, market nonprofit track
Degree completion	Annual review by MPA director, annual report to MPA faculty	SSY-5: 22 Initially Enrolled; 9 FT & 13 PT students	Completion rate: 64% (14 students). W/I 2 yr: 8FT, 1 PT. W/I 5 yr: 0FT,4PT. > 5 yr 0 FT, 1 PT	Grad School implementing continuous enrollment. Prog. Dir. report status of all students annually.
Advising	Current student survey	80% of current students indicate advising is excellent; above avg.	Not assessed in Spring 2010	Include advising items on next current student survey
Internship Placements: adequacy of placements, appropriateness to mission	Current student survey	80% of current students indicate ability to find appropriate placement. 80% indicate program assistance is excellent or above average	Not assessed in Spring 2010 survey items; discussed in open-ended questions: pre-service students want more program assistance located internships	Add internship item to current student survey. Program is working on formal alliance with 2 local governments and 3 non-profits in area for better placement options
	MPA director annual review of Internship placement data, annual report to MPA faculty	90% of students placed in local government, regional or state government, or nonprofits	96% of students in 2008-09 and 2009-10 completed internships in appropriate placements	No action needed.
Career counseling, job placements	Current student survey Alumni survey Graduating student survey	All students know of career services office. 80% of graduating students indicate career services excellent or above average	Not assessed in Spring 2010 surveys.	Add career counseling to current student and alumni survey; graduating student survey
	MPA director annual review of placement data, annual report to faculty	90% of grads employed/6 mo. 95% of grads employed/1 yr 90% of grads in local, regional, state government, nonprofits	Of 23 grads in 2008-09 and 2009-10, 1 was unemployed, 2 status unknown. Of all known: 95% employed; all in appropriate jobs	No action needed.

Section V: Teaching and Learning

Purpose: To assess student mastery of required competencies and describe program action taken in response to assessment findings

MAPPING COMPETENCIES TO THE CURRICULUM					
Required Course/Activity	To lead and manage in public governance	To participate in and contribute to the public policy process	To analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions	To articulate and apply a public service perspective	To communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry
POL 765 Admin Law or LAS 735 Municipal Law	I	I	I	I	
POL 800 Research Methods		P	P	I	P
POL 801 Admin, Ethics & Policy	I	I	I	I	I
POL 875 Organizations & Mgmt	P	P	P	P	P
POL 876 Human Resource Mgmt	I/P	I	I	P	P/M
POL 877 Public Finance Admin	P	P	P/M	P	P
POL 879 Policy Analysis & Program Eval	P	P	P/M	I/P	P
POL 871 Internship	P/M	P/M	P/M	P/M	P/M
POL 871 Final Research Project	P/M	M	M	M	M
Written Comprehensive Exam	M	M	M	M	
Oral Comprehensive Exam	M	M	M	M	M

Note: I = Introduced; P=Practiced; M=Demonstration of mastery

MAPPING EKU GRADUATE SCHOOL STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES TO THE MPA COMPETENCIES					
To explain, discuss, and apply clearly and accurately the key concepts and central theories, and demonstrate expertise appropriate to the discipline	X		X	X	
To formulate and express important/essential questions and issues related to the discipline with clarity and accuracy, and appropriate depth and breadth	X	X	X	X	X
To identify, collect, analyze, and evaluate relevant information to understand essential questions and issues and to advance knowledge in the discipline			X		
To identify, analyze, and evaluate underlying assumptions of arguments, abstract ideas, and alternative perspectives and theories			X		
To generate new knowledge, application, or creative expressions through the self reflective synthesis of information, evaluation, and analysis of critical questions or issues/problems related to the discipline			X		
To communicate clearly and logically using oral, written, and/or artistic forms					X

Assessing Student Mastery of Required Competencies

Competency: Students who graduate from the MPA program should be able to **analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions**

Learning Outcome Defined	Evidence Collected	Analysis and Findings	Action Based on Results
Employ analytical tools for collecting, analyzing, presenting, and interpreting data, including appropriate statistical concepts and techniques	Final course research paper and final exam results in POL 800 SSY, SSY-1	Some students show poor understanding of which analytical tools appropriate for specific research questions and data	Increased lab time, more opportunities to practice using analytical tools without specific prompt from instructor
	Faculty evaluate 10 randomly selected final required research projects in POL 871 SSY, SSY-1 using assessment rubric	80% demonstrate excellent or above average use of analytical tools, clear descriptions and graphical/tabular illustrations of analysis	Practice in courses beyond POL 800 result in increased student mastery.
Comprehend and apply statistical and decision tools for public management.	Faculty and invited practitioners evaluate final program evaluation papers and presentations in POL 879 SSY	All projects met expectations. Analysis appropriate, linked research questions to policy recommendations.	Program includes student eval of program in 2-year cycle of this class. Faculty working on other 'real world' eval projects.
Identify, analyze, and evaluate underlying assumptions of public policy alternatives	Student performance on case study requiring identification of alternatives to local budget constraints requiring spreadsheets, identifying & prioritizing strategies to balance budget SSY	Most projects met expectations.	Expand coverage of links among policy goals, budget policy alternatives
Understand and apply the legal context of municipal and nonprofit administration	Faculty evaluate final papers in POL 765, LAS 735 SSY-1; faculty evaluate the final project in POL 846 SSY – scoring rubric to assess ability to apply legal context to administrative problems	Projects, papers in municipal law, nonprofit classes demonstrate appropriate understanding and application. Admin Law papers show students have difficulty applying core concepts to local public/non-profit administrative problems.	Reviewing cases used to increase application to local, regional, state public, nonprofit agencies
Generate new knowledge or application through the synthesis of information, evaluation, and analysis of critical questions, issues or problems related to public administration and public policy.	MPA faculty evaluate 10 randomly selected final required research projects in POL 871 SSY, SSY-1 using rubric to assess level of application	About two thirds of the research projects attempt the generation of new knowledge or application with conclusions/recommendations appropriate to address administrative/policy problems. Some students have difficulty with appropriate scope of final project; analysis adequate but in some recommendations exceed findings	Faculty evaluating whether to include final research requirement in POL 871 Internship to create tighter link between applied projects and final research
Overall competency	Current student survey; Alumni survey done in SSY	Current students: Over 85% confident in program's ability to teach skills/knowledge in this domain; over 75% confident in their abilities in domain. Alumni:79% score program excellent/above average in teaching in this domain	Deliberate Identification of competencies in domain new in SSY. Refine definition, link more specifically to syllabi SLOs, course assignments, exams.