

Program Performance Review: Culmination Meeting Memo Master of Public Administration, MPA

The 2016-2017 Program Performance Review (PPR) process for Master of Public Administration, MPA program concluded with a culmination meeting on September 7, 2017. The program submitted its disciplinary accreditation materials in lieu of the required PPR materials.

The following people attended the meeting: Anil Puri (Provost), Pamella Oliver (Associate Vice President of Academic Programs), Sheryl Fontaine (Dean, HSS), Lynn Sargeant (Associate Dean, HSS), Stacy Mallicoat (Chair), Shelly Arsneault (Program Coordinator), Sam Stone (Faculty), David Adams (Faculty), and Su Swarat (Assistant Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness).

The Provost thanked the faculty for their effort in completing the accreditation process. The accreditation agency, the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs and Administration (NASPAA), requested additional information on several issues in the Commission on Peer Review and Accreditation (COPRA) One-Year Reaccreditation Report.

Discussion and suggestions for addressing the requested information took place in preparation for the program's submission of the final report (see numbered items below). The program submitted its final report to the Commission in June 2018. In response, the Commission found the Master of Public Administration program to be in "substantial conformity with NASPAA Standards for Professional Master's Degree Programs in Public Affairs, Policy and Administration". The program is accredited for a period of 6 years (9/1/18 – 8/31/24).

1. The program is requested to provide additional information regarding its approach to program evaluation, demonstrating clear connection between mission, goals, and its program evaluation and student learning assessment processes.
 - The faculty stated that the program is addressing this issue systematically, re-examining and highlighting the alignment between its mission statement, goals, student competencies, learning outcomes, and evidence.
 - The faculty will develop an assessment plan in the Spring. A three-member assessment committee has been formed to work on it. They will also re-evaluate the LOGIC model, not only for Student Learning Outcomes, but also for other aspects of program operation (e.g. program input/output, faculty research/scholarship activities).
 - The program is working on its interim report (due in September 2017), addressing the specific concerns raised by NASPAA; It will submit its final report in June 2018, which will include a comprehensive evaluation plan (e.g. new LOGIC model, mission, goals, SLOs, rubric, etc.).
 - The AVPAP concurred that existing, successful practices need to be made more explicit in the program's upcoming reports.

2. The program is requested to provide additional information regarding how the program operationalizes its diversity plan to intentionally promote a climate of inclusiveness, including its efforts to refine the exit survey, incorporate guest speakers, and the results of its work reviewing diversity in the curriculum.
 - The faculty acknowledged the original accreditation report did not clearly articulate the program's diversity goals, and that there is a strong need to connect all related activities to highlight the program's effort to promote diversity.
 - The faculty will expand the LOGIC model beyond student learning assessment to include other aspects of program operation (e.g. curriculum, student experience, internship performance, alumni report).

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- The faculty pointed out that NASPAA is more interested in the *process* to promote diversity and to create a climate of inclusiveness. Part of the effort in this regard is the programs' Exit Survey. The program is working with the SSRC to improve the survey, and is hoping to develop an alumni survey that captures the issue of diversity as well.
 - The AVP of Academic Programs recommended the program to work with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to review the survey, and in addition, to seek an external consultant to review the reports before submission.
3. The program is requested to provide evidence of support systems appropriate to support students to persist to graduation, and to consider additional causes which may impact student retention and graduation.
- The Program Coordinator stated that the original report included incorrect data and inaccurate language in discussing student retention. The program has spoken with the IR office to ensure that correct data (i.e. post-census enrollment data, focusing on students who have registered for classes) are used in upcoming reports.
 - The program examined retention data for pre-service and in-service students, and decided to focus on marketing to in-service students. The information sessions are helpful in attracting the ideal applicants, and the writing samples required during the application process also help select out unqualified applicants.
 - The Dean recommended the program to consider developing different marketing materials to attract ideal applicants. The Associate Dean indicated that the updated university application process will allow for program-specific customization, which may also help the program attract target applicants.
4. The program is requested to elaborate on its approach to assessment, and to provide evidence that assessment enables the program to focus improvement on program-wide student learning.
- The program is required to complete a full-cycle of assessment on 1 competency by May 2018, and to establish plans to address 2 more competencies. The faculty expressed confidence that there is plenty of evidence, but acknowledged the need to describe the evidence fully in the upcoming reports.
 - The AVP for Institutional Effectiveness suggested that the program should consider reducing the number of SLOs. The faculty concurred, and expressed the intent to do so.

The Provost encouraged the program to continue its effort, and to strive for successfully meeting NASPAA's standards. He emphasized that commitment to accreditation needs to come from the leadership and involve all faculty. He recommended the program to send faculty to NASPAA conferences to increase their awareness and expertise. The program is also suggested to consult the accreditation reports of other CSU MPA programs.

The Dean thanked the faculty for their hard work. She reiterated the college's commitment to help the program succeed through various support services (e.g. marketing, data analysis and student success).