

FEB 17 2005

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**Master of Public Administration, Political Science  
Assessment of Student Learning Plan  
Kansas State University**

Check the box if your program's student learning outcomes have been modified since November 2003. If so, please email ([apr@ksu.edu](mailto:apr@ksu.edu)) or attach a hard copy to this document.

**A. College, Department, and Date**

College: *Arts and Sciences*  
Department: *Political Science*  
Date: *October 11, 2004*

**B. Contact Person(s) for the Assessment Plans**

*Joe Aistrup, Department Head, Political Science*  
*Krishna Tummala, Director, M.P.A., Chair M.P.A. Committee*

**C. Degree Program**

Master of Public Administration

**D. Assessment of Student Learning Three-Year Plan**

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

1. *Demonstrate expertise in research methods and policy analysis, understand the politics and economics of public budgeting and the various budgetary techniques, know organization theory and behavior, understand importance of information technology, and show mastery of laws and practices pertaining to personnel management;*
2. *Have knowledge of one or more elective areas such as administrative law, administrative ethics and comparative administration and show expertise in one area of concentration such as: budgeting, personnel management, international/comparative administration, or planning.*
3. *Pre-service students, while working as interns, acquire practical experience in administration and the workings of public or not-for-profit bureaucracies, while mid-career students relate their work experience to literature on public administration.*

Relationship to K-State Student Learning Outcomes (insert the program SLOs and check all that apply):

	<b>University-wide SLOs (Undergraduate Programs)</b>	<b>Program SLO is</b>
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Program SLOs	Knowledge	Critical Thinking	Communication	Diversity	Academic / Professional Integrity	conceptually different from university SLOs
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						

Program SLOs	University-wide SLOs (Graduate Programs)			Program SLO is conceptually different from university SLOs
	Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes and Professional Conduct	
1.	X	X	X	
2.	X	X	X	
3.	X	X	X	
4.				
5.				

**1. How will the learning outcomes be assessed? What groups will be included in the assessment?**

- Demonstrate expertise in research methods and policy analysis, understand the politics and economics of public budgeting and the various budgetary techniques, know organization theory and behavior, understand information technology, and show mastery of laws and practices pertaining to personnel management.*

This learning outcome will be assessed through the written comprehensive examination that occurs in each student's final semester in the M.P.A. program. This examination covers each of the major areas of Public Administration noted above. We will collect these exams and an assessment form, indicating whether the students pass with distinction, pass, or fail.

This is a *direct* assessment.

- Have knowledge of one or more elective areas such as administrative law, administrative ethics and comparative administration and show expertise in one area of concentration such as: budgeting, personnel management, international/comparative administration, or planning.*

None of the areas of concentration are offered solely within the department and as such, the department has no control over faculty teaching these courses to our students in these other departments. Nonetheless, we evaluate the general student learning outcomes using the MPA graduate research paper. This paper is written after students complete their internships or work experience. Students' areas of concentration and their internship/work experience generally coincide with one another (see description below).

These are methods of Direct assessment.

3. *Pre-service students, while working as interns, acquire practical experience in administration and the workings of public or not-for-profit bureaucracies, while mid-career students relate their work experience to literature on public administration.*

Students must submit an MPA graduate research paper after their internship and/or at the end of their program of study to demonstrate their competence in applying knowledge they gained from their core areas, elective areas and chosen area of concentration to their internship or in-service work related experiences. We will collect these graduate research papers and the supervising professor and the graduate committee will evaluate in an oral examination the quality of each student's knowledge and ability to apply this knowledge to the real world of their internship or work experiences. The students' graduate research paper and oral examination will be evaluated on the scale of excellent, passing, failed, as indicated on an assessment form.

These are methods of *direct* assessment.

2. **When will these outcomes be assessed? When and in what format will the results of the assessment be discussed?**

**Three-Year Plan:**

**Year One:** An assessment form will be used by all faculty supervising students' M.P.A. committees, to be attached to each student's completed comprehensive examination. It will indicate whether the student passed with distinction, passed or failed this examination. The form will allow space for additional comments from the major professor and any of the other committee members so that all are encouraged to give feedback on student performance. These forms will be placed in the students' files along with their examinations. This form will also include space for rating the MPA graduate research paper and oral examination. These forms will provide the most important data for the committee to assess student achievement.

**Year Two:** We will continue to collect the assessment forms described above, monitoring the efficiency of the process and the usefulness of the assessment forms for the faculty.

**Year Three:** In the Spring of the third year the M.P.A. Committee will meet, review the forms and a sampling of student examinations and graduate research papers (including samples of poor or failing examinations, and examinations and research that are passing, or excellent). The Committee will summarize the results of its review and bring its findings and initial recommendations for improvement to the full faculty during a strategic planning meeting. The committee will then finalize its recommendations for improving the program in light of the faculty's suggestions.

We will continue the assessment process detailed above and will begin the process of any changes or necessary improvements in our approaches to teaching, examinations

or research. This assessment process will continue with the M.P.A. Committee doing its review every three years. The first assessment will be considered our benchmark.

**Alumni Survey:**

Once every three years, graduates of the MPA program will be surveyed to ascertain their opinions on the value and usefulness of their graduate training at KSU for their current position and professional success. Alumni comments will also be taken into consideration when making recommendations for improving the program.

**3. What is the unit's process for using assessment results to improve student learning?**

<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Improvement Plan</b>
1. Knowledge of core Public Administration Areas	Student exams and assessment forms will be collected for a three year period, and then evaluated by the M.P.A. committee. Alumni survey will also be taken into consideration. If any problems or weaknesses are discovered, the committee will make recommendations to the full faculty, which will make final decisions on how to correct them. At each new assessment, we will compare the current results to the benchmark as well as the most recent assessment to track progress and continue to recommend any improvements that may be necessary.
2. Knowledge of elective areas and area of concentration	Every third year, the M.P.A. committee will meet to review the graduate research papers, comprehensive exams, and oral exams completed by our recent graduates and on that basis will present recommendations to the full faculty. The faculty will make final decisions on whether and how to make any changes in our courses. Findings from the Alumni Survey will also be taken into consideration when considering revisions.
3. Practical experience or in service work experience	Every third year, the M.P.A. committee will meet to review the graduate research papers submitted by our recent graduates and their oral examinations. On this basis, the MPA committee will present recommendations to the full faculty. The full faculty will make final decisions on whether and how to make any changes in our courses. Findings from the Alumni Survey will also be taken into consideration when considering revisions.