Augusta University Master of Public Administration (MPA)
Program Achievements and Assessment Report
2016 - 2017 Academic Year

Introduction

The 2016 – 2017 academic year was a productive one for the Augusta University MPA. During the year, the program doubled in size from around 26 students to 55 students. We completed a cybersecurity workforce study for the Augusta University Cyber Institute and the overall community. We graduated 12 students, and all of the graduates are either employed or advancing their education in higher degree programs.

Based on this past year’s success, we are confident in stating that the program is poised to significantly contribute to the overall community development and governance of the Augusta Metro. Below is a summary of the program’s achievements this past academic year.

• We helped complete the 2017 Augusta University Cyber Institute | MPA Cybersecurity Workforce study, which has been widely discussed throughout the university and the local community. The report can be accessed by visiting the following site: http://cyber.augusta.edu/cybersecurity-workforce-study/
• Our enrollment increased from 26 in Spring 2016 to over 50 students in Fall 2017.
  o We received over 52 applications for Summer 2017 or Fall 2017 admissions (an increase from 22 applications received last year).
  o We admitted 35 students during the Summer and Fall 2017 admissions cycle.
  o Thirty new students enrolled during the Summer and Fall 2017 admissions (an increase from 13 new students admitted last fall).
• Six of our students received travel funding from The Graduate School ($3,000).
• With help from Rich Rogers in the Division of Communication and Marketing and Dr. Martha Ginn in the Pamplin Dean’s Office, we completely redesigned our website.
• Our office coordinator Erycha Medeiros has helped maintain our website and revolutionize the program’s graphics and social media efforts.
• We received funding from the Augusta University Cyber Institute to offer e-government training modules to the community for free.
• MPA faculty conducted over 35 media interviews.
• We graduated 12 students. Two of our students earned the Certificate in Nonprofit Leadership.
• Our current student body has a mean GPA of 3.75.
• Three of our recent students started PhD programs (Allison Vick at UGA, Anne Merloiu at Valdosta State University, and Giorgi Khatiashvili at Ole Miss).
• This fall semester, seven students are working as graduate assistants.
• We redesigned our curriculum to offer students the opportunity to take more electives.
• We surveyed local employers and program alumni as an effort to continue improving our program.
• We increased the size of our Community Advisory Board.
• Alumni Patrick Clayton won the distinguished alumni award for Pamplin College.
The achievement and assessment report is divided into the following sections:

- First, we discuss the MPA program’s achievements.
- Second, we analyze the results of the program’s exit survey. All graduating students are asked to complete an exit survey. The MPA director and faculty use the data from the survey to make programmatic decisions.
- Third, we analyze the results of last year’s course-embedded assessments. This was the fourth full year for doing learning outcomes assessment based on the 2009 NASPAA accreditation standards. The program has assessed all five of NASPAA’s core competency areas.
- Fourth, we discuss the results of the program’s cultural competency and diversity efforts.
- Lastly, we discuss the program’s marketing and promotion activities.

**Program Achievements**

**Student Achievements**

The MPA program is proud of its excellent students. This past academic year (Fall 2016 and Spring 2017), the program admitted 23 students, and 12 students completed their requirements for graduation. Two students completed the requirements for the Certificate in Nonprofit Leadership. Below are some of the major student accomplishments from the past academic year:

- The program has a number of students who are maintaining 4.0 GPAs.
- The mean GPA of current students is 3.75.
- Three students published articles and essays in scholarly forums.
  - Allison Vick was a coauthor on the 2017 Cyber Institute | MPA Cybersecurity Workforce Study. Allison is also a coauthor on a peer-reviewed article with Dr. Hatcher: Hatcher, William and Allison Vick (MPA student). (forthcoming). Promoting your Community on the Web: An Exploratory Analysis of the Web Presence of Cities in Georgia. *Georgia Journal of Public Policy*
  - Parker Riggs is a columnist for the American Society for Public Administration’s main trade journal, *PA Times*.
  - Ann Merloiu is completing a book review for *Politics and the Life Sciences*.
- Last year, students in PADM 6750, Program Evaluation surveyed local employers and alumni for the MPA program.
- Our students presented their research at academic conferences.
  - Erika Broussard presented at the 2017 Southeastern Conference for Public Administration.
  - Anna Merloiu presented at an interdisciplinary studies conference at the University of Georgia.
- This past year, a number of our students have obtained jobs in the field of public service.

*Cybersecurity Workforce Study*
This past spring, the MPA program, with funding and assistance from the Cyber Institute, designed and implemented a workforce study of the cybersecurity industry in the Augusta Metro area. The project is the first comprehensive investigation into the cyber workforce of the area that Fortune magazine as labeled as one of the world’s top cyber hubs. The project is a partnership between our MPA program and Augusta University’s Cyber Institute. Dr. Mark Harris, a faculty member in the Hull College of Business, is also a key contributor to the research. We are excited to see the results of the study and work toward making our community a hub for cyber innovation.

The study was a huge success for the program. The work has been mentioned favorably by university leadership and reported by the media. The study’s findings have been covered by the Augusta Chronicle, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Government Technology, Speaking with…Carl Thornton Jr., WJBF News Channel 6, There It Is with Deke Copenhaver, WRDW News 12, The Augusta Chronicle, Government Technology and other media outlets.

Information about the extent of the media coverage can be found on the MPA program’s town and gown website: http://www.augusta.edu/pamplin/mpa/town_gown.php

**Figure 1: MPA Growth**

![MPA Total Student Body, Fall 2009 - Fall 2017](image)

**Program Growth**

This past year, the MPA program enjoyed significant growth in enrollment. Figure 1 tracks the MPA enrollment over time. Since Spring 2016, the program’s total enrollment has doubled. The
MPA growth shows that there is support in the community for the program, and demonstrates the overall quality of the program in being able to recruit current and future public managers.

Community Initiatives

The Augusta University MPA program has an excellent relationship with public servants in the Augusta Metro area. The program has a strong history of community service and outreach. This past year, the program continued this important work by being involved in a number of initiatives helping local nonprofit and public agencies.

- The 2017 Augusta University Cyber Institute | MPA Cybersecurity Workforce Study provides valuable economic data to Augusta University and policy makers in the Augusta Metro area.
- Each semester, the MPA program sponsored a town and gown series of speakers addressing issues relevant to the Augusta community.
- Dr. Hatcher is working on public outreach projects with the Greater Augusta Arts Council.
- The Fall 2016 and Spring 2017 students in PADM 6750, Program Evaluation surveyed local employers and MPA program alumni. The information is being offered for the local community on the MPA’s town and gown website.
- Through a generous grant from Augusta University Cyber Institute, the MPA program developed an online training program focusing on e-government and security training. The training program is available on the MPA website: http://www.augusta.edu/pamplin/mpa/e_governance.php
- MPA student Parker Riggs helped organize the Augusta University MPA student chapter of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA).
- Many of our MPA faculty members are active in local civic groups.

Certificate in Nonprofit Leadership

In the Fall 2016, the Augusta University MPA, in conjunction with the Hull College of Business’s MBA program, launched a Certificate in Nonprofit Leadership. The nonprofit sector is rapidly growing and is one of the largest industries in the Augusta metro area. In recent years, the number of nonprofit organizations in the nation has increased to 2.3 million, which is over 5% of the nation’s gross domestic product. These organizations are looking for managers with training in nonprofit principles. Managers in nonprofit organizations work with business, develop local economies, and provide crucial services to communities.

The Certificate is on track to be successful. In Spring 2017, we had our first graduations of the program. Going forward, we hope to grow the certificate.

BA to MPA

In Fall 2016, the program secured university approval for its accelerated option, the BA to MPA. The accelerated MPA degree option allows students majoring in Political Science and Criminal
Justice, who meet certain guidelines, the opportunity to apply 9 hours of MPA classes to both the 124 hour undergraduate degrees and the MPA degree. The accelerated option will help Augusta University increase undergraduate enrollment in the Political Science and Criminal Justice fields and graduate enrollment in the MPA program. The accelerated option will assist the MPA program in recruiting and retaining our excellent undergraduate students.

We are hoping to grow the BA to MPA component of our program. Fall 2017 is the first semester that students are enrolling in the BA to MPA. Currently, the program already has three students in the BA to MPA program.

**Faculty Productivity**

MPA faculty have a responsibility to connect theory and practice for their students. To accomplish this goal, MPA faculty need to be productive researchers and encourage their students to work on research projects. This past year, our MPA faculty published in highly ranked peer-reviewed outlets and contributed to organizations in the Augusta community. Below are some of the major achievements of the MPA faculty.

- The MPA faculty published a number of peer-reviewed articles (over 12 in major outlets)
- Dr. Allison Foley is engaged in meaningful applied research in our community working with graduate students and the Richmond Country Sherriff’s Department.
  - Dr. Foley has had two of her encyclopedia article submissions accepted by the *Encyclopedia of Corrections* co-authored with MPA alumnus, Giorgi Khatiashvili.
  - Dr. Foley also has an article under review for the *Journal of Healthcare for the Poor and Underserved*.
  - This past December, she had a baby! We’re happy for Dr. Foley and her family. Even with such a tumultuous life event,
- Dr. Ginn was recently promoted to serve as the Assistant Dean of the Katherine Reese Pamplin College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences.
  - Dr. Ginn, with MPA student Allison Vick and Dr. Lance Hunter, coauthored the article, “Biggest Loser? Obama's Administrative Agencies and the Supreme Court”, which will be published *Questions in Politics*.
  - She also coauthored an article with Dr. Meares and Dr. Hunter examining voting turnout after terrorist attacks in seven urban areas in the United States. The article will be published in *Behavioral Science of Terrorism and Political Aggression*. The article examines voting after terrorist attacks in seven U.S. urban areas.
  - The high profiled Scoitus blog and *The Atlantic* interviewed Dr. Ginn about the appointment of Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court.
  - This past spring, Dr. Ginn was named as Pamplin’s “Outstanding Faculty Member.”
  - Dr. Ginn was recently awarded the Georgia Political Science Association’s Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Award. The award is given to full-time professors in Georgia who choose to enhance their skills in teaching as a part of their faculty development plan.
Lastly, Dr. Ginn’s recent publication “For whom the Poll Airs: Comparing Poll Results to Television Poll Cover” in *Public Opinion Quarterly* has received extensive media coverage and scholarly attention. The *Washington Post* asked Dr. Ginn and her co-authors to write an article explaining their findings for the influential *Monkey Cage* blog.

- Dr. Gray is settling into her job as the Director of Augusta University’s Office of Experiential Learning. In this role, she coordinates the university’s leadership certificate, which is an important component of the undergraduate experience at Augusta University. This summer, she will helped us students by teaching PADM 6030, Grant Writing and Administration.

- Dr. Augustine Hammond is currently working on a research project with Dr. Hatcher and Dr. Meares looking at the effect of town and gown partnerships on economic development. Our MPA program owes Dr. Hammond a debt of gratitude for doing an excellent job teaching our main research methods course, Tools for Decision Makers. His students consistently describe him as an excellent and caring professor.

- Dr. Hammond is working with Dr. Hatcher on examining the effect of nonprofits play in managing local economic development. The findings of the research will help local officials design more effective economic development strategies. Recently, the *Journal of Public and Nonprofit Affairs* accepted an article reporting the results of their research.

- Dr. Hatcher stays busy with his work directing our MPA program, but he also is an active researcher.

  - In March, he presented two papers at the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) in Atlanta. One paper, “Cultivating Community Assets: Using Administrative Practices and Design to Better Communities,” will be published next year as a book chapter, in a text on the relationships between community development and public management. At ASPA, Dr. Hatcher also presented his paper co-authored with Dr. Meares and Dr. Victoria Gordon from Western Kentucky, “Why Do the Job? The Motivation of Academic Administrators in Public Affairs Programs.” A version of the paper was featured in a symposium on directing MPA programs published by the *Journal of Public Affairs Education*.

  - Dr. Hatcher, working with MPA alumnus Giorgi Khatiashvili, published an article in *American Journal of Public Health* examining the funding of the Ryan White Program, which assistance economically need HIV/AIDS patients.

  - Dr. Hatcher, Dr. Meares, and Dr. Holland, a colleague from the University of Mississippi, have a forthcoming article examining the effectiveness of providing mental health services via the internet. The article will be published in the *Journal of Health and Human Services Administration*.

- Dr. Heslen is our newest addition to the faculty. Dr. Heslen successfully completed his doctoral program at the University of Oklahoma in Fall 2016, defending his dissertation on using organizational theory to help improve the nation’s intelligence community. The dissertation is entitled: *Leading a More Effective Intelligence Community: Understanding and Managing the Cognitive Challenges of Intelligence Collection in Lethal Environments*. 
This past spring he taught a new course PADM 6950 Cybersecurity Policy, which received excellent reviews from our MPA students.

Dr. Heslen received a National Security Agency (NSA) Curriculum Development Grant for the 2017-1018 year and plans to use it to develop three cyber security courses, “Introduction to Strategic Cybersecurity,” “Cyber Warfare,” and “The Global Cyber Threat Environment” over the course of the next year.

This past fall, Dr. Mary-Kate Lizotte joined our faculty, and taught her first class with the program in the Spring PADM 6650. In terms of research, Dr. Lizotte attended the Midwest Political Science Association acting as a discussant and presented two papers. This past year, she has been a very active researcher publishing the following articles:

- Dr. Lizotte also recently had two chapters published:

She is continuing to work on several projects including a book project investigating gender differences in policy preferences, which is under contract with Temple University Press.

She wrote up her reactions to the second and third presidential debates, which were included among other scholars' reactions on the *Ms. Magazine* website, and she discussed political polarization and the public's reactions to the 2016 Presidential Election and early days of the Trump presidency on Deke Copenhaver's radio show, "There it is" on March 14, 2017.

Dr. Meares is currently working on a number of research projects in the areas of urban planning and community development.

- Dr. Meares was the lead researcher on the 2017 Augusta University Cyber Institute | MPA Cybersecurity Workforce Study a project examining the cyber workforce needs of the Augusta Metro area, *The Augusta Metro Cybersecurity Workforce Study.*
- In another project, Dr. Ribando and Dr. Meares worked with their PADM 6750 Program Evaluation course on a survey project about the effectiveness of Augusta University's MPA program and employment chances. Results from the survey can also be found in the MPA Town & Gown section of our website.
Dr. Meares and Dr. Hatcher recently surveyed the directors of small MPA programs (ones with less than 100 students). The research was published in the *Journal of Public Affairs Education*.

Lastly, Dr. Meares continues to compile a productive research record. Below are a few of his research publications, this year.


In the middle of this work, Dr. Meares became a father last December. We are proud of him and wish his family the best of luck.

Dr. Ribando continues to work on her promising research examining the consolidation of Augusta University and Georgia State University. This fall, she presented her research at the Southeastern Conference for Public Administration (SECoPA) and the Georgia Political Science Association’s conference. The work, “Reframing Consolidations: Using Frames to Examine a University Consolidation,” stemmed from a spring 2016 course. The course studied organizational change and leadership through examining the consolidation process that created Augusta University. The article is currently under review for publishing with the *Georgia Journal of Public Policy*.

Her recent publications are:


As mentioned, Dr. Meares and Dr. Ribando worked with PADM 6750 Program Evaluation to survey local employers and the Alumni of our program. Results from the survey can be found on the MPA Town & Gown section of our website.

Our faculty are currently preparing for another productive academic year, and have already started working on projects in the Augusta area. For example, MPA faculty are working with Greater Augusta Arts Council on coordinating/moderating public meetings. This project has already received news attention by *The Augusta Chronicle*. Please see our “MPA in the News” page to read more about the community projects involving our MPA faculty: http://www.augusta.edu/pamplin/mpa/mpa_news.php

Alumni Achievements

Our graduates serve in key positions throughout the Augusta Metro area, and through their successes the program’s alumni strengthen the prestige of the Augusta University MPA. In the past year, our alumni have achieved many professional milestones. Below are a few examples:

- Patrick Clayton currently serves as the chief deputy for the Augusta-Richmond County Sheriff’s Department. Last spring, he won the distinguished alumni award for Pamplin College.
- John Waller recently was named city administrator for Grovetown, Georgia.
- Karen Denny recently accepted a position managing the Ryan White Program at Augusta University. The program provides assistance for economically needy people living with HIV/AIDS.
- Jamel Hodges, who graduated in 2015, is assistant director of communication in Augusta University’s Office of Academic Admissions, and he is currently working on an Ed.D. in Educational Innovation at the university.
- Andre Goodman recently accepted a job at Georgia Tech as a business analysts.
- Brittany Dixon was recently promoted to Program Coordinator of the historic Paine College’s TRIO Upward Bound Program. She also recently completed the New Leaders Council of Augusta Institute, a six-month leadership and professional development, training, mentoring, networking, and career and political advancement program for young professionals. Lastly, in March 2017, was sworn in as the 2017-2019 State Secretary for the Georgia Association of Special Personnel Programs (GASPP), a non-profit organization, made up of educators, policymakers, professionals in the private sector and other individuals committed to ensuring that secondary and post-secondary educational opportunities are appropriate and accessible to students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
Program Evaluation: Student Diversity

Our program strives to create an environment of inclusion and diversity. Our current student body is a fairly diverse one. However, there is room for improvement. In the future, the MPA director and faculty will implement plans to increase the diversity of the program’s student body.

Table 1: Demographics for MPA and Augusta University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MPA</th>
<th>Augusta University</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African-American</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 55  N = 8,882

Program Assessment: Exit Interview Results

All graduating MPA students are asked to complete an exit interview. We use the data to assess student learning of core concepts (Table 2), the quality of program advisement (Table 3), and the student opinion of the program’s classes (Table 4). This past fall and spring, 10 of our 12 graduating students completed the exit interview.

Student Assessment of Learning

Students believe they have learned quite a bit from our program. They were asked to evaluate what they knew relative to our learning outcomes at the beginning of our program and what they believe they could do now. Students are asked to indicate on a Likert scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree) their knowledge on key public administration concepts. Table 2 presents the means of the answers given by the graduating students. The students report an increase in knowledge in all categories based on the mean results.
Table 2: Self-Assessment of Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Before Joining the Program</th>
<th>At the Conclusion of the Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Properly identify human, organizational, and resource issues</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>4.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in a case or situation and develop an appropriate course of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>action</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe how public policy decisions are made</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>4.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify and explain the political, social, and economic</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>4.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contexts in which public policy decisions are made</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collect and analyze data essential to understanding and</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>4.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>addressing problems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Properly identify the legal and/or constitutional issues</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>4.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in a case or situation and develop a course of action that is</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>legal and constitutional</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Properly identify a public administrator’s responsibility</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>4.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to elected officials and the general public in a case or</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>situation and develop a course of action or solution that</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>considers these issues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectively communicate in writing</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective communicate orally in a public presentation</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>4.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work in a team</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The scale is 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

In two open-ended questions, students were asked to identify additional skills or knowledge gained from the program, along with what they wished they had learned.

- Additional skills learned included leadership and project management skills, budgeting and finance principles in practice, effective communication skills, connecting theory and practice, and personal time management
- The “wished for” list included a class on fundraising and more opportunities to apply skills.

Student Assessment of Advising

Feedback on advising was positive, as shown in Table 3. The director will continue intrusive advising of students during their first semester in the program.

Furthermore, the director will continue to push students to use JagTrax to assume primary responsibility for their programs of study.
Table 3: Student Evaluation of Advisor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Willing to meet with me at a time and place that was convenient</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpful and courteous</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helped me develop a course schedule that fit my needs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responded to my questions in an accurate and timely manner</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Recommending the Program to Others**

All ten of the students have recommended the program to others.

**Student Assessment of Quality of Instruction**

Students were asked to assess the quality of instruction for both core and elective courses. Tables 4 and 5 present the results.

Table 4 (next page) presents the results for core courses. Overall, students positively assessed the quality of instruction in the program. The program should continue to monitor student opinion and performance in PADM 6750. As the capstone experience for our students, the course is a crucial component of the curriculum.
Table 4: Student Assessment of Quality of Instruction, Core Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PADM 6000, Survey of Public Administration</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADM 6050, Constitutional and Administrative Law</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADM 6100, Organizational Theory and Behavior</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADM 6200, Human Resource Management</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADM 6300, Public Budgeting</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADM 6600, Tools for Decision Makers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADM 6650, Public Policy Analysis</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADM 6750, Program Evaluation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 (next page) presents the results for elective courses. The numbers vary since students make different choices as to which electives to take. Overall, however, the feedback was very positive and clearly comparable to the results for core courses. A few of our elective courses received limited negative feedback from our students. However, most students agreed that the elective courses are being taught well. We will continue to monitor these courses for program improvement.
Table 5: Student Assessment of Quality of Instruction, Elective Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Description</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Did not take the course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PADM 6020, GIS</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADM 6030, Grant Writing &amp; Administration</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADM 6250, Introduction to Urban Planning</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADM 6301, Financial Management for Nonprofits</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADM 6302, Nonprofit Management</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADM 6350, Emergency Management</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADM 6351, Introduction to Homeland Security</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADM 6352, The Unconventional Threat</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADM 6550, Human Services Administration</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADM 6700, Urban Government Administration</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Program Assessment: Student Learning Outcomes

This academic year, our program assessed student learning in five courses. In this section, we discuss how the program assessed student’s performance learning and mastering of the NASPAA core competencies.

Fall 2016 Assessments
PADM 6200, Human Resource Management

SLO1c: Students will be able to properly identify human resource issues and develop a course of action or solution that is based on a solid understanding of HRM principles and related law (PADM 6200—second time assessed)

SLO4c: Students will be able to properly identify ethical issues and develop appropriate courses of action (PADM 6200—first time assessed)

SLO5a: Students will properly identify human resource issues and develop a course of action or solution that is based on a solid understanding of human resource management and human behavior (PADM 6200—first time assessed)

Table 6: Results of Learning Outcomes Assessment in PADM 6200

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NASPAA Competency</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Assessment Method</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Results of Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To lead and manage in public governance</td>
<td>Students will be able to properly identify human resource issues and develop a course of action or solution that is based on a solid understanding of HRM principles and related law</td>
<td>Case study assessed by instructor and outside (practitioner) evaluator</td>
<td>80% of students will correctly identify the issues and develop an appropriate solution</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To articulate and apply a public service perspective</td>
<td>Students will be able to properly identify ethical issues and develop appropriate courses of action</td>
<td>Case study assessed by instructor and outside (practitioner) evaluator</td>
<td>80% of students will correctly identify ethical issues and provide appropriate courses of action</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To communicate and interact with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry</td>
<td>Students will be able to properly identify human resource issues involving diversity and develop a course of action or solution that is based on a solid understanding of human resource management and human behavior</td>
<td>Case study assessed by instructor and outside (practitioner) evaluator</td>
<td>80% of students will correctly identify the issues and develop an appropriate course of action</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In PADM 6200, students excelled on most of the learning assessments. However, three of the issues (presented in Table 5) were identified as areas of improvement.

**PADM 6050, Constitutional and Administrative Law**

SLO4b: Students will be able to properly identify legal and Constitutional issues (PADM 6050—second time assessed)

### Table 7: Results of Learning Outcomes Assessment in PADM 6050

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>NASPAA Competency</th>
<th>Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Assessment Method &amp; Standard</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PADM 6050</td>
<td>To articulate and apply a public service perspective.</td>
<td>Students will be able to properly identify legal and constitutional issues.</td>
<td>Students are required to write a paper analyzing a landmark Supreme Court decision in administrative law. In the paper, the student must properly identify the legal issues before the Court, as well as the relevant constitutional provisions. Students must also correctly identify the Court’s ruling on the issue and explain.</td>
<td>Yes, all students scored a 16 or higher. In previous years, students have struggled with identifying rules of laws. As a result, the instructor spent more time covering the fundamental importance of identifying rules of laws in case briefs early on in the semester and stressed their importance in these papers. Further, the instructor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
made a point to identify the rules of law in the class lectures and putting them up on PowerPoint slides. This adjustment appears to have paid off with the average score going up a full point from last year to this year. Almost half of the students (7 total) correctly identified the holding and the rule of law in the case. Three students did not clearly identify the rule of law and another 5 did not specifically articulate the rule of law or applicable test in the case so there is still room for improvement. Still, with six students receiving perfect scores on the assessment, the learning outcome appears to have been met.

PADM 6600, Tools for Decision Makers

SLO3b: Students will be able to analyze data (PADM 6600—fourth time assessed)

Table 8: Results of Learning Outcomes Assessment in PADM 6600

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>NASPAA Competency</th>
<th>Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Assessment Method &amp; Standard</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PADM 6600</td>
<td>To analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions.</td>
<td>Students will be able to analyze data</td>
<td>Pre- and post-test in PADM 6600. Students shall score one unit better on the post-test than the pre-test.</td>
<td>There were initially 11 students in the class but one student dropped out and another student did not take the pretest. Thus, this pretest-posttest assessment is based on the nine students who took both the pretest and posttest. There was a decline in the mean score from the pretest to the posttest with a mean score decline of about 1 (M = -0.72, SD = 2.54) on a 10-point scale. The mean pretest score was 6.67 (SD = 1.66) compared to the mean posttest score of 5.94 (SD = 1.78). Five (55.6%) of the students experienced a decline in performance from the pretest to the posttest (by between 1 to 4 points), one student (11.1%) experienced an increase in performance (by 5 points) and three students (33.3%) did not experience a change in performance. Though the mean posttest score is lower than the mean pretest score, in general, the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
students performed better than previous semesters. This notwithstanding, there were areas that the students appeared to have problems. I recommend monitoring performance over a couple of years before making any decision.

**Spring 2017 Assessments**

**PADM 6650, Public Policy Analysis**

SLO1a: Students will explain how and why a particular policy had a particular outcome (policy analysis paper in PADM 6650)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>NASPAA Competency</th>
<th>Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Assessment Method &amp; Standard</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PADM 6650</td>
<td>To participate in and contribute to the policy making process</td>
<td>Students will explain how and why a particular policy had a particular outcome</td>
<td>Students were required to write a policy analysis paper.</td>
<td>Yes, all of the students scored 80% or higher. While all students scored at 80% or higher, and the average score was an 88.93%, there is still room for improvement. Students did not all sufficiently use course concepts in the paper and not all students discussed the impact of the policy on our local area or on a historically marginalized group. In the future, I will stress this more in the short paper that the students are assigned earlier in the semester as well as in the policy evaluation logic model that the students are assigned earlier in the semester.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PADM 6750, Program Evaluation**

SLO1e: Students will develop a logic model for a program along with an appropriate data collection strategy (program evaluation exercise in PADM 6750)

SLO 1c: Students will present the results of analysis orally and in writing (presentations in 6750)

SLO 5b: Students will demonstrate the ability to effectively communicate and interact with others in a team project, negotiation, or an internship (Peer evaluations in PADM 6750,
evaluations of the negotiation exercise in PADM 6200, and work supervisor evaluations in the internship)

Table 10: Results of Learning Outcomes Assessment in PADM 6750

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>NASPAA Competency</th>
<th>Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Assessment Method &amp; Standard</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PADM 6750</td>
<td>To lead and manage in public governance</td>
<td>Students will be able to develop a logic model for a program along with an appropriate data collection strategy</td>
<td>Program evaluation exercise in PADM 6750. 80% of student teams will be able to develop a logic model for a program and select an appropriate data collection strategy</td>
<td>Students were given a question on the midterm asking explain the purpose of the logic model and using the example provided to build a logic model for a social program aimed at counseling parents of elementary school students. 5/6 students received at least 80% of the points on this question. Most of the missed points were located in the section where student identified the difference between a short term and medium term outcome. In the future the instructor plans to spend more time explaining the differences between short term and medium term goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADM 6750</td>
<td>To analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions.</td>
<td>Students will be able to select proper data collection techniques for particular situations</td>
<td>Program evaluation exercise in PADM 6750. 80% of student teams will choose an appropriate data collection method to fit the project</td>
<td>Students were given a capstone service learning project, in which they assisted the Masters of Public Administration program at Augusta University with an alumni survey and a job market analysis. They analyzed data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and created a separate alumni survey. The purpose of the survey was to better understand why alumni came to the program, gauge their interest in reconnecting with the program, and to gain their insight on possible strategic directions. Students designed the survey and analyzed the results. The results were reported in a written manuscript and a presentation given on May 2nd to Dr. Hatcher and myself. Students were graded by the sponsors, Dr. Hatcher and myself and received a 93 for the oral delivery and a 95 for the written presentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADM 6750</td>
<td>To communicate and interact with</td>
<td>Students will demonstrate the</td>
<td>Peer evaluations in PADM 6750. 80% of project to complete for the class. A</td>
<td>Students were given a group project to complete for the class. A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This round of learning outcome assessments was both instructive and helpful. Overall, our students satisfied the assessment standards.

- In the past, our assessment process has identified student learning issues in PADM 6650, Policy Analysis. Based on the students’ performance in the Spring 2017 section of PADM 6650, it appears that these issues have been resolved.
- It appears that students had issues applying some of the human resource concepts with a case study. The curriculum changes incorporating human resource material into our new course on leadership and ethics will most likely address this concern.
- Additionally, while all the students met the assessment standards in PADM 6750, the program may want to revisit the assessment process for the class to ensure that it is meeting the needs of our students. This past year was the second year that we used PADM 6750 as the program’s capstone experience. We are learning that our students are well-prepared to conduct an evaluation project with a community partner. The students are able to work in teams and apply the NASPAA competences while helping a community partner.

Based on the results of our assessment process, the program is doing an excellent job assessing the learning outcomes of our students.

One area of improvement identified by the faculty is that some of the students in PADM 6000, Survey of Public Administration are struggling to learn the major theories in the field. The course’s instructor will dedicate more class time to discuss the major theories in public administration and provide more examples of those theories in practice.
Program Assessment: Cultural Competency Component

In the 2013-2014 academic year, the faculty completed a review of our curriculum to see how we were covering cultural competency (diversity) issues. Carrizales (2010) recommends curriculum components including: 1) knowledge of local and national demographics, societal disparities, and policy and legal issues surrounding diversity; 2) a self-reflection component that includes societal biases; 3) a skills-based component that focuses on communication skills; and 4) a community-based component that includes internships and other experiential learning offerings. Our review found that we were missing the self-reflection component.

As a result, the MPA Director contacted Dr. Lorraine Evans from the Office of Diversity and Inclusion who put together an on-line component that could be used with PADM 6000 as the self-reflection component and would introduce students to cultural competency. That component was tested with the PADM 6100 class in the Spring 2015 term. The results have overwhelmingly positive.

This past academic year, we administered the cultural competency learning module in two classes: PADM 6000, Fall 2016 and PADM 6000, Spring 2017.

Fall 2016

Key Findings

- Nine students completed the cultural competency module.
- ALL students passed.

Module structure

The module, “An Introduction to Cultural Competency” was designed by faculty in the Office of Diversity and Inclusion in conjunction with faculty in the Master of Public Administration program. The overall goal of the online module was to improve self-efficacy when working in cross-cultural situations with clients and colleagues. There were four learning objectives:

1. Recognize the main characteristics of culture and understand how we learn cultural preferences to provide optimal service to clients with a variety of perspectives both among and within demographic groups.
2. Explain the stages of cultural competency to foster inclusive practices and processes to promote a welcoming and client centered workplace.
3. Assess conscious and unconscious preferences to manage biases that disrupt communication and limit the development of positive relationships with clients and colleagues.
4. Appreciate the differences that exist within and across cultural groups to interrupt the unintended stereotyping that can impact the decision making processes.

1 Dr. Lorraine Evans and Dr. Lindsey West helped the program administer the cultural competency component. They also drafted the write-up of the results for this report.
**Assessment**

There were two tiers of assessment, a self-reflective essay and a pre- and post-test. Students completed an essay that focused on cultural learning, unconscious bias and promoting an inclusive workplace. The goal was to encourage critical reflection on the topic and required students to connect the material to real world problems. It was a pass/fail assignment and all students successfully completed the essay.

The pre- and post-test was adapted from the Clinical Cultural Competency Questionnaire (CCCQ) developed by Robert C. Like, MD, MS, Professor and Director of the Center for Healthy Families and Cultural Diversity, Department of Family Medicine, UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. The 14-question survey addressed perceived overall self-efficacy as well as knowledge, confidence, skills and self-awareness, all key constructs in cultural competency, as well as overall perspectives on the topic and general demographics.

**Table 11: Cultural Competency in PADM 6000, Fall 2017**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Perceptions Paired t-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How knowledgeable are you about demographics of diverse racial and ethnic groups?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How skilled are you in dealing with socio-cultural issues in obtaining a client’s perspective about his/her situation and needs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How aware are you of your own bias and prejudice?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 9

In addition to the pre-test/post-test, students also wrote a self-reflective essay focused on cultural learning, unconscious bias, and promoting an inclusive workplace. The goal was to encourage critical reflection on the topic and required students to connect the material to real world problems. It was a pass/fail assignment and all students successfully completed the essay.

**Spring 2017**

Unfortunately, Dr. Lindsey West was unable to provide the pre- and post-test results of the cultural competency module completed by the students in the Spring 2017 section of PADM 6000.
However, she was able to report that all of the students completed the cultural competency module and turned in their self-reflective essays.

Some of the initiatives in this plan include:

- Putting in place the Walker Scholarship starting fall 2016. The scholarship is now in its second year, and the MPA director is encourage all of the program’s students to apply.
- Continuing the improvements in the advising process to include mandatory in-person advising for new students and follow-up on their performance in the first semester of classes.
- Implement strategies in the program’s diversity and cultural competency plan.

Marketing and Promotion

The 2016 – 2017 academic year was a successful one for the MPA program’s marketing and promotion efforts. Our MPA program has been featured in over 35 media stories, and based on a report by the Division of Communication and Marketing, our program’s media presence has increased significantly. Figure 2 details the program’s success on social media.

**Figure 2: Social Media Outreach**
Below are the major promotional actions from this past year:

- Program director and/or faculty attended 2 graduate fairs (Augusta University and University of South Carolina-Aiken).
- Dr. Hatcher and Erycha Medeiros attended an informational meeting with employees of Columbia County. The meeting recruited a student, who is currently enrolled in the program.
- Due to support from Dr. Ginn in Pamplin’s Dean Office, the program was able to completely redesign its website.
- Due to support from the Department of Political Science and The Graduate School, the program fielded a social media campaign in May 2017.
- Promotional materials were acquired. The program ordered t-shirts and tumblers to be distributed to students and stakeholders.
- Program faculty have been interviewed by numerous media outlets. The results of our media promotion efforts can be viewed on the program’s town and gown page: http://www.augusta.edu/pamplin/mpa/town_gown.php
- The program’s Facebook page and Twitter page were overhauled. Erycha Medeiros has excelled at managing the program’s social media sites, and her work has been commended by NASPAA.
- The program’s involvement in the 2017 Cyber Institute | MPA Cybersecurity Study has produced significant positive attention for the Augusta University MPA.

**Overall Conclusions**

- Graduating students believe they learned from the program, were quite satisfied with advising, and the overwhelming majority are recommending the program to others. The director and faculty need to continue monitoring the effectiveness of PADM 6750 as the capstone experience for the program.
- The program is experiencing significant enrollment growth, which demonstrates its appeal to public servants in the Augusta Metro.
- The MPA faculty are productive scholars who are publishing in top journals in their areas of research.
- MPA students are advancing through the program and graduating on time.
- The director needs to continue monitoring the implementation of the program’s new initiatives, in particular the BA to MPA program, the Certificate in Nonprofit Leadership, and the formation of the student and alumni associations.
- The program needs to expand its fundraising efforts. The program is working with alumni to increase fundraising. In addition, the program is planning to sell MPA tumblers and t-shirts to fundraise money for the student association.