On behalf of our faculty and students, I am pleased to welcome you to the latest issue of our newsletter, The Public Servant. The newsletter includes sections dedicated to our current students, faculty news, and alumni information. We hope you enjoy keeping up-to-date on our program!

I am extremely proud of the work that we are doing to help the Augusta community. To help spread the word about our partnerships, we are introducing a section to the newsletter on community outreach.

Lastly, our program continues to do an excellent job educating students for public service. According to data prepared for NASPAA, close to 90% of our students are finding employment in the public sector or seeking to further their education.


Please keep in touch!

Will Hatcher, PhD
Please Welcome...

We have a few new members to our MPA program please join me in welcoming...

Dr. Mary-Kate Lizotte

I am very excited to join the Political Science department and the Master of Public Administration faculty at Augusta University. I earned my PhD in Political Science from Stony Brook University in 2009. Prior to coming to Augusta University, I taught at a small liberal arts college in Birmingham, Alabama. I'm looking forward to being able to focus a bit more on my research in this new position. My research interests include political behavior and gender and public opinion. Much of my work is concerned with the origins and implications of gender differences in public opinion, often referred to as "gender gaps." In addition to my work on public opinion, I have also published research on the gender gap in voting, political knowledge, and party identification. My work has been published in edited volumes as well as Politics & Gender; Journal of Women, Politics, & Policy; The Social Science Journal; and Journal of Conflict Resolution. I am looking forward to collaborating with undergraduate and MPA students on research projects. I will be teaching undergraduate courses on American Government, Congress and the Presidency, and Research Methods. I will be teaching Public Policy Analysis in the Master of Public Administration Program. Teaching and research excellence are very important to me, and I'm delighted to join a faculty and department that values these as much as I do.

Erycha Medeiros

I am the new Office Assistant for the MPA Program and the Center for Public Service in the Political Science Department at Augusta University. I received my Bachelor’s Degree in Art History from Georgia State University in 2013. While at Georgia State University, I held an Assistantship with the Middle East Institute. My research focus was in Middle Eastern and North African: languages, history, culture, and of course art! I look forward to assisting the MPA Program, especially its community development goals. As a native of Augusta, I have always felt that Augusta has exceptional potential as a developing city. I hope to continue to watch it grow along with the MPA Program and Center for Public Service, and I look forward to helping out wherever I can!
Student Updates
The MPA Student Association

Last year, our students created the MPA Student Association. For the past year, Brooke Durden served as president of the organization, Roy Flores served as the vice president, and Erika Broussard-Jordan helped organize events for the group. Many of our other students have assumed leadership roles in the club as well. We are proud of their hard work.

For this issue of The Public Servant, we talked with Brooke Durden, president of the association, about her experience in our program.

1. What career would you like to pursue after earning your MPA?

After earning my MPA, I hope to pursue a career in the legal field as a corporate attorney, and perhaps one day a career in politics or state government.

2. What have you liked most about the MPA program?

My favorite part of the MPA program here at Augusta University is definitely enjoying the strong relationships that exist amongst my cohort and faculty, as well as the student body as whole. Even though we all come from different backgrounds and experiences, we’ve truly blended together like a small family throughout the last year and half.

3. What advice would you give to new students in the program?

Work hard, don’t procrastinate, and don’t try to get through it alone. Utilizing the exceptional staff and students around you is definitely a key to not only success in this program, but also to enjoying it every day.

Alumni Profile
Chief Patrick Clayton

Our MPA program strives to better our community by educating public servants who will contribute to public and nonprofit agencies. Before he graduated from our program in 2006, Patrick Clayton already achieved this goal by serving an impressive career in law enforcement. Since graduating from our university, Pat has continued to better our community by serving in key local law enforcement positions in a professional manner. He is the ideal public servant.

In addition to his MPA, Pat has 37 years of experience in the field of law enforcement. He has served as a special agent in the Air Force Office of Special Investigations (1979-1984), the Naval Criminal Investigative Service (1986-1988), and the Drug Enforcement Agency (1988-2010). Most recently he also served as Chief of Public Safety, for the Richmond County School System. He is currently the Chief Deputy of the Richmond County Sheriff’s Department.

As Chief Deputy, Pat is responsible for managing operations, which includes overseeing 650 sworn officers and a budget of over $60,000,000. In his current position, Pat has been instrumental in improving the work of the Sheriff’s Department. He has helped the department make evidence-based decisions in their law enforcement practices, and he has encouraged the force to be more active in the area of community policing. He is using his experience and knowledge from our MPA program and our university to help improve the Augusta community.
NA Today

Wallet Hub
Dr. Wesley Meares was interviewed by the Wallet Hub about a study on the best places in Georgia to raise a family. In the article he discusses what types of priorities young families are likely to search for, and which kinds of cities are going to meet those requirements. See it here: https://wallethub.com/edu/best-places-to-raise-a-family-in-georgia/25039/#wesley-meares

The Augusta Chronicle
The Augusta Chronicle article showcases the increased Non-Profit focus of the MPA program. It includes an interview with Dr. Hatcher and Dr. Meares about the MPA Program's Certificate in Non-Profit Leadership and their goals to have a future certification open to the public as well as MPA students. See it here: http://chronicle.augusta.com/news/education/2016-08-17/new-augusta-university-certificate-focuses-nonprofit-work

American City & County
Dr. Hatcher was interviewed by their Government Product News section. The interview discussed the MPA program at Augusta University and the benefits it could provide to a potential student, as well as the versatile nature of the degree when applying it to career options and job fields. See it here: http://americancityandcounty.com/gpn/peach-state-mpa-program-combines-theory-and-practice-related-video

The Washington Post
Dr. Ginn co-authored an article for their Political Science Column “Monkey Cage.” The article discusses the pit falls of trusting news sources’ poll reports, as it is in a news agency’s best interest to post the most “newsworthy” or attention grabbing results. See it here: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/08/23/heres-another-reason-not-to-trust-tv-news-reports-about-election-polls/

JAGWIRE
Our NASPAA Accreditation for the MPA Program was featured in the JAGWIRE. Dean Clark and Dr. Hatcher were both interviewed for the article about what the accreditation means for the program. See it here: http://jagwire.augusta.edu/archives/35370
Town & Gown Series

Town and Gown partnerships seek to cultivate productive relationships between universities and their communities. In our Master of Public Administration (MPA) at Augusta University, we believe strongly in serving the local community and helping foster beneficial partnerships.

To help achieve this goal, the program is hosting a series of town and gown meetings. We plan to offer four meetings each year on topics relevant to public agencies and nonprofits.

At our first meeting this past November, our director, Dr. Hatcher, discussed how our MPA program can help local public agencies and nonprofits do the following:

- Write grants
- Evaluate programs
- Facilitate public meetings
- Survey citizens
- Design social media promotions

Future town and gown meetings will provide information on topics relevant to public service in the Augusta community and discuss how our MPA program can help public servants advance their careers.

Our meetings are open if you, or your organization may want to join us in the future feel free to contact our department about registering for our future meetings!

Dr. Ribando is working with a group of students to survey the community and our MPA students, to develop a comprehensive strategic plan, both for the undergraduate program and how our MPA program can best impact the community. Students involved: Deshanda Edwards, Emma O'Bryant, Saralynn Yarborough, Lizander Sanchez-Perez, and Lee Benedict.

Three of Our Students Presented at the GPSA Conference, here are some of their experiences:

The Georgia Political Science Association (GPSA) conference was truly interesting because it took place directly after the presidential election. The key note speaker gave a presentation about the relevance of political science in today's world and touched on how to make what is learned in the field of political science more relevant to the outside non-academic world. He stressed that political scientists should focus on the more specific political questions facing the world rather than the broad ideologies that divide us. Being a Public Administration student, I agree with his analysis. It is the specifics we deal with on a daily basis in public administration and in understanding our small contribution more clearly, we can help build better governance in our communities. - London Smith

The Georgia Political Science Association Conferenced held in Savannah, Georgia provided me a unique opportunity to learn about fascinating research in the fields of Political Science and Public Administration from throughout the region. I was able to work with Dr. Martha Ginn, Dr. Lance Hunter, and fellow student Adam Rutkowski to present Biggest Loser? Obama’s Administrative Agencies and the Supreme Court. The conference allowed us a chance to present with the support of the Augusta University MPA faculty, and receive valuable feedback about our project. This conference displayed to me the importance of learning from each of the different fields of study, and I was able to meet incredible individuals who are passionate about their work. Participating in this conference encouraged me to continue seeking out further opportunities like this, and I believe will help me as I hope to pursue future research throughout my career. This program's assistance in providing exposure to conferences like this one has given me the confidence to pursue opportunities far beyond graduation. - Allison Vick
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:


Dr. Hammond is currently working on a research project with Dr. Hatcher and Dr. Meares looking at the effect of Town & Gown on the economic development. He is also active with our MPA Student Association, and tirelessly works to help our students learn the research tools needed to make evidence-based decisions.

Dr. Ginn co-orchestrated Augusta University’s Pre-Law Day, an event organized by our Political Science Department and Career Services with our Chair, Dr. Murray. At the event her mock trial class gave a very well attended and received performance.

Dr. Ginn continues her role as our internship coordinator for the program; placing students here in the CSRA as well as in Atlanta. Her willingness to work with students to find the right fit with their time and interests has been a real asset to our students and our program.

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 a great deal of attention. The Washington Post asked Dr. Ginn and her co-authors to write an article explaining their findings.

Dr. Hatcher recently worked on two publications with MPA students: Giorgi Khatiashvili and Shannon Cooper. An American Journal of Public Health article:


An encyclopedia entry in Global Encyclopedia of Public Administration, Public Policy, and Governance on “Law and Public Administrator’s Commitment” with Shannon Cooper.

Dr. Meares is currently working on a number of research projects in the areas of urban planning and community development. His recent publications have applied in top urban policy journals, such as Cities and the Journal of Urbanism. Dr. Meares and Dr. Hatcher recently surveyed the directors of small MPA programs (ones with less than 100 students). The research is being considered for publication.

Dr. Foley is engaged in meaningful applied research in our community working with graduate students and the Richmond Country Sheriff’s Department to facilitate the department better meeting the needs of the county.

Dr. Foley has had two of her encyclopedia article submissions accepted by the Encyclopedia of Corrections co-authored with our MPA student: Giorgi Khatiashivilli, these will be published in an upcoming issue of the encyclopedia.

Dr. Foley also has an article under review for the Journal of Healthcare for the Poor and Underserved, “So I won’t go to jail: Year of two of a PROMUNDO-adapted program to eradicate gender-based violence.”

Dr. Lizotte joined our faculty this past semester. She recently published an article about the gender gap with the Affordable Care Act in The Social Science Journal. She also currently has an article under review with the Journal of Conflict Resolution, “The Gender Gap on Torture Attitudes.”

Dr. Lizotte gave a conference presentation at the Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting in Chicago about: “Gender Differences in Support for Gun Control.”

Dr. Lizotte also recently had two chapters published:


In August, our university started its fundraising campaign. Donations help us continue our excellent work of educating public servants. As a donor, you can determine where your gift goes. You can pledge your donation by going to the following website:

http://giving.augusta.edu/

You can support your MPA program by pledging your donation to the:

- Political Science Discretionary fund (29114)
- Dr. Ralph Walker Scholarship Endowment (39200)
- MPA Program Discretionary fund (29116)
- Dr. Gwen Wood Book Scholarship (29103)

Questions?

Feel free to contact our Department about our MPA program, or its community involvement.

Dr. William Hatcher
Program Director
whatcher@augusta.edu

Erycha Medeiros
Office Assistant
emedeiros@augusta.edu
(706)737-1710