Master in Public Administration

Standards

The primary purpose of this Masters degree program is to transmit to students the knowledge and skills necessary for the effective and efficient administration of public and non-profit agencies. The program goal is to train people for leadership positions in the public sector, with a particular emphasis on the development of core knowledge areas and administrative skills. Specifically, the program is designed to promote:

1. The development of an advanced grasp of the nature of public administration and its function within the American political system; this includes a knowledge of the process by which public policy is created and implemented at the local, state and federal levels of government;

2. Advanced knowledge of the principles, theories and practices related to directing a complex public-sector organization. Specifically:
   (a) a grasp of the principles and practices of organizational behavior and leadership;
   (b) advanced knowledge of the principles and practices of budgeting and public finance;
   (c) an advanced understanding of the legal environment affecting public sector management.

3. The development of organizational and managerial skills necessary to direct a complex public organization, including:
   (a) skills critical for successful human resources management;
   (b) strategic planning and problem-solving skills;
   (c) quantitative and qualitative program evaluation techniques;
   (d) interpersonal skills and an understanding of group dynamics.

4. The development of quantitative analytical techniques, statistical methods, and qualitative research competencies relevant for public management.

5. An awareness of ethical issues affecting the public sector.

6. A concentration of study in one of three areas: non-profit management; public management; or criminal justice administration.
Assessment Plan

Capstone Requirement
Capstone experiences are particularly helpful in assessing the value of the program. Students in the program are expected to complete a final project with practical value for an agency or non-profit. As a result, agency heads, elected officials and other influential leaders in the region have had an opportunity to benefit from the work of our students. Students are required to give a public presentation of their Capstone project to a group of MPA students and faculty. This presentation is an additional way the program insures the quality of the Capstone project, and it has the added benefit of providing a model for students who have not yet moved to the Capstone stage in their program.

Student Satisfaction Survey
A survey of students who are currently enrolled or recent graduates of the MPA program. The survey asked students to rate a variety of experiences within the program, and how they would like to see the program grow and change.

Coursework Performance