Of the 46 eligible survey respondents (Tribal leaders and MPA Tribal students total) 27 completed all parts of the curriculum focus questions. Respondents were asked levels of importance of each topic area/skill for graduates to possess. The original survey asked participants to prioritize their top 12 areas/skills, however there was not a comparable or easy way to for this with the 35 items online. Using straight statistical analysis of importance levels, we identified different tiers of importance that could be easily considered as tiers 1-5, High Priority – Not a Priority.

Tier 1 – Very Important (High Priority)

* The Framework of Federal, State, and Tribal Laws and Policies
* Tribal Jurisdiction, Sovereignty, and Tribal Rights
* Strategic Planning
* Building sustainable economics

Tier 2 – Somewhat Important (Moderate Priority)

* Building Collaborative Relationships between Governments
* Tribal sovereignty & jurisdiction that shape natural resource practices and policies within the context of state, federal, tribal relationships
* Ability to speak to tribal groups and develop a consensus based public process

The Tier 1 and 2 importance and priority results show that there has been a shift away from the initial priority areas identified 12 years ago at the start of the program. The original survey found that the top areas were mostly around sovereignty, Treaty rights, history, and law. Given the context 10-20 years ago, with the continued struggle for sovereignty, fast changing legal landscape, and new federal level policies and regulations, leaders were identifying with skills that could establish and protect Tribal sovereignty. Graduates of the program and Tribal Leaders from all across the country have waged many battles to articulate the sovereignty of the Tribes and strengthen Tribal Self-governance and economies. With this strengthened and in place, the focus is shifting towards consultation and negotiation processes, strategic planning, communications, and understanding frameworks and jurisdictions at all levels of government. An important note of difference between tiers 1 &2 and tier 3 is that the top tiers seem to be big picture and tier three (and 4 & 5) are more about specifics. This could be a limitation of the original 35 topics or could indicate that higher-level understanding and leadership are more important than detailed skills at this time.

Tier 3 - Neither Important Nor Unimportant (Priority)

* Federal Indian Policy (Historical and Current)
* Tribal, State, and Federal Government organizations
* Investment Strategies and Sustainable Economic Development for Public/Private Entities
* Knowledge of practice and legal context to implement tribal social services program
* Capability to Develop and Manage Department Objectives and Budgets
* Ability to speak to professional and environmental organizations and participate in a collaborative process to solve policy problems
* Ability to write grants and proposals to raise funds
* Ability to write legislation, ordinances, briefing papers and other legal or policy documents

Tier 4 – Somewhat Unimportant (Low Priority)

* The development, functions, and current trends in tribal natural resource management operations as models
* Principles of financial management for tribal, state, and federal funding sources
* Principles of financial management for tribal,
* Taxes and revenue generation on tribal lands
* Business management and practices
* Contracting, investments, public/private/tribal corporate agreements
* Personnel program development
* Program evaluation: monitoring and evaluation of projects and programs
* Administration of Justice
* Development of Tribal business codes
* An understanding of environmental policy including federal, state, and tribal laws and regulations and the potential impacts of international treaties
* Child welfare issues
* And understanding of the framework of state, federal, and tribal laws and polices to protect cultural resources and develop an operational program to conserve cultural resources
* An understanding of the development, functions, and current trends in tribal natural resource management operations as models
* An understanding of the framework of federal, state, and tribal laws and policies and the political and economic context of the current issues surrounding the conservation of salmon