

Risks Inherent within current MPA- TG Structure

1. Required coursework offered only every other year.
2. Reliance upon too few faculty members.
3. 50% of coursework delivered through one voice/perspective.
4. Not enough coursework delivered by PA practitioners.
5. Dependence upon founders.
6. Not Enough Opportunity to Share Native Perspective with Non-Native students.

Suggestions for Improving MPA Tribal Curriculum and Delivery

- 1) Move away from teaching PA theory and toward PA practice.
- 2) Include larger percentage of Native case studies to demonstrate application of Public Administration principles.
- 3) Deliver more strategic thinking, strategic planning coursework.
- 4) Alter curriculum to provide more routine task oriented trainings devoted to budgets, human resources, communication skills, record keeping, etc.
- 5) Build statistics requirement into the curriculum rather than have it as a pre-requisite.
- 6) Avoid losing face-to-face interaction, intense seminar discussions and the opportunity for students to build networks and share their knowledge.
- 7) Ensure the seminar sessions are well-guided by the faculty.
- 8) Ensure faculty members are skilled at conflict resolution. The issues that arise in our classrooms include many hot button topics and the opportunity for strife is ever present. We need faculty who can defuse tense situations.
- 9) Cease having the same faculty person in each class the students take. This model limits the perspective to which students are exposed. One voice should not deliver 50% of the required curriculum.
- 10) Identify a safer faculty evaluation process so students feel free to produce truthful evaluations without fear of reprisal. Build in process that allows for faculty evaluations to go directly to the Dean.
- 11) Avoid inclusion of political partisanship in all faculty presentations, whether left-wing or right or other.
- 12) Ensure faculty members are inclusive rather than divisive.
- 13) Present more critical thinking skills exercises to demonstrate and practice ability to identify data that is biased by inappropriate comparisons, emotionally charged data sets, or swayed by gaps in critical data elements.
- 14) Avoid inclusion of the word "tribal" in the MPA degree, but create and award an 'accredited certificate' for each person that completes the five tribal concentration courses, whether they complete the degree or not.
- 15) Ensure that students attain a good grasp of the pathways through which funding flows prior to reaching the end user.
- 16) Ensure students understand the relationships between the many administrative arms of federal, regional, state, tribal, and non-profit agencies.
- 17) Ensure students gain skills in communicating with legislators and granting agencies.
- 18) Create mechanism for Native faculty to present material to general track students.

- 19) Ensure students understand the value of building partnerships and maintaining clear lines of communication with all key stakeholders. Utilize case studies to demonstrate the ways disparate parties can form alliances to achieve mutually beneficial ends.
- 20) Build larger faculty base to avoid crisis should someone be unable to participate.
- 21) If a distance education model is incorporated into this program be certain it is delivering an equivalent quality of education as the classroom model does. Build in evaluation mechanisms. Examine already existing structures rather than rebuild the wheel.
- 22) Consider utilizing video conferencing technology. It is present at all community colleges and at many tribes across the region.
- 23) Maintain external program review and advisory body.

Other changes for consideration

1. Break core into two credit, one weekend blocks, two each quarter, taught by variety of individuals with specific expertise in one area.
2. Consider having first weekend core, second weekend concentration, third weekend core and last weekend concentration.
3. Develop changes in curriculum which will allow greater number of elective credits.