



Fall 2012 UALR MPA Student Survey

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2012 UALR Mail Services Survey

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UALR/IOG Survey Research Center
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Introduction

The UALR Institute of Government Survey Research Center (SRC) conducted a survey at the request of the UALR/IOG Master in Public Administration (MPA) department. The purpose of the study was to assess the opinions and perspectives of currently enrolled MPA students regarding the program, classes, teaching format and other issues. The results from this survey will be used to make better decisions concerning the MPA program and to better serve the needs of its student body.

Methodology

The target population was students enrolled in any MPA class during the fall 2012 semester. The MPA coordinator's office provided a database to the SRC of emails for the students. The population database used for the study consisted of 56 eligible students.

The survey was conducted between November 27, 2012 and December 11, 2012. A total of 40 individual interviews were completed for an overall response rate of 71 percent.

Data Analysis

Descriptive data analysis is presented which includes frequency distributions. Counts and percentage frequencies are presented for the sample as a whole. Also included are the comments from the open-response questions.

2012 UALR MPA Student Survey

Count and Percent Frequencies

35 questions

**Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.*

Q1 How would you rate the quality of teaching in the MPA program?

	Count	Percent
Poor	1	3%
Fair	3	8%
Average	6	15%
Good	23	58%
Excellent	7	18%
	40	100%

Q2 How would you rate the quality of academic advising?

	Count	Percent
Poor	6	15%
Fair	4	10%
Average	7	18%
Good	12	31%
Excellent	10	26%
Total	39	100%

Q3 How would you rate the quality of MPA classrooms, lounges, and other facilities?

	Count	Percent
Poor	17	43%
Fair	11	28%
Average	6	15%
Good	5	13%
Excellent	1	3%
Total	40	100%

Q4 How would you describe the frequency with which required MPA courses are offered?

	Count	Percent
Inadequate	14	38%
Adequate	23	62%
Total	37	100%

Q5 How would you describe the range of elective courses offered by the MPA program?

	Count	Percent
Limited	18	45%
Adequate	16	40%
Extensive	6	15%
Total	40	100%

Next, please provide us with your opinion of how well, if at all, the following skills, knowledge, and abilities have been developed given your experience with the MPA program. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements as it relates to your experience in the program.

Q6 I have gained substantive knowledge about public and non-profit organizations.

	Count	Percent
Strongly Agree	7	18%
Agree	28	72%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	3	8%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	1	3%
Total	39	100%

Q7 I have gained substantive knowledge about public policy.

	Count	Percent
Strongly Agree	10	25%
Agree	19	48%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	4	10%
Disagree	5	13%
Strongly Disagree	2	5%
Total	40	100%

Q8 I have gained substantive knowledge about the political process.

	Count	Percent
Strongly Agree	6	15%
Agree	22	55%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	7	18%
Disagree	4	10%
Strongly Disagree	1	3%
Total	40	100%

Q9 I have gained substantive knowledge about public service values and professional ethics.

	Count	Percent
Strongly Agree	12	30%
Agree	21	53%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	2	5%
Disagree	4	10%
Strongly Disagree	1	3%
Total	40	100%

Q10 I have improved my critical thinking and problem-solving abilities

	Count	Percent
Strongly Agree	9	23%
Agree	22	55%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	9	23%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Total	40	100%

Q11 I have developed skills to analyze and interpret quantitative data.

	Count	Percent
Strongly Agree	5	13%
Agree	19	50%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	4	11%
Disagree	6	16%
Strongly Disagree	4	11%
Total	38	100%

Q12 I have developed skills to analyze and interpret qualitative data.

	Count	Percent
Strongly Agree	6	15%
Agree	21	54%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	5	13%
Disagree	4	10%
Strongly Disagree	3	8%
Total	39	100%

Q13 I have developed leadership, organizational, and managerial skills n people and direct projects in a fast-paced workplace.

	Count	Percent
Strongly Agree	11	28%
Agree	17	43%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	10	25%
Disagree	2	5%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Total	40	100%

Q14 I have improved my ability to write clearly and concisely.

	Count	Percent
Strongly Agree	10	25%
Agree	19	48%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	9	23%
Disagree	2	5%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Total	40	100%

Q15 I have improved my ability to to verbally present information clearly and concisely.

	Count	Percent
Strongly Agree	7	18%
Agree	22	55%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	9	23%
Disagree	2	5%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Total	40	100%

Q16 I am better prepared to participate in and contribute to the public policy process.

	Count	Percent
Strongly Agree	9	23%
Agree	20	51%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	8	21%
Disagree	2	5%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Total	39	100%

Next, please provide us with your preferences for different scheduling arrangements for our MPA courses. Of the following course formats presented, regardless of your experience in such a format, please indicate how much you like or dislike each option. Also please indicate if you have ever taken a course in that format.

Q17a Have you ever taken a course offered one night a week Monday through Thursday 6pm to 9pm, on the UALR campus (traditional format of our courses)?

	Count	Percent
Yes	38	95%
Yes, but dropped	0	0%
No	2	5%
Total	40	100%

Q17b How do you feel about this type of course format?

	Count	Percent
Strongly dislike	0	0%
Dislike	2	5%
Neither like nor dislike	10	25%
Like	17	43%
Strongly like	11	28%
Total	40	100%

Q18a Have you ever taken a course offered Friday evening and all day Saturday for 5 weekends regularly spaced across the 16 week semester?

	Count	Percent
Yes	12	30%
Yes, but dropped	1	3%
No	27	68%
Total	40	100%

Q18b How do you feel about this type of course format?

	Count	Percent
Strongly dislike	3	8%
Dislike	5	13%
Neither like nor dislike	17	44%
Like	11	28%
Strongly like	3	8%
Total	39	100%

Q19a Have you ever taken intensive weekend classes offered Friday evening and all day Saturday for 5 consecutive weekends?

	Count	Percent
Yes	7	19%
Yes, but dropped	0	0%
No	30	81%
Total	37	100%

Q19b How do you feel about this type of course format?

	Count	Percent
Strongly dislike	4	11%
Dislike	3	8%
Neither like nor dislike	17	47%
Like	11	31%
Strongly like	1	3%
Total	36	100%

Q20a Have you ever taken a course that meets exclusively online one evening a week?

	Count	Percent
Yes	7	18%
Yes, but dropped	0	0%
No	32	82%
Total	39	100%

Q20b How do you feel about this type of course format?

	Count	Percent
Strongly dislike	3	8%
Dislike	2	5%
Neither like nor dislike	16	43%
Like	7	19%
Strongly like	9	24%
Total	37	100%

Q21a Have you ever taken an online course that is self-paced, never meets as a class and must be completed during the regular 16 week semester?

	Count	Percent
Yes	7	18%
Yes, but dropped	0	0%
No	32	82%
Total	39	100%

Q21b How do you feel about this type of course format?

	Count	Percent
Strongly dislike	2	5%
Dislike	4	11%
Neither like nor dislike	18	49%
Like	5	14%
Strongly like	8	22%
Total	37	100%

Q22a Have you ever taken any other type of course format aside from the ones previously mentioned?

	Count	Percent
Yes	15	38%
Yes, but dropped	1	3%
No	23	59%
Total	39	100%

Q22b How do you feel about this other type of format?

	Count	Percent
Strongly dislike	1	7%
Dislike	1	7%
Neither like nor dislike	1	7%
Like	7	47%
Strongly like	5	33%
Total	15	100%

Q22c What kind of course was it? Please describe the location of the course, along with the hours it met, and how often it met in the semester.

(Multiple Responses)

UCA, Mornings or Afternoons, two or three days a week

One Class offered in one month, met 2 to 3 days a week

Intensive weekend summer course, met only 2 weeks during the month, for Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Classes met Friday evening, all day Saturday and half day Sunday for 2 or 3 weekends spaced throughout the semester

Two weekends. Fri afternoon, all day sat and Sunday

All day Saturday and Sunday for two weeks.

Nonprofit Management by Dr. Ellen Plummer. Held at Ross Hall. Met three weekends over the semester, four hours Friday, seven hours Saturday, and four hours Sunday.

Summer, on campus, 3 weekends, Friday, Saturday, Sunday

We met for 3 hours on Friday, all day Saturday, and over half the day on Sunday.

The location for the two classes was in Ross Hall, we met on Friday nights from 6:00 to 9:00, Saturday from 9:00 am until 5:00 pm, and Sunday from 1:00 until 5:00 in the afternoon. The classes were three weekends a semester.

Standard weekly classes

Standard Course times either 3 times a week for one hour or 2 times a week for 1.5 hours

Friday evening, all day saturday, all day sunday 3 times a semester

Friday evening, All day Saturday and Sunday afternoon; 3 weekends a semester

Q23 We would also like to know about your preference of locations for our MPA courses. Please indicate how much you would like or dislike taking our MPA at each of the following locations:

UALR's main campus

	Count	Percent
Strongly dislike	2	5%
Dislike	3	8%
Neither like nor dislike	2	5%
Like	16	43%
Strongly like	14	38%
Total	37	100%

Location in downtown Little Rock

	Count	Percent
Strongly dislike	4	11%
Dislike	3	8%
Neither like nor dislike	10	27%
Like	15	41%
Strongly like	5	14%
Total	37	100%

UALR's Benton campus

	Count	Percent
Strongly dislike	17	49%
Dislike	3	9%
Neither like nor dislike	12	34%
Like	3	9%
Strongly like	0	0%
Total	35	100%

Other Location

	Count	Percent
Strongly dislike	4	20%
Dislike	1	5%
Neither like nor dislike	12	60%
Like	2	10%
Strongly like	1	5%
Total	20	100%

Other Location, specify responses for Q23:

(Multiple Responses)

Clinton School

Any area with less crime rates, some of my female classmates feel unsafe, especially at night because of a high rate of crime and inadequate campus police force.

online

Q24 All in all, would you recommend this MPA program to a colleague or friend who is planning to pursue an MPA?

	Count	Percent
Yes	34	89%
No	4	11%
Total	38	100%

Q25a Why would you recommend the MPA program to a colleague or friend?

(Multiple Responses)

Since MPA program commits to developing students' critical thinking and integrated skills, I'd like to introduce it to my friends.

Location in the capitol city, hours the courses are provided, and overall quality and experience of professors.

Although there is a dearth of electives, there is enough meat on the bone to make it worthwhile.

I think the MPA degree is an excellent course of study and UALR offers the most competitive program in the region.

It has been a great program so far. I have learned a lot, and I feel the degree will be valuable.

MPA is a degree that is gaining recognition in the nonprofit industry. It makes more sense for a person that knows they plan to work in the public sector than an MBA. Having an MPA should let employers know that the person has at least a base level of knowledge about managing a government or nonprofit organization.

Dedicated professors that are relatable and the structure of the program that allows you to work full time.

I believe my experience was an outlier. I attended during a large exodus in MPA faculty, and the primary instructor I had over the course of the program was not a great teacher.

The level of instruction is exemplary. The program is designed with the working professional in mind. The program thoroughly prepares or improves the professional abilities of the public manager.

My experience in the MPA program thus far has been great. The professors have been knowledgeable, challenging and eager to teach. I feel like after I graduate from this program, it will be time well spent. The major thing I dislike is the classroom setting. The desks are mismatched, chairs are falling apart and the lighting in the hallway and classroom are horrible. I am looking forward to see how this first semester of the group capstone project will turn. I'm not sure if I am for that format or not yet.

UALR is a respected university, and the program is as well.

I would only recommend the MPA program to a friend that already lives here in Little Rock. I have friends all over the Nation. That being said I feel like the MPA program is a good program and it has so far worked for me and has taught me a lot. I like the campus, however Ross Hall needs major renovations, and for God's sake the UALRPD needs to quit worrying about writing parking tickets and trying to catch people smoking on campus and do something about these people that obviously don't belong on campus that are robbing the student body!

The professors are extremely knowledgeable and seem to genuinely enjoy teaching. They have a passion for the research and instruction they do and it comes across. I feel that it is very high quality and I believe it will further my knowledge by completing the program.

The program is offered locally, by a nationally recognized university. The course is challenging yet it does not interfere with my job. Courses are interesting and prepare me for leadership positions in public service.

Great program

The MPA program is very engaging from a knowledge base and personal standpoint. The professors offer additional help outside of the classroom to ensure their students adequately comprehend the material presented in class. The MPA program also is an excellent tool to guide students into a particular career path that they may or may not have previously considered prior to admittance into the program. It expands analytical skills and greatly improves the quality of writing the students produce.

It is a good program in reference to other programs in the state of Arkansas.

Excellent content and professors are knowledgeable and wanting to prepare students for MPA careers.

Any one who is searching for professional development, I would recommend they take this program. The skills in this program are also applicable to the private sector. I believe it is worth the investment.

The program is flexible, well-tailored to real-life employment situations, and the faculty is extremely knowledgeable and helpful

I would recommend the MPA program to a colleague or friend because this program will help you to understand not just theory behind public policy and public policy implementation but it will teach you the practical understanding and application of the theory and policy also.

The strength of this program is the practical teaching style that prepares us for the work environment in the field of government.

Great faculty - not only are they great instructors but work with the students on personal matters as well as matters pertaining to the program

I do not imagine getting substantially better quality at other MPA programs.

The MPA staff is well versed in the material of the program and seem well qualified to teach the subjects. The classes attempt to integrate skills used in public administration with the general knowledge of the subject matter.

Well, The MPA course will give the good knowledge about public sector, non-profit sector and will prepare us to learn and grow in real world of experience.

The professors are very knowledgeable in their area of concentration. You can get that one-on-one assistance if you need clarification on assignments.

It's one of two in the state that's accredited.

Q25b Why would you not recommend the MPA program to a colleague or friend?

(Multiple Responses)

Can get same degree quicker and cheaper from ASU with many online options and credit for government employment.

Limited selection of electives reducing ability to specialize in a particular subject matter. High acceptance rate, early courses not entirely that challenging. Lack of communication for other potential course or internship opportunities and how they might fit within the MPA program. Older facilities that lack basic functioning technology, such as projectors.

I don't believe this program is going to pay off in the long run.

Now, we would like to hear about the program in your own words. The following questions ask about your experience in the MPA program. This information will tell us what we can do to make your experience better, or what we need to keep doing to maintain your good experiences with the program.

Q26 In what ways has your experience in the MPA program helped you to move towards your professional or career goals?

(Multiple Responses)

Many research topics what I did is helpful for me to know which direction of public administration is suitable for me. When furthering the research, there are more thinking about it. I feel it is really great let me to focus more on my career goals at some point.

The program has provided me knowledge of public and nonprofit organizations that I could not find in other management or administration programs. In addition, each provides an element of service and ethics that is vital to public administration. Overall, the program is providing me tools to begin a career in the public or nonprofit sector.

I will be able to apply for better jobs.

It has helped me professional look at my current field and evaluate whether or not I see myself here long term.

It helped to secure a leadership position/career change with a state entity.

I have developed a more well-rounded knowledge of all aspects of nonprofit management. Coupled with my CPA certification, the MPA will allow me to continue to grow into areas of management outside of finance alone. Within finance, it has given me more insight into what managers in other areas deal with, which allows me to be more prepared for interactions with them.

Credentials are necessary to advance.

Has helped me realize what direction I want to go in my career and has inspired me to pursue further education.

Provided me with a qualified Master's degree that will aid me in the future and met my own personal educational goal.

The program has exposed me to much needed experience in public finance, grant writing, and HR skills that I have otherwise missed in the course of my career. Additionally, it has improved my analytic and communications skills.

My MPA degree will give the knowledge and the qualification I will need to move to higher GS levels.

It has helped me to better understand the details of how public organizations work.

I feel like I have learned a great deal, and I am confident that I will be able to find employment after graduation. I have also formed a great network of fellow classmates and teachers that I know will benefit me in finding a job.

The program,Âs subject material is specific to my work in the public sector. It has provided greater understanding of why things work the way they do and how I (in my role) can further impact the organization.

I work in federal law enforcement and am also a lieutenant colonel in the Army Reserve specializing in civil affairs and psychological operations. A degree from this program greatly benefits me in each profession. In law enforcement, the degree prepares me for supervisory positions within my agency as well as my "post retirement" job with a state or local law enforcement agency. My goal is to retire from my federal position and obtain a position as chief of police, administrator of a drug task force, or director of emergency management. A degree is necessary in the military for promotion to colonel. Additionally, I utilized my experiences from this program during my two deployment to Afghanistan working with Afghan government officials at all levels of government (district, provincial, and national).

exposure to a varitey of PA disclplines.

Have had the opportunity to network in some classes. Acquired some skills that will help me in the job market such as budget analysis and policy analysis.

This program has helped move my career interest from the legal profession to a public servant field. My comprehension of public policy has increased as well as the ability to convey thoughts through my writings in a more clear and concise manner. My focus is more on being an effective instrument to bring quality opportunities to several communities to enable them to better themselves.

Listerv email about jobs, helping in preparation with connections and networking to jobs!

I have been able to apply leadership skills, etc. to the current job I have. Understanding public administration is very important for decision makers such as legislators. Learning how organizations operate help to make wise decisions for the organizations and others that depend on the organization. Given the current political and economic climate, public administration has to be "re-thought" and I believe this program is key in helping to change and begin that conversation.

It has helped to clarify some things that I experienced in years of HR management that previously made no sense, or seemed experimental. I also have a better understanding about policy formulation and research methods that both evaluate and test hypotheses, especially in areas that people generally take for granted because "they have always done things that way."

The MPA program has helped to be clear and concise with my writing and has taught professional skills such as writing memos and professional reports (whether the memo or report is quantitative and/or qualitative).

When I took P&B, I learned a great deal about the story behind why decisions are made. This help me a great deal in becoming a manager and understanding why certain things have to develop in a certain way. I learned more importantly which battles to fight and which battles to sit out.

I have a library of books to reference, I have a better/broader understanding

Internship opportunities are extensive

The MPA program has helped me understand the different areas of government and their overall operation. It has helped me to recognize the connections with certain areas and why they have the layers of government.

Q27 What would you say are the major strengths of UALR's MPA program?
(Multiple Responses)

Great location in the capital of Little Rock.

The knowledge and experience of the faculty and that the program is accredited as a public administration program.

Some of the faculty.

Good solid background in the profession of Public Administration, enjoy the night time offered classes. I do think it is manageable while working full time.

That it is a real program and not online. Face and classroom time with instructors and fellow classmates is important.

great professors
varied electives to choose from generally allows students to follow their interests
great experiences and several opportunities to do real-world work with local businesses
as part of the first 'group' capstone project, I think is has been a great experience in real-world projects and forced us to apply many of the things we have learned throughout the MPA program

Proximity to state agencies and nonprofits in Little Rock.

Location and great professors.

Professional, accredited degree. Some good faculty members. New capstone format is wonderful and will cause a great ripple effect in the community and will only stand to benefit the program in the longrun.

Excellent faculty, high expectations for student achievement.

The professors and staff.

Knowledgeable staff.

I have been fortunate to have for the most part teachers that seem to actually care about my future as I try to find employment. They also seem to really be knowledgeable in the field.

Instructors and course content

The reputation of the UofA system was very important when I decided on a program (online vs local). The convenience of attending classes locally was equally important. I enjoy a class format more than online although I do see the benefits of online programs. Every instructor was friendly, knowledgeable, and willing to work with me when either my duties with my job or military interfered with class. The availability to attend evening classes. The change to the final capstone class. A "real world" group project is much more interesting and beneficial than writing a paper.

Faculty

If one is willing to seek out advise and help from a faculty member regarding a personal endeavor they are willing to assist in what ever way they are capable of. This includes letters of recommendation, fellowships, networking with potential employers, and furthering research opportunities.

The strengths of the MPA program is the analytical skill training and writing that we have to do. It forces students to think outside the box and break down policies that are not easy to comprehend and thus causes our mental capacity to expand.

Learning to analyze policy, learning about organizations (theory) and learning what bureaucracy is.

The way the curriculum is designed and organized. The prerequisites make sense!

The major strengths of the MPA program is linking practical application of theories to actual situations.

Practical teaching style

Wigand and Sink

Qualified staff that is passionate about public administration.

The professors.

Professors with different backgrounds

Q28 What would you change about UALR's MPA program and why?
(Multiple Responses)

Extend more cooperative programs or more extensive courses available.

I would like to see more specialty emphasis fields, such as health care, because that would provide students the opportunity to mold their field and the program to collaborate with other educational entities.

I would offer more electives. The sheet students use to track their progress lists many electives but most of them have not been offered in years. It is the same set of electives each semester. This makes it hard to develop interests and abilities in areas of Public Administration that are not addressed by the standard set of electives.

Group work - at least the way much of it currently is done. There should be a better way to grade the students that do not contribute to the group in a meaningful way. As of now, they coast on the work/grades of the more prepared students.

Tighten admissions standards. Conditional admits should be the exception versus the rule. I have come across many fellow students with one or both of the following: fairly low undergrad GPAs and/or poor writing skills.

Streamline the communication preferences of the professors in the department, some prefer blackboard, other do not utilize it at all. Some require printed copies of assignment while others prefer them to be turned in electronically. And the advising and course registration process is poorly managed.

Until this semester I haven't received as much feedback as I would like on my research papers. As each class builds to the next I find feedback to be valuable. Other changes would be the location of the classes. Ross Hall is not in the best shape. I often worry about security walking back to the parking lot at night. It is not the best lit part of campus.

I would like to see electives offered more often. I listed the variety of electives as a strength, but the frequency at which they are offered sometimes leaves students with no choice as to which elective they "elect".

Consider offering more classes in a weekend format...both electives and possibly core classes. These classes seem to be well attended and would allow working students additional flexibility in scheduling classes. Sometimes adding another night through the week is too much, but giving up a few weekends is doable.

I would make the admissions process more selective

The facilities are horrendous.

More class options so that you are not forced to take certain classes because others are not offered that semester.

I believe most of the concepts presented throughout the program are largely theoretical and not practical. I felt some of the most helpful, and quite frankly, most interesting discussion and learning took place during courses where knowledge can be practically applied.

The team-based capstone design should, if implemented, only be required of students accepted to the program after the design was put in place. It is unfair to change the requirements for those who began the program with the expectation that the capstone would be a personal effort. Students should also have the option of writing a thesis in place of a capstone.

The facilities must be improved. Ross Hall is poorly lit, unsanitary, and contains outdated technology. The classrooms are uncomfortable. Additionally, the program staff and the School of Government in general must demand that UALR do more to reduce crime on campus.

I would like to see a wider selection of classes.

The classrooms are a mess, and it becomes very uncomfortable and distracting when you have to sit there for long periods of time. Find a better set of classrooms or remodel the ones you have. Also, instructors that adhere to a strict attendance policy need to realize that some of us are parents and we have jobs and responsibilities that require us to miss classes sometimes. Our work and various positions require late nights at the office or travel. We should be allowed to miss without being penalized as long as we let the instructor know ahead of time.

First I would change the venue where the classes are taught. To put it bluntly Ross hall is horrible it is falling apart! The next thing that I would like to see changed is most of the professor's reliance on Blackboard. I hate Blackboard and it has historically given me problems when attempting to turn in assignments. Why cant the MPA program offer any daytime courses? Finally, and this is going to sound like a minor issue, but I am sick of putting a \$1.25 into the vending machines on the third floor of Ross Hall in an attempt to get a pepsi and all the machine will spit out is a orange Crush. I don't drink that, it doesn't even have caffeine in it.

Classrooms are drab (and COLD)...the temperature can make for some very uncomfortable lectures.

THE CLASSROOMS! I understand this is not necessarily a problem with the MPA program and more a budget issue with the UofA system. However, between all of my training and education over the years the classrooms used by the MPA program at UALR compete for the worst. In my current class there is insufficient space to sit at a desk. The entire course I had to pull a chair up and sit by the door.

Classrooms. very uncomfortable and old.

Multiple options for capstone would be welcomed. I am a fan of the new group consulting model I feel that it will provide real experience utilizing what we have been taught in the program in addition to a welcome resume boost. I would like to see other options retained such as the thesis or mini thesis options that the program had previously. I would also like to make the suggestion of an individual capstone project similar to what the Clinton School of public service offers. This program allows for students to partner with an organization to accomplish a meaningful task. This is somewhat like a fellowship. This option allows for the experience to be more tailored to the student's personal career interests. This would most likely require a dedicated staff member to help maintain the connections formed by the students.

Academic rigor. Some of my earlier courses are entirely too easy and did not reinforce the material that was taught. I would also like to have required basic statistics course followed by a research methods specific to PA (similar to the current methods class). Other elective research courses would be helpful for building usable hard skills. These would include GIS training, SPSS, and Excel. These could be offered in a workshop format perhaps or one credit hour courses. I would also like to see a budget tools course as well to address more technical aspects.

The MPA program itself is pretty good in my opinion. Probably one thing that would be of assistance to students for future writing assignments is to allow them to interject their voice more into assignments to show that students have a better comprehension of what is being asked of them. This helps to develop flexibility in writing so students are able to determine which writing style is needed at a particular moment versus only relying on one style of writing.

Maybe the work load. Some professors give you 30hrs per week of homework, that is not necessary. Perhaps projects that allow us to apply the reading is more helpful in some cases.

Don't know enough to be critical of anything.

I would change how social issues are discussed in the classroom setting. Some students feel very uncomfortable with dealing with some if not most social issues, such as race, gender, and class. These social issues affect Americans daily, I would change how it is discussed because students not only need to be introduced to some if not most of the social concerns especially in their historical context as well as in its current application because how can we as public servants truly serve the people if we don't know or are not willing to address social issues.

I would also change the range of courses to be added to the curriculum such as courses that include more federal government career paths and not just state and local career paths. I think that changing or increasing the range of courses offered that deals with foreign policy as well as domestic policy would make the program more fulfilling.

I would increase the electives offered. I was excited to take Administrative Law when I began the program. However it was never offered.

The admission standards to the program should be changed. It seems that the program accepts anyone and everyone of applies. I'm alarmed by the lack of intelligence of some of the people who gained admission into the program. Seeing this doesn't make me confident I entered into a high quality MPA program.

Also, I feel that program is too heavily geared toward non-working students in terms of course content. I understand this in a way because many (in my opinion too many) students do not have full time jobs. However, it seems that much class time is spent trying to explain things in a way that non-working students understand happens in the "real world".

online classes - at least for the electives... hard to devote one night a week with job and young children

There needs to be more flexibility in class time schedules. It would also be nice to have more elective choices.

The advising process and to add some classes to be on-line.

Make electives more available; It put me back a semester

Create more of a diversity of courses.

Finally, we would like to know a little more about the background information of our students. This information is used only for comparison purposes; for example, such comparisons permit us to consider the needs of certain student groups and how to address these needs. Again, all your responses are anonymous.

Q29 Are you a . . .

	Count	Percent
New student (started Fall 2012)	7	20%
Continuing student (started prior to Fall 2012)	27	77%
Alum or graduate of the MPA program	1	3%
Total	35	100%

Q30 What best describes your current student status in the MPA program?

	Count	Percent
Full-time student (9 or more hours per semester)	10	29%
Part-time student (generally take 6 hours per semester)	23	66%
Part-time student (generally take 3 hours per semester)	2	6%
Not currently enrolled in the program	0	0%
Total	35	100%

Q31 How did you first discover the UALR MPA program?

	Count	Percent
College/Career Fair	2	6%
Friend/Relative/Colleague	11	31%
Employer recommendation or suggestion	1	3%
UALR Website	16	46%
On the web(college recruiting sites, college review sites, etc.)	0	0%
Online search	1	3%
Other, please specify:	4	11%
Total	35	100%

Other specify responses for Q31:*(Multiple responses)*

Professor

Just a program that I wanted to attend.

UCA (Kim Hoffman)

Graduates from UALR with my undergrad degree in Spring 2012

Q32 What was the main factor in your decision to pursue the MPA degree?

	Count	Percent
Job advancement (e.g. desire for promotion)	13	37%
Change to a new career	3	9%
Develop professional skills	15	43%
Personal fulfillment	3	9%
Other, please specify:	1	3%
Total	35	100%

Other specify response for Q32:

Personal interest in public sector, career advancement,
professional development

Q33 What factors affected your decision to attend the UALR MPA Program?

<i>(Multiple responses)</i>	Count	Percent
Cost	10	29%
Location	30	88%
Admission Requirements	14	41%
Convenient Class Times	19	56%
Reputation	10	29%
Employer Reimbursement Program	3	9%
Other, please specify:	2	6%

Other specify responses for Q33:*(Multiple responses)*

desired program

I need a career!

Q34 Which of the following best describes your current employment status?

Employed in the public sector at the local level	0	0%
Employed in the public sector at the state level	9	26%
Employed in the public sector at the federal level	2	6%
Employed in the public sector by multiple levels	1	3%
Employed in the nonprofit sector	10	29%
Employed in the for-profit sector	3	9%
Volunteering or interning without pay for a public or non-profit	0	0%
Interning without pay for a for-profit firm	0	0%
Not employed and not actively seeking work	2	6%
Not employed and actively seeking a position in public & nonp	3	9%
Other, please specify:	4	12%
Total	34	100%

Other specify responses for Q34:

(Multiple responses)

Graduate Assistant

Employed part time at a bait and tackle shop, seeking a position in the public or nonprofit sector.

Graduate assistant, technically state employed

Full time employment in private sector

Q35 How much professional work experience (in years) do you have in the public and nonprofit sectors (including internships but excluding volunteer activity)?

	Count	Percent
Never employed in the public or nonprofit sector	6	18%
0-1 year	6	18%
2-4 years	11	32%
5-9 years	9	26%
10-14 years	0	0%
15 years or more	2	6%
Total	34	100%



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