

MPA Monthly Meeting 02.27.20

Present: Mike Crow, Anna Rhoads, Puanani Nihoa, Amy Gould, Meghan Doughty, Yoichiro Tsuzuki, Cali Ellis, Lucky Anguelov, Cheryl King-Simrell, Doreen Swetkis and Dhara Katz (note taker).

Announcements

- Summer 2020 and AY 2020-2021 Catalogs are up
 - Please check your entries
 - By March 13th, please send Mike course descriptions (where available) and preferred dates on weekend sessions
- March 17th curriculum meeting: Please come with advantages and drawbacks of both proposed formats for the concentration requirement.
- Native Cases Institute: Registration open. June 25-26 at Little Creek. Let Mike know if you need the registration information again.
- Requests for Summer Institutes are out (due March 9) and so will be submitting a proposal for us to host an institute on the MPA program to obtain community feedback. If you would like to assist/sponsor, let Mike know. (Meghan and Mike will work on Summer Institute together.)
- Alumni Newsletter (Mike & Dhara point people on this): Deadline to submit Alumni or Faculty highlights for consideration is March 13th. Email your highlights to [Dhara](#).
- Dhara is taking over responsibility for our relationship with Advancement and their Raiser's Edge database concerning alumni. If you have updated contact info on alumni, please let Dhara know.
- Saint Martin's is launching a PhD program in leadership in summer 2020.

Director Updates

Assistant Director Search

Anna's last day is Friday March 13th. We have approval to move ahead with hiring a replacement. The position description is submitted and under review with Budget and HRS. The search committee will be comprised of Mike, Puanani, Dhara, Lucky and a yet to be named outside person.

Interim Coverage for Anna's Responsibilities:

- Puanani to do the visit in week 1 or 2 of spring quarter to talk about hooding and graduation
- Student ambassadors: Puanani
- Social media: Mike and Dhara
- Student permission to walk at graduation: Puanani
- Potential and prospective student inquiries: Puanani
- Current student advising: Mike
- GA time sheet approval: Mike

Director Updates (con't)

Quarterly Provost Check-in

Mike met with Jen Drake and Larry Geri on February 5th for our quarterly MPA check-in meeting. Discussion focused primarily on recruitment and enrollment. Also updated Jen and Larry on curriculum re-design. Jen and Larry indicated that we would need an external review process for whatever proposal we develop, either:

- Review by Deans and/or Provost
- Review by a graduate program committee (MPA, MES, MIT)

Discussion: Should the proposal for graduate program review go forward, faculty would like Mike to go make the Provost aware of the possible budgetary implications of this process and of the impact on faculty autonomy in curricular matters.

Legislative Assistant Program

Cali and Jeremy Mohn have prepared a draft proposal and we are working on a budget. Next steps will be review by Jen. Conceptualized as a professional certification program (so no academic credit per se) A consideration for us is if we would like to offer students who complete this program credit towards an MPA, and if so how much.

Hyogo Prefecture Program

David McAvity has reached a tentative agreement with Hyogo Prefecture that the students they sponsor will pay in-state tuition in consideration for participating in the MPA program. Hyogo has asked for greater flexibility on our expected TOEFL score for MPA students. Our website says that our expectation is a score of 100. Their students typically score in the range of 60-70. UW's standard is a minimum TOEFL of 80, and a preferred score of 92. Would like to indicate that we expect something similar.

Event Planning

Charles Menifield Visitor at May 30th Symposium (Author of The Basics of Public Budgeting and Financial Management: A Handbook for Academics and Practitioners): Lucky is planning.

Working with local ASPA chapter to see how they can promote it. Faculty suggest trying the President's equity fund and having it in Tacoma.

Chuck Marohn, Founding President of Strong Towns: City of Olympia may organize a visit. Have volunteered MPA as a co-sponsor at \$500, if it goes forward.

Concentration Transcriptability

Mike and Puanani have a meeting set with Lori Klatt for March 16th.

Recruitment and Enrollment for AY 2020-2021

Anna- 36 started, 9 incomplete, 28 complete

Puanani- 7 to 10 complete, 15 incomplete

Looking at data analysis regarding low enrollments with Larry Geri. At our quarterly check-in meeting, Jen requested a contingency plan for addressing MPA enrollment. Below is what Mike provided:

MPA Program Application Count

The first round (priority) deadline for MPA program applications was Monday, February 3rd. As of that date, the Master of Public Administration program had the following numbers of applications for the two cohorts for which it is recruiting in Fall 2020:

Olympia PNAPP Cohort	Applications
Fall 2017	119
Fall 2018	70
Fall 2019	63
Fall 2020 (as of February 3)	34

Tribal Governance Cohort

Fall 2016	35
Fall 2018	25
Fall 2020 (as of February 3)	12

Possible Contributing Factors-MPA program staff believe the following factors may contribute to this change:

- 1) Economy: A strong economy typically encourages potential students to delay graduate education
- 2) Declining Evergreen undergraduate enrollment: About 40% of the MPA program's enrollment consists of students who earned their undergraduate degree at Evergreen.
- 3) Tacoma program success: It is possible that some students who would have applied in Fall 2020 and live in Pierce or King County are waiting until Fall 2021 to apply for the next Tacoma cohort.
- 4) Institutional reputation: lingering concerns since events in 2017 may discourage applications, as well as negative student experiences attributable to reduced staff in student support services.
- 5) MPA program reputation: Since 2018, we have seen unusually low student satisfaction scores in our annual MPA student survey, possibly generating negative word-of-mouth
- 6) Rising tuition and fewer tribal resources to support Tribal Governance students
- 7) Concern over the future of the Evergreen employee tuition waiver (2 applications this year, compared to 7 or 8 in other years)

Recruitment and Enrollment for AY 2020-2021 (con't)

Short-Term Strategies

In response, MPA staff are exploring the following options to increase applications for Fall 2020:

- 1) Setting a second deadline for March 9th and continuing social media and personal contact strategies to encourage applications
- 2) Consider moving to a rolling admissions process for Fall 2020, accepting applications through spring and summer 2020
- 3) Lower our enrollment targets for our Fall 2020 cohorts and readjust curriculum to serve a smaller cohort:
 - a. Olympia PNAPP cohort: 30
 - b. Tribal Governance cohort: 15

This strategy will require that we re-allocate MPA faculty and may have implications for EWS and/or the Tacoma undergraduate program, since we had planned to draw on them for faculty to support our core courses.

Long-Term Strategies

- 1) Non-enrollment survey: Follow up with potential students who started but did not submit applications on their reasons for discontinuing the process.
- 2) Data analysis: Use application pool data to describe who we are reaching and to identify possible missed opportunities.
- 3) Marketing campaign: Use revisions in the MPA program's curriculum to promote and re-brand the program (for instance, addition of a weekend-intensive option).
- 4) Responding to demand for online and hybrid options
- 5) Engaging alumni as a means to generate positive word-of-mouth
- 6) Weekend intensive option to supplement Tribal Governance program
- 7) Move towards admitting cohorts every year in Tacoma
- 8) Build relationships with political science departments in "feeder" programs (NWIC, WWU, UWT, UPS, St. Martins)
- 9) Explore additional academic programs (legislative assistant program and graduate certificate programs)
- 10) Explore ways to increase flexibility in the MPA program (reducing barriers to entering program, to completing the degree, and increasing options for part-time students)

Recruitment and Enrollment for AY 2020-2021 (con't)

Discussion: Faculty and Staff-Generated Ideas:

- Online teaching (topic for next meeting):
 - Discussed doing a summer institute that would teach faculty how to teach online
 - 50% of program has to be classroom based but a single class can be totally online
- Alumni events to introduce Mike
- Send to alumni list – mail a sticker/letter, please post to show pride in your MPA degree
- Legislative Session – put on an Evergreen MPA Pride event where we encourage people in Session to where a pin showing they graduated from Evergreen
- We are looking at Tacoma cohort being strong next year. Would be good to keep 2 person teaching teams throughout because this isn't our transition year; next year would be, since we're in our first year of the Tacoma cohort. We did the survey, we did the IE last year, and we're an independently motivated and successful program.

Assistant Director Updates

Puanani most of our applicants are coming from undergrads. Good number of applicants. Doing a lot of recruiting on reservations. Working on graduation. We will have to change graduation from the Longhouse most likely. We are looking at Purce Hall I. We got fabric gifted to us from eighth generation and we're using that fabric on the hoods.

Anna working on transition document, recruiting and financial aid. Looking good for our second round of applications. Puanani will be taking over student interest communications and Mike will be taking over communications with current students. Mike will approve any of the time sheets that Anna was approving. Puanani will be also speaking with second year students.

Human Subject Review

Background: The human subjects review process for course, capstone, and ILC projects has recently altered (see outline of concerns courtesy of Amy Gould below). Mike is seeking guidance on what sort of review process we would like to see for MPA student projects and how to assure students hold to standards for ethical research in capstone projects.

Obstacles concerning HSR/IRB reviews for student projects in ATPS and Capstone:

1) Due to staffing changes/desk responsibilities in the Deanery, there is not a functioning IRB at this time. Instead, Karen Gaul and 2 readers might provide "feedback" on applications, but the formal review process is dysfunctional/non-existent at this time. Especially for research deemed "exempt". Students do not need to submit an HSR and faculty are encouraged to provide ethics oversight to student projects via classroom activities/assignments. We usually always include the HSR as part of our deliverables in ATPS and Capstone with submission to the Deans for review. However, it seems this is no longer an option.

Human Subject Review (con't)

2) This is not only due to staff changes at TESC. It is mainly due to changes in federal law. Some changes to the federal Common Rule as of Feb. 2016:

- * "harmonization"= one IRB for all federal agencies,
- * online review process,
- * more exemptions for 'low risk' studies,
- * clearer informed consent agreements that must include future uses of bio specimens

The main concern is with "more" exemptions for "low risk" studies. The Feds already deem studies approved by a Department or Agency head for "public benefit" as exempt. Also, Feds deem anything not "generalizable" as "not research", low risk, and therefore exempt. But just because a study isn't "generalizable" doesn't mean it can't do harm. Part of their definition for "generalizable" includes statistically generalizable. Meaning, a random sample with interval/ratio level data to run inferential statistics. Very few of our students do this due to the nature of the research questions they are asking and the purposeful/targeted/non-random sample populations they are researching. Therefore, by default most of our student projects are "exempt" and do not need to go through the HSR process. In the past, we had staff in charge of our HSR process at TESC who still wanted to review all applications to ensure quality research (exempt or not; even after the law changed in 2016). However, now with skeleton crews on staff, this is not a viable option.

Key question: What comments or concerns should I raise with administration on IRB process as applied to MPA student research?

Discussion:

Two different issues have contributed to the breakdown in IRB at Evergreen. First are changes in the definition of research and of research risk, and particularly guidance on what research is generalizable and what is not. Then Evergreen's structure changed, with responsibility for IRB being transferred from John McClain's position and made part of Karen Gaul's responsibility as a Dean. This meant losing institutional knowledge about Evergreen's IRB process. In 2017, Evergreen lost its status as an institution covered by the Federalwide Assurance for the Protection of Human Subjects. Thus the institution is no longer qualified to receive Federal Grants. While research activities done for course credit typically do not require IRB approval, ATPS and capstone projects may be considered research because they produce results shared with the public, making them similar to thesis or dissertation research. For the moment, MPA faculty are reviewing projects for compliance with standards for ethical research, but an external review process is needed.

Follow-up actions:

1. Amy to speak with Karen Gaul and then will send out a status update
2. Doreen to follow up with Jen
3. Mike to document concerns in a memo addressed to Karen and Jen.

Next MPA Monthly Meeting is Thursday Apr 2, 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm in Lab I - 3033