**MPA Director Workplan**

**Academic Year 2019 – 2020**

The MPA Director oversees the day-to-day operations of the MPA program and takes a lead role in developing and implementing the program’s strategic plan. This document outlines the ways in which I will seek to fulfill the program’s long-term strategy. Over the 2019-2020 academic year. I plan to work towards the following goals on behalf of the MPA program:

1. *Enhance MPA program relationships with community stakeholders and tribal authorities*

Extensive and well-maintained relationships with community stakeholders are crucial to the success of most MPA programs. These connections provide avenues for recruiting students, gaining insight into employer needs, provide foundations for developing graduate assistantships, provide opportunities for MPA capstone projects, enhance student placement, and lay the groundwork for externally-funded research for faculty. In turn, these relationships allow MPA programs to develop a curriculum informed by the needs of regional employers and to connect faculty and student expertise to projects that benefit the community and state.

At present MPA program faculty have excellent ties to state government and local governments in Thurston County. The launch of our MPA program in Tacoma reinforces the need for relationship building in Pierce County. In addition, expanding our relationships with tribal governments may provide ways to reinforce recruitment for the Fall 2020 tribal governance cohort. I plan to do the following to support the MPA program’s relationship-building this year:

1. Participate in at least two conferences addressing Native American public affairs in Washington State (Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians conference in October, and Centennial Accord meeting in November)
2. Organize and participate in at least three meetings with identified program stakeholders, particularly focusing on Tacoma/Pierce County and tribal governance, to assess employer and community needs.
3. Engage with Pierce County’s Coalition to End Homelessness to seek opportunities for student and faculty applied research or capstone projects
4. Engage with Washington State’s open data office to seek opportunities for student and faculty applied research and capstones
5. Enhance relationships with alumni through alumni newsletter and at least one alumni-oriented event
6. Work with students to develop at least one “showcase” capstone project on behalf of a public, nonprofit, or tribal government client.
7. *Coordinate review and revision of MPA curriculum for 2021-2022 academic year*

The MPA program began a process of reviewing its curriculum last year, without conclusion. The review is intended to i) update curriculum to meet student and employer needs and enhance consistency across years; ii) revise scheduling to enhance flexibility and access to the program for a wider range of students; iii) address inequities in faculty workload. I plan to support these efforts in the following ways:

1. Coordinating and facilitating MPA faculty and staff meetings to consider proposed changes
2. Identifying potential barriers that scheduling creates for students and bringing these to faculty attention
3. Identifying opportunities for scheduling changes that will enhance flexibility (particularly for tribal governance and part-time students)
4. Investigate and report on requirements for making program concentrations transcriptable
5. Analyzing possible consequences of proposed curriculum and schedule changes
6. Reporting to faculty on recommendations for program scheduling and curriculum changes that may enhance student enrollment or improve retention
7. Reporting to faculty on recommendations for increasing equity in faculty workload
8. *Develop and begin to implement a plan for program assessment*

The MPA program currently undertakes multiple forms of indirect assessment of student learning, particularly through an annual student survey, occasional alumni and employer surveys, and focus groups with students and alumni. Best practices in academic program assessment suggest that i) the program’s process for assessing student learning address each of its stated learning outcomes and that it be documented in an assessment plan and ii) assessment of student learning outcomes should incorporate direct assessment of student artifacts in addition to indirect assessment through surveys, interviews, and focus groups. In addition, best practices for NASPAA indicate that MPA programs should document the processes they use to assure diversity and inclusive culture for students, staff, and faculty and inclusion in curriculum in the form of a diversity plan. I plan to support these goals by:

1. Developing a student learning assessment plan that includes direct assessment of student capstone projects
2. Pilot a direct assessment of one or more MPA program learning goals (as put forth in the program mission statement) using student capstone projects from the 2018-19 academic year and report on the results
3. Develop an MPA program diversity plan
4. *Cultivate opportunities for program growth*

At present, the MPA program is near capacity in terms of student enrollment, given faculty resources and agreements on student-faculty ratio in the collective bargaining agreement. Growth in this context then seeks to increase the number of high-quality applicants to the MPA program and lay the groundwork for program growth when new faculty become available. Over the next year, I plan to:

1. Investigate and report on the viability of admitting students to our MPA program in Tacoma annually
2. Investigate and report on the viability of an early-entry option into the MPA program
3. Investigate and report on possible opportunities for graduate certificate degree programs (such as a nonprofit management graduate certificate program)
4. Investigate and report on opportunities for continuing education non-credit training programs (e.g. Certified Legislative Professional program; Certified Tribal Administrator program)
5. Investigate and report on viability of a weekend-intensive MPA program (in conjunction with the tribal governance concentration).