

**ACCREDITATION REPORT FOR THE  
GRADUATE PROGRAM IN  
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

Winter 1998

Carolyn Dobbs  
Director

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## Introduction

A comprehensive self-study for the Graduate Program in Public Administration was completed in 1993. The two volumes of that self-study and the report of the external reviewers will be available for members of the reaccreditation team during their visit to Evergreen. These documents have been submitted to the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HEC Board). This current accreditation report is based on that 1993 report and a recent survey sent to graduates of the MPA program from 1993 through 1996. In addition the Director and Assistant to the Directors conducted two focus group sessions of current students in June 1997. Summary reports of the alum survey and of the focus groups are attached in the appendix.

The Graduate Program in Public Administration (MPA) is primarily designed to serve the needs of students either preparing for or refining a professional career in public administration. We also have had in the past and currently have students in the program who are interested in pursuing a doctoral degree in public administration. The program at Evergreen embraces the accreditation objective "to develop in students their competence in interpreting, organizing, and communicating knowledge and to develop the analytical and performance skills needed for the conduct and advancement of professional practice."

With this objective in mind the program is divided into six Core programs for eight quarter hours credit each, forty-eight quarter hours total. In addition to successful completion of the Core offerings, a student must take three graduate electives offered by MPA or the Graduate Program in Environmental Studies (MES); the three electives are four quarter hours each, for a total of twelve quarter hours and a program total of sixty quarter hours.

## Program components

The six Core programs are:

The Political and Economic Context of Public Administration, which examines major changes that have occurred in the practice of democracy, racial and gender justice and effective and proper management of public affairs in United States history. The program provides a historical survey of public administration in the U.S. and the State of Washington. Particular attention is given to the political, economic and social forces that shape government ideas and practices in the United States. The offering begins with a focus on the Founding Period, moves to the Progressive Era, when public administration was defined as a profession, and next to the Roosevelt/New Deal administrations, and finally to post-World War II years and contemporary issues.

Research Methods for the Public Sector, which provides a foundation in the use of quantitative and qualitative research methods suited to the analysis of social and economic policy. The intellectual and value assumptions underlying various methods and techniques are stressed. Instruction is also provided in the use of computers for statistical analysis.

Understanding Public Organizations, which explores organizational theory and behavior in the public sector as a means to understanding and appreciating organizational situations. Students conduct library and organizational research to learn how to effect changes that make organizations more productive, responsive and equitable. The program stresses that a workforce reflecting the range and diversity of the state's populations is a culturally enriched workforce with a greater capacity to serve the state's citizens.

Fiscal Policy, which deals with the economics and politics involved in the collection and allocation of public sector revenues. Topics include tax and non-tax revenue sources, the economics and politics of the budgetary process and public sector goals of equity, efficiency, economic stability and growth.

Public Policy and Its Administrative Implications, which discusses each stage of the policy-making process: policy identification and agenda setting, formation, adoption and implementation/program evaluation. Important skills needed at each stage of the policy process are

introduced and discussed. Given this foundation, a variety of current public sector policies are examined and analyzed.

Applications Project, which provides the capstone for the Core programs. As such, it builds on the foundation developed during the previous quarter as well as the earlier four Core offerings. Students are required to design and carry out a well-focussed research project. This research should represent the culmination of the students' work in the MPA Program and integrate the study and practice of public administration. Under the guidance of the faculty and in conformance with the MPA mission statement, students are encouraged to select a public or non-profit sector topic that furthers their own interests and professional development. Applications project research usually is conducted in small groups; however, occasionally, a student will work alone. The result of this Core is a bound document, filed in the thesis section of the Library. Students also make a final project presentation to the class and invited guests at the end of the quarter.

A student who has not had the equivalent of at least a year's full time work at a professional level in either the public or non-profit sector must also complete a graduate internship, for one quarter hour credit beyond the sixty-hour base. The internship must be the equivalent of half time for one quarter (approximately 200 hours of time in the workplace). The Assistant to the Directors works with a student, who has been required or recommended to take an internship as a condition of admission to the program, to develop a satisfactory placement.

There are also two prerequisites required for admission to the program: statistics and micro/macro economics. Students must demonstrate satisfactory completion of these courses within five years prior to their application date. If a student has not completed the prerequisites, a conditional admission is granted. Statistics must be completed before the Winter Quarter of Year One in the program, and the economics prerequisite before the Fall of Year Two. Both of these prerequisites are offered during Summer School, taught by faculty affiliated with MPA.

#### Mission statement for MPA and link with TESC's teaching/learning foci

The mission statement for the Graduate Program in Public Administration is as follows:

The faculty of the Graduate Program in Public Administration at The Evergreen State College share a primary commitment to challenge and thoroughly prepare students to seek democratic, equitable and practical solutions to the problems which face governments, organizations and communities in the Pacific Northwest. Our graduates, we hope, will be actively committed to creative public service in the region.

The program has been designed to develop analytical, administrative and communication skills needed for effective public service. Instruction in these skills is integrated into a substantive curriculum by faculty who value interdisciplinary team teaching and collaborative learning, rigorous and informed analysis and discussion, critical examination of the political and economic contexts of values and knowledge, and regular attention to the roles played by race and gender in the workplace and in public policy.

This mission statement was adopted by the MPA faculty in 1986 and still serves as a foundation statement for the program. It is also consistent with the five foci that are central to an Evergreen education, personal engagement, collaboration, interdisciplinary study, linking theory with practice, and working across significant differences. These foci are present in all parts of MPA curriculum design and delivery.

Personal engagement must be demonstrated first in the application process, as prospective students must address in a written statement why they want to be admitted to the program and also write an essay on a public policy issue of their choice. This engagement must be demonstrated continuously during the student's tenure in the program. Venues for personal engagement are through seminar preparation and

participation, completion of written assignments, presentations in class, and through successful research endeavors.

Collaboration is modeled by the faculty who team teach the six Core offerings; it is also required through a number of team projects throughout the two years. Another important aspect of collaboration is exhibited in seminar as faculty and students build on one another's critical reading and contextualization of the texts to develop an understanding that surpasses any one individual's understanding of the material.

Each of the Core offerings and, in fact, many of the electives have an interdisciplinary structure. By definition the study of public administration must be done in an interdisciplinary manner because of the complexity and wide-ranging ramifications of the field and the interconnectedness required with other disciplines.

Public administration is primarily an applied field; however, its theoretical elements are essential to building critical perspective and depth into one's understanding of the field. Throughout the two years the content of the classes moves back and forth between theoretical and practice-based content and activities.

The MPA program has as prerequisites not only a successfully completed undergraduate degree, but also requires statistics and micro/macro economics. The program builds on the knowledge and skills gained in undergraduate work and in many cases professional expertise. In addition the Applications Project Core requires original research that produces a body of knowledge not previously known.

#### College resources

Faculty teaching in the MPA program have the same basic support as all full time faculty at Evergreen. In addition the program has a separate budget which includes support for administering the program. This support includes recruiting, bringing in guest speakers, offering public events such as a symposium, or running workshops for students. The budget also provides support for membership in national public administration organizations, such as the American Society of Public Administration and the National Association of Schools of Public Administration. The director attends the annual conference of the latter organization.

Two staff, shared with the MES graduate program, provide support for the directors and faculty assigned to the programs, and they work directly with prospective and current students and program alum. Activities include admission, recruiting, publications, financial aid, supervising graduate assistants, internships and employment opportunities, liaison with other offices on campus, supporting the graduate student association, and maintaining program records.

In addition to staff support the two programs have an assigned workroom and social area for students. This space includes four computers, which are networked for Internet access, and programmed with software that supports student needs in the academic programs. The social area includes student mailboxes and a lounge.

A significant problem exists in the area of support for all classes that occur outside the normal daytime schedule. We have worked to improve student access to the library, computer center, student services generally, and food services. Access has improved somewhat and will certainly continue to improve as the College dedicates more of its resources to part-time studies at the undergraduate level. And certainly, staff support through workshops in the Library and Computer Center has been very good.

### Faculty

The program draws from a number of faculty to teach in the program. Five FTEs are assigned each year, 4.5 to teach in the Core offerings and .5 for the director responsibility; in addition 1 FTE is allocated for faculty to teach the three electives during the academic year. Two prerequisites and three or four additional MPA electives are also offered during summer quarter, and the director continues half time on administrative duties.

In addition to the teaching responsibilities faculty assigned to teach in the MPA program must maintain an active research and/or public service agenda. Current examples include working with the Trinational Coalition on public education, serving on the Thurston County Council on Diversity and Human Rights, the Crisis Center Board, and the Thurston County Planning Commission and Timberland Regional Library Board of Trustees, and performing pro bono consulting with non-profits, state agencies and doing research with bodies such as the legislature on poverty issues.

All of MPA's Core offerings are taught by full time faculty assigned full time to the graduate program. All faculty teaching in the MPA program are selected based on academic background in public administration or relevant fields, such as economics, sociology, or urban planning. A sample of faculty vitae is in Volume II of the 1993 Self-Study and in a separate file folder with the MPA materials.

In addition to their teaching, all faculty assigned to teach in the MPA program participate in MPA governance. Examples include advising students as well as developing the curriculum and MPA policy. They also plan for the future of the program, particularly in the area of identifying faculty hiring needs to sustain and build the program. They also work with the Director reviewing student applications and with the Director and Assistant to the Directors responding to requests for financial aid. The faculty and staff complete regular self-studies (See the 1993 study) in order to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the program. These studies are for on-campus use as well as to meet the requirements of the state HEC Board.

### Admissions and requirements

The graduate admission and retention policies ensure that student qualifications and expectation are compatible with institutional mission and goals. The program adheres to standards set by the state HEC Board including completing an undergraduate degree at an accredited institution, maintaining a 3.0 grade point average the last two years of undergraduate work, demonstrating the ability to work at a graduate level as shown in the public policy essay and the two professional reference letters. Ability to work successfully is also determined by the contents of the application form, which includes work experience and community involvement, by the letter of interest, and transcripts. Graduate program faculty are involved in specifying admission criteria, transfer of graduate credit, and graduation requirements.

In addition a faculty committee appointed by the director reviews applications. Their recommendations are given to the Director for decision.

Graduate program admission policies and regulations are consistent with and supportive of the character of the graduate programs offered by the institution. These policies and regulations are published in the catalogue and MPA Student Handbook and made available to prospective and enrolled students. These documents are on file for accreditation team review.

As indicated above, admission to the MPA graduate program is based on information submitted with the formal application such as undergraduate and graduate transcripts and evaluations by professionals in the field and the student's letter of interest and public policy essay.

Faculty teaching in graduate programs are involved in establishing both general admission criteria for graduate study as well as admission criteria to specific graduate programs. Academic Deans, the Provost, and as appropriate, the Dean of Enrollment Services are involved in finalizing admission criteria.

Graduation requirements for advanced degrees offered by the institution are determined by the faculty teaching in the applicable graduate programs. The policies governing these graduation requirements include:

- the specified time period in which the degree must be completed (four years after admission to the MPA program);
- the number of credit hours that must be completed at the degree-granting institution (at least 48, which is 80% of the total required for graduation),
- the minimum number of graduate-level credits required for the degree, which is sixty quarter hours (100%).

For the MPA degree a minimum of two academic years is required, with a total of 60 quarter hours. The MPA classes are evaluated by a narrative evaluation, which becomes the student's transcript. The student must receive full credit for each class, and the work described must be performed at a graduate level.

At the end of the student's second quarter in the core curriculum (successful completion of the Context program and Research Methods), all faculty who have worked with the student during the two quarters make a recommendation to the Director about the student's ability to complete the degree in a timely and successful way. Using these recommendations, the Director makes candidacy decisions before the beginning of the third quarter Core and notifies students in writing.

The final test of a student's ability to receive a graduate degree is completion of the Applications Project. Success is measured by the quality of the student's thesis, class presentation, and presentation of the final document for binding.

Transfer of graduate credit is evaluated by the director with advice as needed from faculty and based on policies established by faculty who are affiliated with the MPA program for planning curriculum and teaching. The amount of transfer credit granted is limited by number (twelve quarter hours) and the length of time since the credit was awarded (last five years) from an accredited institution. The credit must be relevant to work done in Evergreen's MPA graduate program.

The MPA program does grant graduate credit for internships, but not for field experiences or clinical practices. Students required to complete an internship, for one quarter hour credit, must do so beyond the sixty quarter hour base required for graduation. The MPA program does not grant credit for prior experiential learning that occurred before the student's matriculation into the graduate degree program.

#### Changes since the 1987-1993 MPA Self Study

The program has not changed significantly since the 1993 self-study although there have been several changes of note. First, based on discussions among faculty and with students, the teaching of statistics was removed from the Research Methods Core and required as a prerequisite for admission into the program. This change has been in effect for two cycles and seems to have addressed the problem. By having statistics as a prerequisite, faculty in Research Methods do not now have to spend class time teaching statistics, but can rather focus more fully on the range of social science methods, some of which utilize statistics and some of which do not. Because of this change the class can begin at a graduate level and delve into the topic of research methods in more depth.

The second change (to be implemented with the class coming in Fall 1998) is to replace the GRE requirement with one that relies on two professional letters of reference. When the HEC Board changed requiring the GRE to local option, the MPA faculty discussed the usefulness of requiring it for



our applicants. For several reasons we recommended removing it as a part of the admissions process; the academic administration approved the recommendation. Reasons included lack of relevance for predicting success in the program since many of our prospective students have been away from college for a number of years. Because of this, they usually are removed from test-taking of this sort and much of the information tested. Our students generally do not test high; however, they have the skills and knowledge to do well in the program. MPA students also typically apply later for the program. Therefore, with the necessary delays of receiving GRE scores at TESC, many students have been already enrolled in the first quarter's Core before scores arrive. Since these students were typically doing fine, it did not make sense to consider penalizing them because of low GRE scores. The student because of cost, test anxiety, and convenience of the testing sites also saw taking the test as a significant barrier.

As a third change we have tried to broaden the curriculum somewhat to include a non-profit sector perspective. Primarily, this has occurred through electives, two on leadership taught by non-profit executive directors, one on the basics of non-profit management again taught by an executive director of a local non-profit, and by adding non-profit focus to the international public administration elective.

A final change has been the development of a recruiting plan in conjunction with the other two graduate programs and the evening undergraduate program. In our MPA recruiting we have broadened our area geographically into adjoining counties and Seattle/King County. We have also reached out to governments other than that state and into the community generally in order to tap interests in the non-profit and private sectors. And we have increased the frequency of recruiting visits during each quarter. The director, assistant to the directors, and program coordinator are all involved in planning and implementing recruitment.

Another change since 1993 has not been a positive one. The number of faculty committed to teaching in the MPA program has been decreasing because of shifting interest to other disciplines, retirement, and resignations. One faculty who left was replaced through a hire to a permanent position (Public Administration Generalist in 1997); however, we are still having to fill our Research Methods line with visitors. We will be requesting another permanent line in the Spring 1998 hiring process; the Research Methods line was second in priority last year for the Social Science Planning Group, the curriculum planning group with which the MPA program is affiliated. However, even with this position filled, the program's director and faculty will need to continue to give attention to recruiting qualified faculty from other areas of the curriculum for rotation into MPA.

#### Future initiatives for MPA

This last section of our report is necessarily speculative; it tries to capture on-going and emerging dialogues and to highlight in a proactive way interesting discussions for the future. Each of these ideas would require feasibility studies and needs assessments to identify levels of interest and resources that might be available or needed in order to proceed. A consultative process would then follow this initial study phase before a decision to act could be made.

First, we have begun conversations based on requests from prospective Native American students and current faculty to deliver the MPA program on-site at the four reservations where we have upper division undergraduate offerings. These conversations, if they were to proceed, would need to become more purposeful; given the increasing opportunities for distance learning and computer-assisted learning, the timing may be opportune for feasibility work. A first step might be to develop an elective in tribal administration to be delivered on campus. A second step would include a needs assessment among interested constituencies, followed by feasibility studies on the costs and the availability of resources, and the content of a program focussed on tribal administration. The third step would be to decide whether to export the existing MPA program (supplemented with at least one elective in tribal

administration) using electronic and computer-based technologies combined with some face-to-face occasions or whether to develop an entirely new graduate program in tribal management.

Second, we should continue to research and follow developments on distance learning and computer-assisted learning. This research would enable us to look further at ways to provide graduate education to people in our area who do not have access to Evergreen particularly because of geographical distance. Working either alone or in collaboration with other institutions, Evergreen might be able to meet a wider range of educational needs. Faculty and undergraduate students at Evergreen's Tacoma campus have indicated interest in our MPA program, and students being graduated from our upper division program offered in conjunction with Grays Harbor Community College might be yet another unmet need.

Third, and possibly part of a solution to the first two ideas above, is the area of continuing education. Nationally, public administration schools offer certificate programs for public managers. We might address the feasibility of Evergreen offering a certificate program for those who are not necessarily interested in or able to matriculate fully. Another aspect of continuing education is to serve our MPA graduates and others who have continuing education needs in their careers. We have had a number of requests for particular training and workshops from alum.

Fourth, there is a continuing discussion at Evergreen about the future of the undergraduate curriculum in management and how it might interface with the MPA program. If it were reconfigured to focus on management more broadly (including private, non-profit, and public sectors as a mirror of changing conditions domestically and globally), then more opportunity might exist for interface and collaboration.

Fifth, at least one faculty is interested in the new international trade agreements and the future role of state government. USIS funds may be available to a college that would develop and deliver a trilateral program, looking at these relations and evolving governmental structures that would help implement the agreements.

#### Conclusion

Over the past years since the last reaccreditation, the Graduate Program in Public Administration has seen a period of stability and refinement as the program has become institutionalized at the College and has built a positive reputation with its graduates and the external community. Nationally and internationally, the public administration field has also gained strength through a developing body of theory and critique of the profession. Schools of public administration have also begun to move fairly strongly into innovative areas of distance learning and have increasingly developed program delivery formats that address educational needs of full time workers and busy lives. The next accreditation period should allow time for the Evergreen program to look at new directions that are consonant with its mission and that of the College and the needs of the State's citizens.

## APPENDIX

- A. Focus Groups Report
- B. Results of Alum Survey
- C. MPA Faculty Teaching Matrix

### Introduction

As part of our efforts to update the 1993 Graduate Program in Public Administration (MPA) Self-Study, we held two focus group sessions in June to hear from our current students. We had a set of focus questions for each session, but also encouraged students to contribute additional information and perspectives if the questions did not cover all that they might want to share. Approximately fifteen students from the first and second year classes participated. The Assistant to the Directors facilitated the sessions, and the Director also attended.

Questions used to direct the discussions included some background about where each student was in her/his career and what factors had entered into the decision to join Evergreen's MPA program. Then the questions moved to the student's experience in the program, both within and outside class. We were also interested in student views about access to other services provided by Evergreen, such as those in the Student Affairs division.

Students who participated in the focus groups came from a range of career backgrounds. Some were already working in management positions in the public, non-profit, or private sector, while others were pre-professional in their career and were anticipating moving into managerial positions as a result of successful completion of the graduate program. They were also typical of the demographic mix in the program based on age, gender, and race.

### Reasons for choosing Evergreen's MPA program

Reasons for choosing the MPA program at Evergreen included personal and professional development opportunities as well as learning new content and skills. Some students, particularly those who were already successful public administrators enjoyed the opportunity to step back from the front line and contextualize the work experiences in the larger historical and social, political, economic understanding.

Still others saw gaining the degree as helping them "break the glass ceiling" or just provide more opportunities for employment in other agencies. Some of the students who came from the private or non-profit sector had faced a choice between a degree in public administration or one in business administration or non-profit management. They decided on the public administration program in order to broaden their career experience and because they viewed public administration as broader for future career opportunities. Finally, students chose this particular program because of convenience; this reason was described in terms of proximity to home and work or willingness of an agency to provide some level of reimbursement.

### Experiences at Evergreen outside the MPA program

Experiences outside the classroom were somewhat mixed. Students remarked on positive experiences with Career Development and the automated registration system. However, the majority of the students expressed disappointment and frustration because services were not available in the evening on a regular basis. Examples were most of the offices in Student Affairs. In addition most students expressed resentment that they were required to pay a Health Fee when most were already covered by other insurance and could not access the Health Center. (This office did establish regular hours during part of one week night in an effort to provide service.)

### Experiences at Evergreen in the MPA program

The experience in the classroom was generally positive. Students noted that writing skills had been honed, and that critical reading skills had improved. They enjoyed seminar and the opportunity to do team projects and thought faculty were accessible. However, concerns were raised about the scheduling for electives, and the question was again raised about having electives for less than four quarter hours credit. Concerns were also expressed about perceived differences in levels of accomplishment among the students and questions about needing one evaluation standard for everyone. Although students thought feedback on seminar was generally good, some wanted more comments on seminar performance and written work from seminar faculty.

Most electives were seen as good; students requested more on the non profit sector and on conflict resolution. A component on tribal administration was also requested.

A general concern was raised that the Fall and Winter Quarters of the second year were not as tightly organized as the first year. Students liked the use of practitioners as guest lecturers, but some worried that guests not be used to replace too many faculty lectures.

**Conclusion**

MPA faculty and staff are discussing results from the focus groups; concerns about availability of services outside the program have been expressed in the reaccreditation study. Some requests have been satisfied this year, such as offering electives in non-profit management and conflict resolution and a mediation workshop outside class hours. Others are under discussion, such as an elective in tribal administration.

## MPA SUMMARY REPORT FOR THE 1997 ALUM SURVEY

### Introduction

In the Spring of 1997 the MPA program worked with the Office of Institutional Research to design and conduct a survey of students who had been graduated from the program in 1993, 1994, 1995, and 1996. These data provided us an update of the survey that was completed as part of the 1993 MPA Self Study. Because we wanted some comparability, we used many of the same questions. We had a good response rate for a mailed survey, receiving 53 responses from a total of 124 surveys that were sent out.

To make the results more useful, we used the number of surveys returned as the base for analysis of the survey. We then presented the numerical frequency, the percentages represented by same responses, and a measure of Chi-square to demonstrate the validity of the response pattern. A set of the responses, the analytical review, and the open-ended responses can be found in a folder in the MPA section of the Reaccreditation Document room.

The demographic features of the respondents correspond fairly well with the demographics of the full classes, although the respondents included 75% females and 25% males whereto classes are typically more balanced between the genders although there are usually a few more women than men. Otherwise, the respondents indicate that they lived and worked close to the college and that they have, by and large, stayed in this geographic area after leaving the program, working predominantly in the public sector. A few have gone on for other graduate work including 5 at the doctoral level.

### Highlights of survey results

The responses describing careers are also typical of the MPA student profile with an even distribution across beginning and mid-career with a substantial number thinking about changing careers. They see gaining the MPA degree as important for their career goals (90%) and hold positions that are central to the field of public administration such as budget and policy analyst, program development and management, and supervision.

The reasons for choosing Evergreen were certainly interesting. Beyond the reasons above of wanting to get a graduate degree in order to better oneself professionally, a significant percentage liked TESC's commitment to diversity (53% in two highest categories) and commitment to social justice (56% in two highest categories). The interest in team teaching/learning communities was not as high (29%) and 35% were not at all or only slightly interested in the interdisciplinary structure. Finally, 89% viewed as strongly important the opportunity for personal growth in the MPA program.

In the array of responses about gains because of the program, the "amount gained" categories corresponded closely with "importance to career." Respondents generally believed they gained substantially and that was reflected correspondingly in the importance to career perception. One important exception was in the area of computer skills. Respondents answered 55% at the two lowest levels for amount gained and indicated at a 57% rate that these skills were very important to the career. Two other areas where there seemed to be some discrepancy between amount gained and importance to career were links to the community and effective management skills. In both cases respondents rated the amount gained somewhat lower than the importance factor.

The questions that rated the MPA faculty indicate that generally the respondents have positive views of the faculty, with a typical array in the good, very good, and sometimes excellent ranges. This was true for academic credentials, accessibility out of classroom, feedback, clearly communicated expectations, diversity of backgrounds, practitioner experience, flexibility, level of preparation, academic advising, quality of evaluation process, and as role models for teamwork and cooperative learning. The only exception seemed to be in the area of career advising, where faculty were ranked low.

In the section that explored the relation between importance of certain services outside the classroom and level of satisfaction, the importance and satisfaction levels were usually average or above. However, there were several categories where satisfaction was lower; these included availability of library materials, the collection as a whole, and software technical assistance.

There were a number of other services including financial aid, services for students with disabilities, First Peoples' Advising, academic advising, and other areas in which the level of satisfaction was average although the level of importance was ranked very low. The only topic that registered a lower satisfaction factor was the grad student association where 30% were "not at all" satisfied. And the only area in which there was a high ranking for "importance" and "satisfaction" was in the area of MPA program administrative support. There were also a significant number of missing responses to these questions.

Ratings of the MPA program elements were strong, with many ratings at the good, very good, or excellent levels. This was the case for applications projects, collaborative projects, core coursework, diverse ideology/philosophy, evaluations, fellow students, focus on state administration, race/gender/class issues, lectures, classroom/panel practitioners, and workshops. Categories in which the array of responses were somewhat lower, including more "fair" responses were seminars, focus on community-based administration, focus on federal administration, and finally in the area of computer applications 60% of the respondents rated that category as "poor" or "fair."

Ratings for community resources and the ability of the MPA program to build bridges were typically positive. These resources included state agencies, state legislature, community-based agencies/organizations and leaders in local, federal, special purpose governments.

### Conclusion

In addition to the closed-end responses highlighted above, the survey generated a richness of open-ended responses; the reader is asked to look through these to gain more descriptive detail for numerical responses above. Generally, they are positive and constructive with many suggestions for improvements. The faculty will be discussing these responses as well as the ones in the other section of the survey in future planning.

Some of the concerns above have been addressed; the Assistants to the Directors position has been strengthened. This has contributed to an improvement in career advising. The statistics content, which was a part of the Research Methods Core, has been moved to a prerequisite status, thereby insuring that students have a current knowledge of statistics that can be built upon in the graduate class.

	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
PECPA	Dolbeare Kuehn Stivers	Geri Olson Stivers	Dobbs Geri Kuehn	Dobbs Geri Leahy	Bantz Crystal Weeks
Research Methods	Lassen Kuehn	Geri Kuehn	Geri Weeks Kuehn	Geri Leahy	Geri Bantz
Understanding Public Org	Kuehn Pratt	Geri Bantz	Kuehn Geri	Geri Mohoric	Geri Arragon
Fiscal Policy	Lassen Shariff	Bantz Shariff	Dolbeare Leahy	Shariff Stivers	Geri Shariff
Public Policy/ Adm Application	Dolbeare Shariff	Bantz Olson	Dolbeare Leahy	Mahoric Shariff	Jennings Shariff
Applications	Dolbeare Stivers	Dolbeare Kuehn Stivers	Dobbs Leahy Weeks	Leahy Dobbs Shariff	Dobbs Leahy Shariff