Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

SLO 1: Basic skills and knowledge
The program will ensure that all MPA graduates will have acquired the basic skills and knowledge required to function as leaders in the public and/or not-for-profit sectors.

Related Measures
M 1: Successfully meet or exceed core competencies
As a professionally accredited program through the Network of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA), the MPA program is required to assess student competencies. The program's core competencies have been identified, and are taught in one or more MPA courses. At the end of each semester, each faculty member rates each student in his/her class according to mastery of the core competencies taught in that course. Each semester, faculty rate student mastery of the competencies according to the following rubric. The methods of assessment for each competency in each course are listed in a Composite Competency Matrix. Rubric: Knowledge/understanding
- 1 - Demonstration of knowledge is insufficient in scope and/or accuracy; limited or no ability to apply knowledge.
- 2 - Recognizes most concepts; can access and cite relevant information; still limited ability to combine or utilize information
- 3 - Has command of key concepts and facts; able both to access and to assess relevant information; can reach and defend conclusions.
- 4 - Understands and critiques arguments. Integrates material across sources.
- 5 - Has superior understanding of issues; offers new insights; develops strong arguments
Skills (writing, speaking, analysis)
- 1 - Weak or no ability to perform skill and/or determine which skills are appropriate for a given situation.
- 2 - Able to apply skills but makes frequent errors (in grammar, organization, speech, analytical techniques, etc.) that significantly detract from communication and conclusions.
- 3 - Able to apply skill appropriately in standard situations.
- 4 - Has command of range of skills and understands strengths and weaknesses of each.
- 5 - Masterful use of skill; papers or oral presentations are well organized, coherent, and persuasive; analysis is appropriate to the questions and data and leads to defensible conclusions.
Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other
Target:
Sixty percent of students will average 3 or higher in all competencies.

SLO 2: Research
Students will demonstrate competence in conducting research in the discipline and communicating the result effectively.

Related Measures
M 2: Student complete thesis or project
Students will be assessed through a final project or thesis and defense at the end of the MPA program. The thesis or project includes a committee of three faculty members. Each of the faculty members assesses the research and the student's ability to communicate the results at the defense. A majority vote of the three faculty members is needed to pass the final project or thesis.
Source of Evidence: Senior thesis or culminating major project
Target:
60% of MPA students in their final semester will satisfactorily complete a final project or thesis on their first try.

SLO 3: Formulate, Analyze, Understand
Students demonstrate they can: Formulate a mission statement for an organization. Analyze the structure of an organization using appropriate theories and concepts. Understand how important contextual factors (internal and external) influence management within the organization.

Related Measures
M 3: Internship report
Rubrics used to assess: Internship report for those students undertaking an internship - students assess various components of the organization where they are placed. A random sample of the narratives from the previous year is then assessed. Secondary data that will be used includes: Data collected in periodic alumni surveys. The minimum competency requirement for the core classes.
Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other
Target:
Internship report for those students undertaking an internship - students assess various components of the organization where they are placed. A random sample of the narratives from the previous year is then assessed.