DPA Report

Program Review and Change Proposal

2003-2004

Report Overview

Over the course of the academic year 2002-2003 the Department of Public Administration underwent drastic reorganization. During the reorganization period as well as the previous academic year—the DPA program experienced significant difficulties which affected both the students and the faculty. While the upheaval, conflict, and constant change was unpleasant for all involved it brought to the forefront some important questions that needed to be addressed. For at least 5 years prior to the reorganization the DPA program was constantly under development via incremental changes. While this allowed for regular improvements in the general approach to the program it never addressed some of the more serious foundational problems existing due to the very nature of the DPA design. This report represents over a year of inquiry into the curriculum, design, and delivery of the DPA program and provides a proposal for a drastic redesign of the DPA at the University of La Verne.

Breakdown of the Review Process

July-August 2003
Collection and Review of previous DPA changes, strategic plans, proposals, as well as review of the existing program design and delivery.
- Review of Student Evaluation Forms
- Review of Student Exit Interviews and Surveys
- Faculty Discussions
- Discussions with administration and marketing
- Review of DPA Meeting Minutes
- Interviews with DPA Alumni
- Review of policy and procedure documentation
- Review of student manual and handbook
- SWOT analysis of program begins

September-October 2003
Design of focus groups and delivery. 3 Focus groups were held on campus. Administrators, Alumni, Faculty, Students and some interested outside individuals were invited.
- Focus Group 1—Program Mission, Goals, Context (15 participants)
- Focus Group 2—Program Design and Delivery (12 participants)
- Focus Group 3—Norms, Outcomes, Student Issues, and Alumni (8 participants)

Following the completion of all focus groups, attendees were surveyed for additional information and some clarification of points.

November 2003
Focus group data was analyzed and discussed with faculty. Categories of information were created for ease of use.

December 2003
SWOT analysis of existing program completed.

January 2004-March 2004
Draft proposal for new DPA program design created and circulated for review.

April 2004-June 2004
Review comments and suggestions to be reviewed by DPA faculty.

July 2004-August 2004
Final Draft of DPA program redesign to be completed.

September 2004
DPA program presentation to Provost, Dean, GAP Committee, and University Faculty Assembly (as needed), as well as any other parties as suggested by the Dean.

SWOT Analysis—DPA Program

Strengths

The DPA program has a number of strengths which make it particularly viable in carrying out its mission and that of the institution.

Unique design allowing for the participation of the full time working adult. The existing structure of the program allows a student to continue working while engaging as a full time student. In addition the design allows for constant renewal of the curriculum to meet the ever-changing needs of the field.

- Unique design
- Flexibility for working adults
- Unique focus (scholarly practitioner)
- Provides collaborative experience
- May be delivered at multiple locations while still maintaining on-campus status
- Efficiency of faculty workload (under minimum faculty levels)
- Flexible location strategy
- Flexibility of student entrance into program
- Excellent potential for guest lectures
- Constant renewal of course material
- Program continuity
- Excellent networking
- Maximum contact time
- Opportunity for "rolling application"
- Can accommodate larger number of students than more traditional models
- Faculty work collaboratively
- Faculty are well versed in all areas of inquiry/coursework
- Students experience "small class size" in cluster within the structure of large program
- Students from diverse background and professional areas
- Focus on the practitioner
- Great PA combination of theorists and practitioners
- Group administration of program and its policies
- Students have access to all faculty
- Excellent revenue potential
- Faculty workload well distributed
- Faculty design coursework in their expertise
- Great opportunities for student interaction and discussion
- Collegial environment
- Faculty participation

Weaknesses

The existing design of the DPA program exists to meet a specific need—that is the education of working adults who must combine school and their career. In addition, the

program is designed to allow for maximum flexibility of location and time. In an effort to meet these 2 very important needs some weaknesses are apparent.

- Requires all faculty to be generalists in Public Administration
- Academic rigor may be compromised for convenience and fit.
- Requires a minimum of 6 full time faculty for optimum performance
- Overly time intensive for key faculty
- Curriculum may tend to be "canned"
- Existing system too rigid
- Lock step programming leads to stagnation
- Very long lead time for curriculum development
- Unbalanced by faculty changes
- Cluster model allows for too much variation in norm
- Student facilitation creates discrepancies
- Very low marketing support
- Very limited financial support
- University not focused on Graduate programs
- University resources geared for undergraduate
- Marketing system is in flux
- Difficult program to market
- Misunderstood externally
- Does not have an "academic feel"
- Intensives too much like a conference
- Difficult to maintain load and pay structure
- Student outcomes are difficult to track
- Minimal faculty downtime to recharge
- Constant drain on faculty resources
- Adjuncts are necessary but underutilized
- Too easy to slide
- Not enough emphasis on research
- Spring start creates administration problems and reduces rigor
- Some courses do not need a whole semester
- A waste of valuable education time (i.e. Fiscal admin.)
- Commitment slippage by students focused on dissertation not coursework
- Commitment slippage by faculty who are not part of the core group
- Focus is only for in-service professionals
- Not enough core faculty

Opportunities
Due to the nature of the upcoming courses and the recent reorganization of the department and the college—this is an opportune time to make significant changes in the DPA program. The nature of La Verne and the DPA program make it extremely viable for creative development.

- Use of diverse faculty and student body
- Ability to bring in guests, authors and practitioners

- Ability to use adjuncts in an effective way
- Perfect time to redesign
- Rebuild faculty
- Restructure courses
- Networking opportunities
- New marketing options
- Increase rigor
- Increase academic "feel"
- Community development
- Possible specialty areas
- Redesign to focus on outcomes not administration of the system

Threats
The DPA program is susceptible to both external and internal threats. At this time most of the threats are economic and market driven. However, the internal threats could prove to be significant.

- Too few faculty
- Major shift in administrative support
- Not enough marketing budget
- Difficult market—economically
- Difficult market—philosophically
- USC and Claremont Ph.D. programs
- Changing the design may limit some flexibility
- Increasing rigor may impact revenue and the market
- External perception
- May not have enough full time faculty for viability

New DPA Curriculum
Year 1 Foundations—Scope and Methods

Fall	Spring
Foundations for Public Administration	Ethics
Public Administration Theory	Organization Theory
Quant & Qual I	Quant & Qual II

Scope of the Field
Foundations for Public Administration—3 units
Ethics—3 units
Public Administration Theory—3 units
Organization Theory—3 units

Methods
Quantitative and Qualitative Methods I—3 units
Quantitative and Qualitative Methods II —3 units

Year 2 Administrative Process

Fall	Spring
Administrative Process I (HR, Fiscal)	Strategic Management and Decision Making
Administrative Process II (IT, Plan, Pol. Eval)	Organizational Change and Conflict Management
Capstone in Public Administration Theory	Capstone in Public Management Process

Administrative Process I —3 units
Administrative Process II —3 units
Strategic Management and Decision Making —3 units
Organizational Change and Conflict Management —3 units
Capstone in Public Management Process—3 units
(Exam Review Course)
Capstone in Public Administration Theory—3 units
(Exam Review Course)

Year 3 Culminating Research—Specialization and Dissertation Development

Fall	Spring
Philosophy of Research	Applied Research Methods
Pro Seminar	Specialization
Research Methods	Data Analysis

Philosophy of Research—3 units
Research Methods—3 units
Pro Seminar—3 units
Applied Research Methods—3 units
Specialization--3 units

SB 3/22/04

Data Analysis—3 units

Year One General Outcomes

- Thorough and demonstrated understanding of public administration theory, PA concepts and issues, the language of PA.
- Thorough rough and demonstrated understanding of organization theory, organizational design, and bureaucratic theory.
- Thorough and demonstrated understanding of ethics, normative values, philosophical concepts and issues for PA.
- Thorough and demonstrated understanding of basic research methods, statistical analysis, and statistical tools.
- Evaluation and development of academic writing and research skills.
- Understanding of doctoral study and scholarship.
- Focused knowledge of self, personal development of scholar.
- Analysis and development of personal leadership skills.

Year Two General Outcomes

- Thorough and demonstrated understanding of human resources concepts, theories, and applications.
- Thorough and demonstrated understanding of fiscal administration concepts, theories, and applications.
- Thorough and demonstrated understanding of information technology management concepts, theories, and applications.
- Thorough and demonstrated understanding of strategic planning concepts, theories, and applications.
- Thorough and demonstrated understanding of conflict management concepts, theories, and applications.
- Thorough and demonstrated understanding of organizational change concepts, theories, and applications.
- Thorough and demonstrated understanding of decision making concepts, theories, and applications.
- Integration of the above concepts, theories and applications in a strategic management context.
- Successful completion of comprehensive exams.

Comprehensive Exams

Students will take 2 sets of comprehensive exams. The first at the fall final intensive covering foundations of public administration—the scope of the field. The second at the spring final intensive covering administrative process concepts and application. Students will be given a set of questions at the beginning of each semester from which to prepare. At the final intensive students will sit for the exam. Questions will be selected randomly from each area. Students will have 2 chances to pass the exams. If the student misses one question they may take another question from the same area within 2 weeks. If the student misses more than one question they must retake the entire exam a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the start of the following semester. Should the student fail the exam a second time they will be given a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study but will not be

allowed to complete the program. The student may petition to repeat a portion or all of the preceding courses. To be determined by the program chair and/or the AQC.

Year Three General Outcomes

- Thorough and demonstrated understanding of research foundations relating to scientific inquiry and the competing notions of knowledge development
- Thorough and demonstrated understanding of research methods strategies and trade-offs in relation to data gathering and research design
- Thorough and demonstrated understanding of one area of research specialization
- Thorough and demonstrated understanding of an applied research approach and its strengths and limitations
- Thorough and demonstrated understanding of one area of specialization central to a student's area of intellectual and research interests
- Thorough and demonstrated understanding of data analysis, data interpretation and data representation
- Thorough and demonstrated understanding of one area of inquiry worthy of dissertation research