Report on Program Actions and Results In Response to NASPAA Accreditation Review

May 6, 2008

Master of Public Administration

Department of Public and Health Administration
College of Business and Public Management
University of La Verne
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Report on Program Actions
by the University of La Verne MPA Program
in Response to
The Commission on Peer Review and Accreditation
May 6, 2008

Introduction

This "Report on Program Actions by the University of La Verne MPA Program" is in response to the Commission on Peer Review and Accreditation's (COPRA) request for further information on four program activities and results. The report is the latest in a series of reports submitted by the University of La Verne MPA program:

1. On August 15, 2006 The University of La Verne MPA program submitted a Self-Study Report, Volumes I and II to be considered for Masters Peer Review and Accreditation.

2. After review of our initial Self-Study Report, the Commission on Peer Review and Accreditation (COPRA), in their Interim Report dated November 17, 2006 (copy attached, Appendix A) requested additional information on specific items.

3. Following the NASPAA site visit conducted on April 25-26, 2007, a Site Visit Team Report was received on May 7, 2007 (copy attached, Appendix B).

4. A NASPAA Accreditation Review was issued on August 3, 2007 (copy attached, Appendix C).

5. On September 11, 2007, an updated Self Study Report, detailing the approach and steps taken by the ULV MPA Program was submitted in response to non-conformity concerns listed in the August 3, 2007 report (copy attached, Appendix D).

6. After reviewing the updated Self Study Report dated September 11, 2007, COPRA requested information on the progress the program had made with respect to four specific items (see the attached November 27, 2007 Interim Report, Appendix E).

The following report is a response to each of the four items raised by COPRA:

*** Item 1: Standard 2.2 Assessment and Standard 2.3 Guiding Performance**
*** Item 2: Standard 3.4 Scope of Influence & Standard 6.3 Admission Factors**
*** Item 3: Standard 4.4 Internships**
*** Item 4: Standard 5.5 Faculty Diversity**

Organization of the Report

This report provides the central concerns of COPRA (*in italics with yellow highlight*) listed in the November 27, 2008 Interim Report followed by an item-by-item University of La Verne MPA program response.

Item 1: Standard 2.2 Assessment and Standard 2.3 Guiding Performance

Standard 2.2 states "The program shall assess its students' performance and the accomplishment of its objectives." Standard 2.3 states, "The program shall use information about its performance in directing and revising program objectives, strategies, and operations."

The August 2007 Decision letter stated: "Based on the self-study report and site visit team finding, evidence of formal assessment procedures is not present. Assessment appears to be largely informal at the program level and the university-wide assessment system appears to produce low response rates and poor comparative data. Thus, the Commission requests that the program develop a formal assessment plan and assessment criteria and provide evidence that it uses "information about its performance in directing and guiding program objectives, strategies, and operations." The Commission also requests that the program provide an update on developments with the university student evaluation system. Until this is done, the program appears to be out of conformance with Standard 2.2 and Standard 2.3."

The Program response of October 2007 indicated that, in the interim between the summer report and October 2007, the Program has undertaken a comprehensive review of its assessment functions and adopted plans to meet NASPAA Standards 2.2 and 2.3. The two-year implementation is in incipient stages presently but a systematic approach has been laid out. Additional resources have been dedicated to assist.

The Commission recognizes the attention the Program and the University have given to this particular nonconformity, and the Commission urges the Program to stay on the track outlined, particularly with respect to student evaluation of instruction and input from alumni and the P.A. Advisory Board. The Commission requests that the Program provide an update on the phase-in of the new assessment plan before the Summer 2008 COPRA meeting.

Approach and Actions Taken by the MPA Program

Six areas were identified for program actions with regard to assessment and guiding performance standards. Four of the program actions were implemented in the late Fall and Winter terms of the 2007-2008 academic year. In addition to the activities initiated in 2007-2008, two additional program actions will be implemented in the 2008-2009 academic year. Each of the program actions is discussed in the following pages and each action is followed by a report on the result of actions implemented.

Program actions and reports include:

A. The design and implementation of an MPA Assessment Program
B. Implementation of strategies to improve the response rate on student evaluations
C. The design and implementation of an Exit Survey for graduating students
D. The creation of a formal MPA Advisory Board

Two other program actions are being planed and will be implemented in the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 academic years:

E. Alumni Focus Group assessment
F. Employer Survey.

A. MPA Assessment Program

Outcomes assessment is a key strategic objective of the University, and the implementation of a comprehensive course-embedded outcomes assessment plan is tied to the College of Business and Public Management's mission and its commitment to continuously improve programs and processes through reflective assessment and measurement.

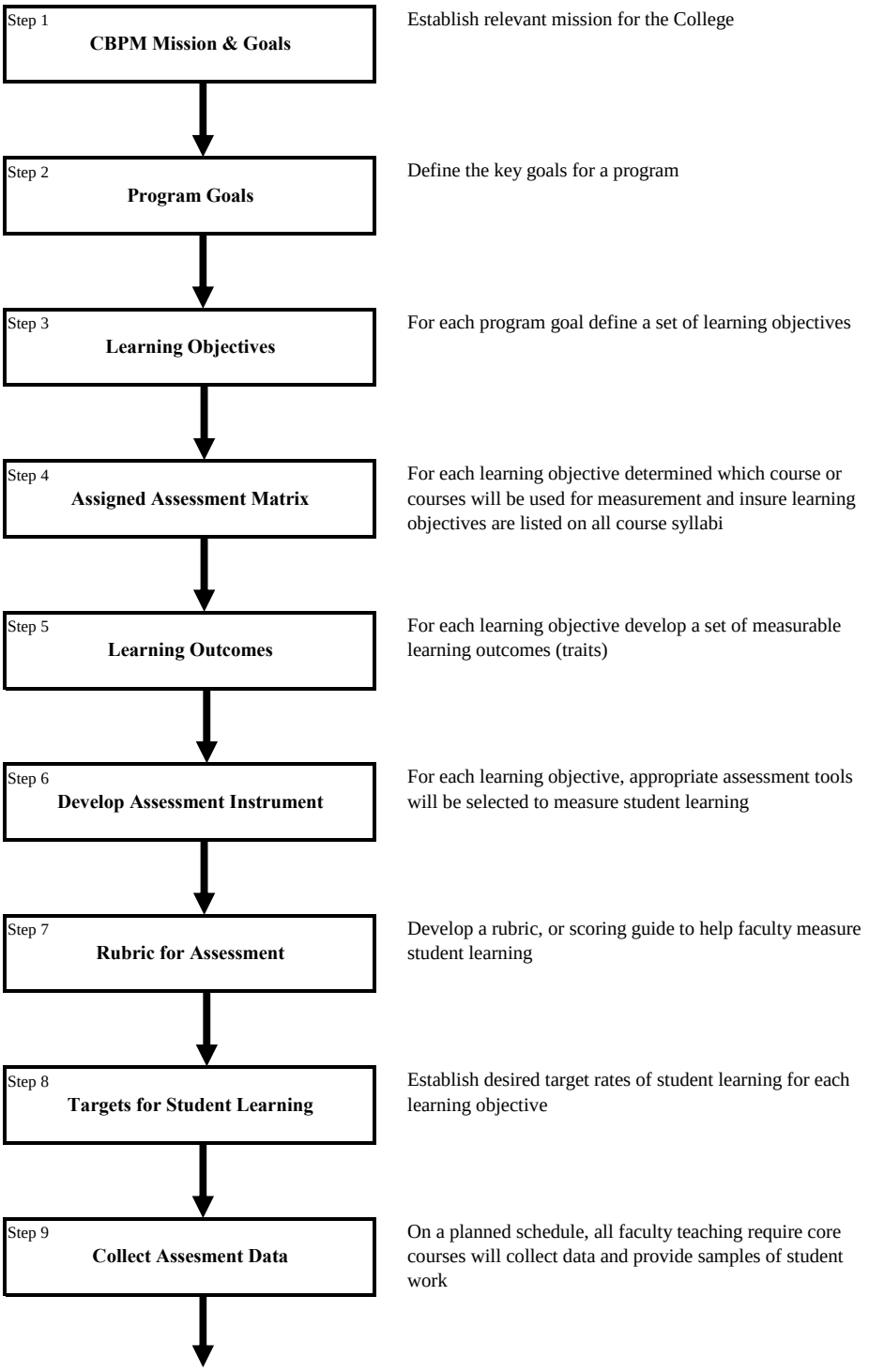
The MPA Assessment Program was designed in the Fall of 2007 based on the ten steps listed in College of Business and Public Management's Course Embedded Outcomes Assessment Program (Table 1). The program assessment included a pilot test that was conducted in the Fall term of 2007 with regular implementation beginning with courses offered in the Winter term of 2008. Additional program assessment will be conducted in courses offered in the Spring and Summer terms of 2008. A schedule for the 2008-2009 assessment is provided.

Table 1. CBPM Course Embedded Outcomes Assessment Program

May 6, 2005

APPENDIX A

College of Business and Public Management
Course Embedded Outcomes Assessment Program



The MPA ten-step assessment program builds on the College of Business and Public Management's Mission and Goals:

1. Define the relevant program elements of the MPA mission.
2. Define the goals and learning objectives of the MPA program.
3. Break down each learning objective into several measurable learning outcomes.
4. Prepare a matrix that shows all the learning objectives and outcomes and the MPA courses in which they are going to be assessed.
5. Develop the instruments to measure or assess the learning outcomes.
6. Develop a rubric for the assessment of the learning outcomes.
7. Set an overall target for student learning.
8. Collect assessment data.
9. Analyze the data.
10. Continuously re-evaluate the curriculum, goals, objectives, learning outcomes, instruments, and rubric.

In the Fall of 2007, The MPA program chair, with the help of the MPA Program Committee (consisting of the full time MPA faculty) developed the goals and objectives for the MPA program based on the MPA program mission:

> The mission of the University of La Verne's Master of Public Administration program is to offer an innovative and practical curriculum that stresses intellectual and theoretical foundations to professionals preparing to take on socially responsible roles in public leadership and service. The mission will be achieved through a curriculum that emphasizes: (1) management of organizational resources, (2) the changing context of public administration, and (3) analytic and decision-making capacity. Students will also develop an understanding of the practice of public administration in diverse public organizations and of the ethical dimensions of public service.

Based upon the MPA mission, the central learning elements and learning objectives of the MPA mission were established (Table 2).

Table 2. Mission Elements and Learning Objectives

Mission Statement Elements of the Curriculum	LEARNING OBJECTIVES
The Management of Organizational Resources	Understand the efficient and effective utilization of organizational resources
The Contextual Nature of Public Administration	Understand the intra and inter-organizational aspects of public administration Understand the inherent social role and ethos for the public, private, and nonprofit sectors
The Development of Analytic and Decision Making Capacity	Understand the role quantitative and qualitative analysis plays in public administrative decision making
Understanding Diversity in the Practice of Public Administration	Understand the implications of diversity in public organizations
Understanding the Ethical Dimensions of Public service	Understand the concepts of fairness and justice in public service

Each of the learning objectives encompasses skills and abilities that were broken down into learning outcomes (Table 3).

Table 3. Leaning Objectives and Learning Outcomes

Learning Objectives	Learning Outcomes (Students shall be able to)
Understand the efficient and effective utilization of organizational resources	Assess recruitment and selection processes Assess employee evaluation systems for promotion and performance outcomes Utilize ramifications of centralized vs decentralized management (IT/HR) resources Comprehension of strategic planning protocol for assessment and development of effective resource utilization
Understand the intra and inter-organizational aspects of public administration Understand the inherent social role and ethos for the public, private, and nonprofit sectors	Distinguish network management from hierarchy management practices Identify central themes and contributors of organizational theory schools of thought Distinguish social, economic, and ecological aspects of community development Compare and contrast the administrative context and social expectation of each sector Know the various mechanisms for the delivery of public goods and services
Understand the role quantitative and qualitative analysis plays in public administrative decision making	Conduct cost-benefit analysis Interpret descriptive and inferential statistics (to multiple regression)
Understand the implications of diversity in public organizations	Identify historical applications of diversity
Understand the concepts of fairness and justice in public service	Provide ethical assessment of policy choices

Once the learning objectives and outcomes were defined by the MPA Program Committee, the MPA Chair developed a matrix that shows all of the learning objectives and outcomes and the MPA course(s) where program objectives and learning outcomes will be assessed (Table 4). This matrix serves as a road map for the MPA course embedded outcome assessment efforts.

Table 4. Learning Objectives and Course Assessment

Learning Objectives	Assigned Assessment Matrix MPA Courses
Understand the efficient and effective utilization of organizational resources	PADM 530 Human Resource Management PADM 584 Managing IT in Public Org PADM 585Strategic Planning in PA
Understand the intra and inter-organizational aspects of public administration	PADM 583 Managing Collaborative Networks PADM 531 Organizational Theory PADM 587 Mg Sustainable
Understand the inherent social role and ethos for the public, private, and nonprofit sectors	PADM 501 Admin & Society PADM 586 Tools for Governance
Understand the role quantitative and qualitative analysis plays in public administrative decision making	PADM 533 Policy Formation & Analysis PADM 582 Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis
Understand the implications of diversity in public organizations	PADM 530 Human Resource Management
Understand the concepts of fairness and justice in public service	PADM 555 Ethical Leadership PADM 596 Grad Seminar

For each learning outcome or set of outcomes, an instrument was developed to measure the students' ability to perform tasks or demonstrate their skills. For some objectives or outcomes, a case study might be the most appropriate instrument; while for others, it might be an exam, simulation, term paper, or a class project.

For each instrument, a rubric or a scoring guide will be developed to help the faculty in assessing the student ability and skill level. The rubric will ensure consistency in the evaluation of the student ability across sections and over time.

The MPA Program Committee set a target objective student achievement on each of the learning outcomes. The goal was set at 80% of all students to achieve adequate or excellence ratings in competency scores in all program outcomes.

During the Fall term of 2007 and Winter term of 2008, based upon the courses offered, several learning outcomes and student performance were assessed. The outcomes of these assessments are summarized and tabulated in an "Assessment Matrix" listed in Table 5. The "Assessment Matrix" was provided to the MPA Advisory Board for review and comment at the April 2008 Advisory Board meeting.

The program expects to complete a full cycle of evaluation and assess all of the learning outcomes and objectives by the end of the Spring Term of 2009. At that time, all of the data will be summarized and tabulated and the MPA Program Committee, the MPA Advisory Board, with the help of the College Assessment Coordinator, will review the data and make any appropriate recommendations to change the curriculum, learning objectives, learning outcomes, instruments, and/or rubrics. A new cycle of course embedded outcome assessment will commence in the fall of 2009.

Table 5. MPA Assessment Matrix

Learning Objectives	Assigned Assessment Matrix MPA Courses	Assessment Instrument	Assessment Targets (Student Learning 80% Standard)	Learning Objective Scorecard Program Goals Set at 80%
Utilization of organizational resources in efficient and effective ways	PADM 530 Human Resource Management	Case Study	Fall 2008	tba
	PADM 584 Managing IT in Public Org	Comparative Case Analysis	Summer 2008	tba
	PADM 585Strategic Planning in PA	Strategic Resource Assessment	Summer 2008	tba
Understand the intra and inter-organizational aspects of public administration	PADM 538 Collaborative Public Management	4-Criteria Exam	3 of 4 items met the 80% standard	**75%**
	PADM 531 Organizational Theory	Exam	Fall 2008	tba
	PADM 587 Managing Sustainable Communities	Environmental Program Audit	Spring 2008	tba
Understand the inherent social role and ethos for the public, private, and nonprofit sectors	PADM 501 Public Administration and Society	Three Essays	2 of 3 items met the 80% standard	**67%**
	PADM 586 Tools for Governance	Exam	Winter 2009	tba
Understand the role quantitative and qualitative analysis plays in public administrative decision making	PADM 533 Policy Formation & Analysis	Conduct a Cost-Benefit Analysis	Spring 2008	tba
	PADM 582 Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis	Critical Essay Review	3 of 4 items met the 80% standard	**75%**
Understand the implications of diversity in public organizations	PADM 530 Human Resource Management	Literature Review	Fall 2008	tba
Understand the concepts of fairness and justice in public service	PADM 555 Ethical Leadership		Spring 2008	tba
	PADM 596 Graduate Seminar	3 Essays (Pre-Post)	3of 3 items met the 80% standard	**100%**

B. Course Evaluations by Students

The second area of focus for improving program assessment activities is increasing the course evaluation response rate of the MPA students. The University of La Verne adopted an Online Student Evaluation system in the fall of 2003. The percent of students who complete the online surveys vary considerably from program to program and among courses. Student comments are a rich source of input for considering changes to the curriculum or method of delivery. In the fall and winter terms of the 2007-2008 academic year, the public administration faculty implemented different strategies to improve adequate student participation in completing the evaluations. Following are some of the suggested means to ensure adequate participation:

1. Each faculty member would include in his/her syllabus the requirement that a student must complete the online university-wide evaluation form.

2. Course faculty could send reminders to students prior to the final week of class that course evaluations are to be submitted on electronically. This reminder is sent in addition to the University-wide student evaluation reminders that are sent to each student by the Academic Affairs Office.

3. The system currently allows for students to print a receipt demonstrating that they have entered and completed the online evaluation for the course. The faculty member can request that this receipt be turned into the faculty member prior to the last regularly scheduled class of the term.

4. In the event on the last night of the course, a student(s) has not completed the course evaluation, the faculty member will allow sufficient time to take those students to the computer lab where they can complete the evaluation.

The result of implementing the above activities improved the course evaluation responses dramatically. Student evaluation response rates for the fall term classes of 2007 and the winter term classes of 2008 are reported in Tables 6 and Table 7 respectively. Overall, term student response rate was 80% in the fall term of 2007 and 72% in the winter term of 2008. Also listed are the three top strengths of each faculty member. In the winter term of 2008, the student response rate for PADM 538 was below our expectations. The faculty member was contacted regarding the low student response rate and requested to submit a plan of action to improve the student evaluation response rate in future classes.

Table 6. Fall 2007 Students' Evaluations

Course	Overall Mean	University Mean	n	r	Strengths
501	3.65	3.61	21	10	Students allowed to express themselves Instructor was available to students Instructor showed professionalism/respect for students
537	3.72	3.61	21	19	Instructor knowledge of subject Students allowed to express themselves Course well organized and well planned
531	3.47	3.61	31	27	Instructor knowledge of subject Instructor showed professionalism/respect for students
534	3.54	3.61	13	13	Instructor showed knowledge of the subject Instructor showed respect & professionalism towards students Instructor gave helpful feedback on student work
Totals			86	69	80% Overall term response rate

n= number of students enrolled in class r= number of student responses 1-4 Scale (4 is highest

Table 7. Winter 2008 Students' Evaluations

Course	Overall Mean	University Mean	n	r	Strengths
501	3.62	3.61	9	9	Students allowed to express themselves Instructor was available to students Instructor showed professionalism/respect for students
534	3.82	3.61	19	19	Instructor knowledge of subject Students allowed to express themselves Course well organized and well planned
582	3.00	3.61	18	11	Instructor knowledge of subject Instructor showed professionalism/respect for students Instructor was available to students
538	3.68	3.61	12	3	Instructor showed fairness in evaluating student work Instructor explained evaluation and grading criteria Instructor was available to students
			58	42	72% Overall term response rate

n= number of students enrolled in class r= number of student responses 1-4 Scale (4 is highest)

As a final note, the MPA Chair in conjunction with the Department Chair will review the evaluations and will use these in faculty development, course assignments, and promotional decisions. Course evaluations were reviewed by the MPA Advisory Board during the April 2008 Advisory Board Meeting.

C. Graduating Student Exit Survey

The third area of focus for improving program assessment activities is the design and implementation of an "exit survey" for the graduating students of the MPA program. The survey was designed by the MPA program chair and focuses upon student satisfaction in two areas: (1) overall program services, faculty, staff and facilities; and (2) curricular matters related how well the program prepared students in public service areas including the program mission elements (e.g. management of organizational resources, analytic reasoning, service context and diversity).

This survey was implemented in the winter term of 2008 in the culminating cap-stone course. Seven students were in their final term of course work. The results of the survey are reported below. The results of exit survey were also shared with the MPA Advisory board at the April 2008 meeting.

The results of the survey are listed in the "Exit Interviews 2008" section that follows. Results indicate scores of average satisfaction (3.0) or above on all items. Above average scores (4.0) were reported on faculty, facilities and overall program. While still average, lowest satisfaction score reported was on an item related to specific faculty expertise in specific content areas (3.4). This concern will be a focus of the MPA chair in future course assignments to ensure the content expertise of the faculty is demonstrated prior to course assignment. The MPA chair is designing an "expertise model" to address this issue. With the hiring of two new faculty members (see discussion on Item 4) the MPA chair will integrate new and continuing faculty into an overall expertise model that matches faculty and their areas of expertise with assigned courses. This model will be implemented in the 2008-2009 academic year.

Exit Interviews 2008 (n = 7)

This survey has been designed to help us assess how well we are meeting our program objectives in the Master of Public Administration (MPA). Please read each item carefully and write in or circle your responses. Items below list various elements of our program. Please rate each element according to the scale below. Write the number that most closely corresponds to your rating on the line beside each item.

1 = Poor ● 2 = Below average ● 3 = Average ● 4 = Above average ● 5 = Excellent ● 0 = No opinion

Program

Average	
4.3	Preparation for your future occupation or career advancement
4.0	Degree to which course content was stimulating and interesting
3.4	Expertise of faculty in their content areas
4.1	Degree to which our program has stimulated your interest in public affairs
4.3	Extent to which the program has allowed you to make connections with others in the profession

Faculty and Staff

Average	
4.1	Assistance you received from ULV MPA support staff
3.8	Career advising you received from ULV MPA faculty and staff
3.9	Academic advising you received from ULV MPA faculty and staff

Faculty

Average	
4.0	Teaching ability of the ULV MPA faculty
4.6	Accessibility of the faculty
4.6	Attitude of the faculty toward students

Facilities

Average	
4.1	Class size
3.9	Classroom facilities
4.2	Student resource/reference room (PAAC)
4.5	Student computer lab (PAAC)
4.3	Commons Room in PAAC

Overall Program

Average	
4.1	ULV MPA program as a whole
3.7	Overall quality of ULV MPA courses
4.0	Overall education you have received from the ULV MPA program

How well has the MPA program prepared you to:

Theoretical foundation

4.1	Understand the legal and constitutional dimensions of public service

Managing organizational resources

3.1	Apply quantitative analysis techniques to policy and management problems
4.6	Understand the budgetary and fiscal dimensions of policy decisions
4.7	Understand the organizational and management dimensions of public service

Practice of PA in diverse public organizations

4.4	Do effective work in a group
4.7	Communicate with colleagues and citizens orally and by writing
4.6	Work productively and collaboratively with others in your agency
4.4	Enhance democratic values through management

Ethical dimensions of public service

4.1	Respond to the ethical dilemmas of public service

Analytic and decision-making

4.4	Understand the role of analysis and professionalism in democratic governance

Practical Individual Competence

4.1	Work independently on policy or management projects
4.6	Understand yourself and your professional goals
4.1	Communicate and work with elected officials

D. Public Administration Advisory Board

The fourth area of focus for improving program assessment activities was to formalize the MPA Advisory Board. In the Winter of 2008, the MPA Director reviewed previous MPA Board Members, MPA alumni and consulted with Senior University administrators to formalize an MPA Advisory Board. All of the candidates selected to be on the Advisory Board accepted the invitation with one exception. The City Manager of La Verne City, where the University of La Verne resides, declined due to potential conflict of interest with respect to the number of Partnerships the City of La Verne has with the University. However, he did agree to serve when he steps down as City Manager in the future.

The MPA Program conducted a meeting of the Advisory Board on April 16, 2008 and included six of the ten advisory members. The four members who could not make the meeting had to address urgent issues that needed their immediate attention; three members had obligations in Sacramento. All members were notified of the meeting schedule prior to the meeting and no indication of conflicting issues were reported until the follow up reminder made few days prior to the meeting.

After the meeting, each of the Advisory Board members received the entire package of materials. The MPA Director will follow up with each member of the Advisory Board with preparation for the fall 2008 meeting. The Advisory Board members will have the ability to continuously communicate with the MPA Chair and each other through the board listserv.

The Board is made up of local government, not-for-profit and for-profit officials, and is designed to advise the MPA program chair and faculty. The objective of the Board is to ensure that our programs meet the needs of the organizations that employ our students. The Board meets as a group twice a year.

What follows below is the mission of the Advisory Board, Advisory Board members' list, and the agenda and minutes of the April 16, 2008 meeting.

Advisory Board Mission

> The Master of Public Administration (MPA) Advisory Board at the University of La Verne is intended to advise the academic leaders and faculty on ways the MPA program can develop into a resource to public service organizations in the San Gabriel Valley and Inland Empire. The program attempts to achieve this objective by bringing together local public administrative leaders on matters of program curriculum, student recruitment and regional network facilitation. The faculty seek feedback on items related to emerging trends in public administration, current and future employee qualifications, and program accessibility and logistics.

Board Members

Jefff Allred, City Manager, City of Norco

Paula Cone, Partner, HdL Coren & Cone (Consulting)

Matthew Fertal, City Manager, City of Garden Grove

Artie A. Fields, Assistant City Manager of West Covina

Henry T. Garcia, City Manager, City of Rialto

Stephen Harding, Deputy City Manager for Development Services, City of Santa Ana

Paul Hubler, Community Relations Project Manager, Alameda Corridor - East (ACE)

Jeff Parker, City Manager, City of Claremont

Paul Philips, City Manager, City of Covina

Robb Quincey, City Manager, City of Upland

University Board Representatives

Jack W. Meek, Jack W.Professor and Chair, University of La Verne

Phillip A Hawkey, Executive Vice President and Assistant Professor

Claude S. Bahouth, Graduate Program Coordinator, MPA and DPA Programs

Agenda and Minutes of April 16, 2008 Advisory Board Meeting

Agenda

- Introductions, MPA Board & Faculty and Administration (faculty bios reviewed)
- The Role of the MPA Advisory Board
- Overview of the LA Verne MPA Program (history, mission, curriculum, graduates, enrollment, current students, academic highlights and publications)
- MPA Program Assessments including faculty course assessments, program learning objective assessments, graduate assessments [exit survey results], MPA program diversity policy and results, and MPA Internship program
- MPA Future Program Initiatives including ICMA West Practitioner-in Residence Program, MPA Sustainability Program and on-line/hybrid alternatives, and SIAM web site
- MPA Board Responses and Guiding Performance including General Feedback, Issues facing City Management and Metropolitan LA, and Comments and Suggestions

Minutes

Attending: Jeff Allred, Paula Cone, Artie Fields, Henry Garcia, Stephen Harding, Paul Hubler, Philip Hawkey, Jack Meek, and Claude Bahouth

- After the introductions, Jack Meek discussed the role and mission of the MPA Advisory Board.

- An overview of the following topics was given by Jack Meek:

  - The Mission of the MPA Program
  - Historical Development of the Program
  - MPA Curriculum
  - Summary of MPA Graduates 2002-2007
  - MPA Enrollment, 2001-2007
  - Summary of Current Students (2008)

- A summary of the MPA Program Assessments was presented by Jack Meek with an emphasis on faculty assessments; learning objective assessments; graduate assessments, namely exit interviews; MPA internship program; and diversity policy.

- MPA Future Program Initiatives was shared with the Board Members which included:

  - "Practitioner-in-Residence" Program: Involves hosting at the University a city or county manager for a week to make in-class presentations to students about local government issues and discuss career opportunities **(Implementation date: 2008-2009 academic year).**

  - Sustainability Program: As part of the Department of Public and Health Services overall sustainability program PAAC Environmental Practices Report (11/15/07) the feasibility of an MPA Program to be offered in a hybrid and on-line format was proposed. The University is located in a congested suburban area and has supported on-line program development. This approach reduces stress on demands for University facilities and on our regional infrastructure. To continue to support this sustainability effort, the MPA program faculty seek to offer the MPA program in a hybrid and on-line formats. This will allow for greater access of our program to a number of interested students. This on-line format will reduce travel and related externality costs for both faculty and students.

  - SIAM Web Site: Professor Jack Meek, Professor of Public Administration, became Chair of the Section of Intergovernmental Administration and Management Section of the American Society of Public Administration, March 11, 2008. With this appointment, we can offer to host the web-site for the section. This will allow over 500 faculty and administrative members of SIAM to contact the ULV web site bringing attention to the University and public administration programs. The hosting

of the web site calls upon University resources for constructing access to and managing of the web site.

- MPA Board Responses and Guiding Performance

Issues Facing City Management and Metropolitan LA:

- Shortage of qualified, professional city manager candidates is apparent.
- Lack of interest in city manager positions needs to be addressed.
- Many positions are being vacated due to high level of staff turnover, retirement wave, and budget cuts.
  - Board members agreed to work with the Program Chair in creating internships for qualified La Verne MPA students. This action will be coordinated by the ULV MPA program and assigned City personnel.
- Written and verbal communication skills of many employees are inadequate.

- Advisory Board Feedback - Comments and Suggestions

The following comments and suggestions were offered concerning the MPA program:

- A listserv for Board members and the MPA Chair should be utilized to enhance continuous dialogue
- In MPA program design, interaction with faculty and peers critical; quality of program should be the primary focus not issues of convenience
- Improvement of students' communication skills, oral and written, should be a focus in any new program format or design
- Fully on-line program may further weaken the students' communication skills
- Connection/tie to the University and networking opportunities are lost if a fully on-line program is implemented and this connectivity needs to be addressed in any future program format or design
- Hybrid format is a better alternative than a fully on-line program design

The Program Chair thanked the Board members for their review and comments and commitment to the program. The Chair indicated continuous communication through a listserv that will be established. The Program Chair reported that future program design would address their concerns on peer interaction; person-to-person communication skill development; networking and connectivity and communication skill development.

The next Advisory Board Meeting will be held on October 29, 2008.

Additional Means for Data Collection

In addition to assessment activities discussed above, the MPA program will utilize two additional means to collect data in the 2008-2009 academic year and the fall term of the 2009-2010 academic year that reflect the level of learning and satisfaction with the program. These two activities include an assessment based on an Alumni Focus Group and the implementation of an Employer Survey. Each of these strategies is discussed below.

E. Alumni Focus Group

The University of La Verne has a formal policy that stipulates that each program offered by the University should go through a comprehensive review once every five years. The MPA program as part of its formal review will conduct a focus group of recent graduates of the program.

The preliminary design of the Alumni Focus Group is as follows:

- An independent moderator will facilitate the focus group and provide a report on the strengths and the weaknesses of the program as seen by the program graduates. **(Implementation date: Fall 2009)**.

In the Spring of 2010 the MPA program is planning and alumni event to celebrate its 35th Anniversary.

F. Employer Surveys

As a part of the formal program review, the MPA will survey employers of its graduates to establish the strength and the weaknesses of its graduates and how they compare relative to graduates from other universities. **(Implementation date: Fall 2008 and bi-annually thereafter)**

The preliminary Employer Survey design of the survey is an open-ended questionnaire. Preliminary questions include:

- Has the ULV MPA graduate met your expectations?
- What do you consider the highest qualities of the ULV MPA graduate?
- What do you consider to be the weaknesses of the ULV MPA graduate?
- Are there areas in our curriculum that we can improve to strengthen the graduate's capability to carry out their duties?
- Are there other considerations you wish our program to consider with regard to preparing our graduates for the workforce in public service?

The selection of survey participants will be based on the general characteristics of our graduates. In recent years, over half of our graduating students work in government with most of those in local government. We plan on contacting the department heads of local cities (Claremont, San Dimas, Anaheim, Santa Ana) who have employed our recent graduates to gather feedback on their work performance. We also plan on contacting department heads of selected non-profit agencies and special districts for feedback on recent MPA graduates. Findings will be reported to the MPA Advisory Board in the Spring of 2009.

Item 2: Standard 3.4 Scope of Influence and Standard 6.3 Admission Factors

Standard 3.4 states that "the public affairs and administration faculty…exercise[s] initiative, and substantial determining influence with respect to…admissions…" Standard 6.3 states, "Admissions shall be limited to applicants showing good potential for success in professional graduate study and public service. Admission standards shall include several of the following factors about each applicant….Final judgment on admission shall be based on a combination of several of the above indicators rather than on a single criterion in order to increase the quality of professional personnel entering the public service."

The August 2007 Decision letter stated: "The self-study report indicated that all student applicants during the academic years 2001-2006 were admitted to the program, either fully or with extra requirements. The site visit team found that "Graduate admission standards are set by the university and apply to all graduate programs… [I]ndividual programs do not have discretion to alter these requirements." Based on the evidence provided, it does not appear that the program has substantial determining influence over admission factors. The program appears to be out of conformance with Standard 3.4 and Standard 6.3."

Based on the program response to the Commission's concerns, the program does appear to exercise such influence. With respect to Standard 3.4 generally, the program articulates that the university has adopted a faculty workload policy that will correct the present situation of extremely high course loads for program faculty.

The Commission requests that the Program submit the university overload policy and provide updates on implementation of the policy before the Summer 2008 COPRA meeting.

Approach and Actions Taken by the MPA Program

A. Admission Standards

COPRA's concern pertaining to the College's degree of influence on admission standards was addressed by Dean Gordon Badovick, in his letter dated September 12, 2007 (included in Appendix C, page 11), who indicated that the graduate programs have substantial degree of influence over admission factors.

To be eligible for acceptance into the Master of Public Administration program, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- A bachelor's degree from regionally accredited college or university.
- A GPA of 2.5 or above for the last 60 semester units of undergraduate study and a GPA of 3.0 for any graduate study.
- A statement of purpose that demonstrates ability to write at an acceptable level of graduate study.
- Two positive letters of recommendations.
- A current resume.
- Internet access and an e-mail account.

In addition, the program may require an applicant interview or other additional supporting materials. The program balances all of theses measures in making a decision for admission.

Table 8. Winter 2008 Admissions

Winter 2008 Admissions	# of Students	Average GPA
Regular Admits	17	3.18
Provisional Admits	5	2.65
Denied	3	2.01
Pending Additional Supporting Material	3	
Total Applicants	28	

B. Dean's Report on the Progress and Implementation of the New Overload Policies

In 2006, the university adopted overload policies with the intent of limiting all faculty members to no more than 2 overloads per semester/term by January 2010. In the past, a number of faculty members have taught a growing number of overloads to help supplement their faculty salaries in this high cost of living area in southern California. For faculty members who have counted on this additional income stream, the decision was made by the Provost to gradually reduce the maximum number of overloads allowed each year. For 2007/2008 the maximum per semester/term is 4; for 2008/2009 it is reduced to 3; and for the 2009/2010 academic year it will be at the target maximum of 2.

The College of Business and Public Management is making progress and is on schedule to insure that no faculty member within the college exceeds the limit. The department chairs have the responsibility to work with faculty members to insure that this policy is enforced. We can report that overloads for public administration faculty have been reduced in the 2007/2008 academic year and no one taught more overloads than allowed. With the hiring of an additional faculty member in public administration for the 2008/2009 academic year, we are confident that overloads will decline even more and all public administration faculty member will be teaching 2 or less overloads per semester/term by the 2009/2010 academic year.

Gordon Badovick,
Dean
College of Business and Public Management
University of La Verne
April 30, 2008

Item 3: Standard 4.4 Internships

Standard 4.4 states "A carefully planned internship experience shall be made available by the program…"

The August 2007 Decision letter stated: "Based on the program's response, no formal internship policy exists due to the professional experience of students in the program. The site visit team indicated, 'The program does not support an internship option for students. Current students expressed an interest in the program providing such an option.' Until an internship experience is made available to students, the program appears to be out of conformance with Standard 4.4."

The program response indicates that it has now adopted a formal internship policy that addresses Standard 4.4.

The Commission requests updates on implementation of the new internship policy before the Summer 2008 COPRA meeting.

Approach and Actions Taken by the MPA Program

MPA Internship Policy – Implemented Effective October 1, 2007

The La Verne MPA program established a formal internship policy on October 1, 2007. The Internship Program has a dual purpose. First, an internship is required for students who do not have adequate public or nonprofit work experience in order for these pre-service students to gain an appreciation and understanding of the public-serving sector. Second, the program shall offer to those students who possess public or nonprofit work experience a voluntary means by which that can augment or enhance their vocational knowledge or explore alternative organizational/career experiences.

The Internship program shall consist of the following elements:

1. **Required Internship For Pre-Service Students**

   Students, who do not have public or nonprofit sector professional work experience, as determined by the MPA Chair at the time of admission, shall be required to complete an internship at an approved public or nonprofit organization prior to graduation. The Internship shall consist of a minimum of 300 hours at the host organization.

2. **Voluntary Internship For In-Service Students**

   Students who do have public or nonprofit sector professional work experience shall be allowed to complete an internship at a public or nonprofit organization as a means to assess or explore other career path options. Students will be allowed to complete this internship option at the organization they are currently employed at provided their internship duties are significantly different than their current duties and offer a career enhancing experience. The Internship shall consist of a minimum of 300 hours at the host organization.

3. **PADM 598 – Government Internship III**

   Students taking either of the internship options must register for and complete PADM 598 Government Internship III. This course shall be added to the 13 required courses in the MPA program.

4. **Responsibilities**

   In conjunction with the MPA Internship Coordinator, the student will draft an Internship Completion Plan that shall detail the scope and range of the internship. As a prerequisite for registration in PADM 598, the student shall submit the plan to the MPA Internship Coordinator for review and approval. Prior to approval, the MPA Internship Coordinator will act as a liaison with the public service agency collaborating with the internship and

obtain written confirmation from the internship supervisor as to the obligations of the internship.

5. **Internship Completion Plan**

   The plan shall minimally contain the following:
   a. Name of student
   b. Name of organization where internship shall occur
   c. Name and title of internship supervisor at the organization
   d. Detail listing of internship responsibilities
   e. Anticipated duration of internship
   f. Learning outcome(s)
   g. Special assignments or readings, as determined by MPA Chair

6. **Evaluation**

   The MPA Internship Coordinator shall be in regular contact with the student and his/her internship supervisor during the internship and will request a completed Internship Supervisor Evaluation (currently being drafted) upon the completion of the internship. Each student is also required to complete a written paper describing their internship experiences and what they have learned about the field.

In Winter 2008, the following three students were admitted to the MPA program with an internship requirement due to their inadequate public and non-profit work experience:

- Matthew Green
- Yuichi Ishikawa
- Scott Murphy

After completion of the initial 9 units (or three courses), the students will have a year after enrolling in PADM 598 Government Internship III to complete their 300 hours at the host organization. These students expect to enter into internships during the 2008-2009 academic year.

Beginning with the upcoming Fall 2008-2009 academic calendar, the MPA Internship Coordinator will be incoming Assistant Professor Marcia Godwin. Professor Godwin has an extensive background in local government and has both participated in and supervised internships in local government settings. In addition to Professor Godwin, Gail Horton, “Director of Professional Success Program” in the College of Business and Pubic Management will assist students in obtaining internships within the surrounding area.

Item 4: Standard 5.5 Faculty Diversity

Standard 5.5 states, "There should be evidence that specific plans are being implemented to assure the diversity of the composition of the faculty with respect to the representation of the minorities, women, and persons with disabilities."

The August 2007 Decision letter stated: "Based on the self-study report and the findings of the site visit team, no diversity plan appears to be in place. Until a plan is implemented, the program appears to be out of conformance with Standard 5.5."

The program response indicates that it has adopted a faculty diversity policy to be put into effect October 1, 2007.

The Commission requests updates on the implementation of the program's specific plans to assure diversity of the faculty.

Approach and Actions Taken by the MPA Program

Facutly Diversity

The MPA Program designed and adopted the "MPA Faculty Diversity Policy" on October 1.2007. The purpose of this policy is to guide the MPA program's efforts in creating a diverse learning environment. The policy acknowledges the need for and the positive learning outcomes that can be achieved with an effective diversity plan for both students and faculty.

The policy consists of a three-pronged approach: (1) A full-time faculty recruitment strategy; (2) diversity in the assignment of adjunct faculty to MPA program courses, and (3) diversity in the assignment of guest speakers in the MPA program.

1. Full Time Faculty Recruitment

The "MPA Faculty Diversity Policy" states that during the recruitment and hiring process for future full time faculty members, the recruitment search committee in cooperation with the MPA Chair and Department Chair shall employ methods to make it possible to recruit and hire faculty who will increase the diversity of the MPA program faculty. These methods include working in close conjunction with ULV departments and committees that have adopted policies and procedures that will "assist in ensuring that candidate pools are diverse and representative of all persons who are qualified and available to do the job, including minorities and women, and ensure a successful outcome" (see Human Resource Management, *Search Committee Process Guidelines for Regular Faculty Searches*, http://www.ulv.edu/hr/hiring.htm).

In the 2007-2008 academic year, the Department is pleased to report that the University added an additional faculty line to the Department of Public and Health Administration. In addition, the Department was allowed to replace a faculty position that was vacated due to retirement. With the implementation of the new policy, the Department is pleased to report the hiring of two new faculty members: an African-American female and a Caucasian female.

To indicate the effectiveness of the new "MPA faculty Diversity Policy" in the area of faculty recruitment, what follows are diversity data with regard to applications (Table 9), applicants screened for phone interviews (Table 10), applicants for campus visits (Table 11) and faculty hires (Table 12). The search committee included the public administration faculty and a "university diversity resource" member.

Table 9. Applicants for Position

Applicants	M	F	*	C	Int'l	African Am	Asian Am	*
40	22	14	4	12	23	3	1	1
Percentage	55%	35%	10%	30%	57.5%	7.5%	2.5%	2.5%

* Unable to determine from application

Note: Four applications were received after the screening process was completed; consequently were not considered.

Table 10. Applicants Screened for Phone Interviews

Applicants	Male	Female	Caucasian	International	African Am
7	3	4	4	2	1
	43%	57%	57%	28%	14%

Note: Telephone interviews took place January 23 and 24, 2008.

Table 11. Final Applicants for Campus Interviews

Applicants	Male	Female	Caucasian	International	African Am
3		3	1	1	1
		100%	33%	33%	33%

Note: Campus interviews too place February 20,21 and 26, 2008

Table 12. Faculty Hires

Applicants	Male	Female	Caucasian	Int'l	African Am
3	-	2	1 Marcia Godwin Ph.D	-	1 Lisa Picket DPA

2. Adjunct Faculty Utilization

For the second area of the "MPA Faculty Diversity Policy," the MPA Chair in close cooperation with the Department Chair develops a diverse adjunct faculty pool. Adjunct faculty assignments were made for the MPA Spring 2007-2008 term and the MPA Summer 2008-2009 term which included four adjunct faculty members, three of which were minorities.

Spring Term 2008

Dr. Marcus Castro — Chief Deputy Director, 2003 – Present, Office of Affirmative Action Compliance, County of Los Angeles, California

Summer Term 2008

Dr. Charles Whiteside — Former Vice Chancellor of Human Resources and Employee Relations, San Bernardino Community College District, San Bernardino, California

2008-2009 Academic Year

Dr. Marcus Castro	Chief Deputy Director, 2003 – Present, Office of Affirmative Action Compliance, County of Los Angeles, California
Harding, Stephen	Deputy City Manager for Development Services, City of Santa Ana, California
Hiram Santisteban	Director of Project Management, Cal Poly Pomona, California

3. Guest Speakers

The MPA Chair in close cooperation with MPA faculty shall make an effort to use guest speakers in the classroom that broaden our diversity. These guest speakers shall be identified and recruited by the MPA Chair and faculty.

The three key elements are expected to be inter-related. For example, the identification of possible guest speakers and their effective teaching/lecturing may lead to adjunct faculty status for these individuals. Similarly, successful adjunct faculty members who meet the requirements for full time employment, could be considered for future full-time positions assuming they also possess the appropriate academic credentials.

In the 2007-2008 academic year, several guest lectures were scheduled during the MPA classes:

Marcus Castro	Chief Deputy Director, Office of Affirmative Action Compliance, County of Los Angeles **Topic:** "Public Administration Leadership in Los Angeles Agencies"
Jesse Holguin	Sergeant, California Highway Patrol, Baldwin Park **Topic:** "Federal Policy Influences on Local Emergency Management Practices"
Hal Nelson	Visiting Professor of Policy and Politics, Claremont Graduate School **Topic:** "Values Conflicts in Policy Analysis: Designing an Equitable and Effective Climate Policy"

Connie Phillips — Senior H.R. Development Specialist, City of Anaheim
Topic: "Conflicting Paradigms of Leadership"

Erica Swift — Management Analyst II, Police Department, City of Los Angeles
Topic: "Successful Management of Public Private Partnerships"

Gabrielle Williams — Development Specialist V, Community Development, County of Los Angeles
Topic: "Effectiveness of Services for Homeless in Los Angeles"

Table 13 – Diversity Plan in Use of Guest Lectures

Guest Lecturer	Fall 2008	Winter 2008	Spring 2008	Summer 2008 *
Name	Marcus Castro	-	Jesse Holguin Hal Nelson Connie Phillips Erica Swift Gabrielle Williams	Tba *
Male	-	-	2	
Male Minority	1	-	1	
Female	-	-	3	
Female Minority	-	-	2	

* Yet to be assigned

We believe the three key elements of the "MPA Faculty Diversity Policy" have brought faculty diversity to the students of the La Verne MPA program in terms of full time faculty, adjunct faculty and guest speakers.