Public Policy

WASC Assessment Plan for MPP Program

Learning Objectives

The objective of the MPP program is to prepare students for careers in government, politics, and public affairs within public, non-profit, or private sectors. The MPP can be completed in two years by full-time students.

The MPP degree requires 72 units of graduate courses, with 40 units of core, foundational, courses (including a public policy internship with a public, private or non-government agency in the summer quarter of the first year), and 24 units of elective courses that allow students to focus on a specific policy area of interest. In lieu of a thesis, students undertake an 8 unit Capstone Research Seminar course spanning two quarters that culminates in students studying a policy issue in depth and presenting their analysis and recommendations to fellow students, faculty, and policy stakeholders. Students are also required to submit a professionally written Capstone policy research paper.

Assessment Components and Assessment Procedures

Assessment will be performed at two points in time: end of first year and end of the program.

We address 5 components in our assessment and use several assessment procedures, as is described below:

1. Knowledge acquired

   Student acquired comprehensive knowledge of methods needed for data collection and policy analysis; Students are familiar with theories of policy evaluation and assessment.

   **Assessment procedures used:** A weighted average of the following components: (1) Average grade of completed core courses at the time of the assessment; (2) Evaluation of the assigned mentor of the student.

2. Application of Research Methods

   Student demonstrates ability to apply appropriate quantitative and qualitative methods acquired in core classes to policy analyses undertaken during internship and capstone.

   **Assessment procedures used:** A weighted average of the grades of the papers in the Internship class and in the Capstone class.

3. Respecting and Able to Work under Strict Deadlines

   An important aspect of the MPP training program is the ability of the student to act under stress of time and assignments. Submission of assignments on time is the goal. Meeting this goal will be measured.
Assessment procedures used: A weighted average of the relative time that students were late in submission of their required assignments for Internship and for Capstone project:

- Internship proposal complete and approved (End of spring quarter)
- Internship paper submitted (First week of fall quarter)
- Capstone project proposal submitted and approved (End of fall quarter)
- Capstone project paper submitted to instructor (End of spring quarter)

4. Exposure to Professional Experience

This metric will allow us evaluating whether or not our graduate students are ready to share their work with other professionals and get peer comments from these professionals. Students had experience in professional conferences and/or submitted/published papers in professional journals.

Assessment procedures used: Number of presentations in professional conferences and number of policy papers submitted and published in professional journals.

5. Satisfaction from the Program

While assessment of student achievements is necessary for the learning outcome, we will also conduct 2 exit ‘feedback surveys’ of the students at the end of year 1 and prior to graduation. Using similar questions will allow us to evaluate changes in satisfaction over the course of the two years.

Assessment procedures used: An on-line survey administered on all students of the two overlapping cohorts during the year.