

Annual Assessment Report

Academic Year: 2015-16

Department: Political Science

Program(s): Master of Public Administration (MPA)

Assessment reports are to be submitted annually to report assessment activities and results by program. The reports are due every summer with a deadline of September 15th each year.

The use of this template is entirely optional.

Note: These reports have been required by MSU policy since 2004.

1. What Was Done

Based on our assessment plan, we evaluated program learning outcomes 1 and 2 this year.

1. Lead and manage in public, nonprofit and other governance organizations.
2. Participate and contribute to the policy process.

2. What Data Were Collected

Per our Assessment Plan, Outcomes #1 and #2 were evaluated by using students' comprehensive exam responses.

Eight MPA students took their comprehensive exams during the academic year, four each in the Fall and Spring semesters.

3. What Was Learned

1. All students' responses demonstrated knowledge of relevant theory and empirical research. All eight students' responses also exhibited the ability to synthesize research and theory into response strategies in a substantive way.
2. All students' responses showed evidence of a substantive understanding of public policy processes and procedures. The majority of students also revealed a strategic understanding of policy dynamics and the ability to identify and access leverage points within the policy process appropriate to official and non-governmental policy stakeholders.

4. How We Responded

1. The new MPA curriculum, launched in Fall 2016, places additional emphasis on developing experiences and evaluative tools that encourage students to build their experience with and capacity to synthesize management and leadership theory into concrete practices. Preliminary data from students' coursework suggests that this approach is having the intended effect.
2. While this assessment cycle indicates that we have met our performance goal for this objective, we will continue to examine our approach to teaching public policy to further enhance the ability of students to not only understand the complexity of policy development and implementation, but to be effective as practitioners within that process.