

Texas A&M International University

Annual Institutional Effectiveness Review (AIER)

Date Submitted January 31, 2008 (2007 Report)

Assessment Period Covered (2006)

Academic Program/AES Unit Master of Public Administration (MPA)

Person(s) Preparing Review Dr. Mehnaaz Momen

Provide summary of the last cycle's use of results and changes implemented

During the last cycle, our assessment results indicated a pattern in the comprehensive exam. Students who attempt to take the exam while taking a core course depict a higher rate of failing the exam. We have changed our policy regarding the comprehensive exam. Students have to successfully finish all core courses before they take their comprehensive exam. We also eliminated all tracks except for the Public Health track, and the students who are not enrolled in the Public Health track will be enrolled in Generalist track.

Section I: Planning and Implementation

Institutional Mission

Texas A&M International University, a Member of The Texas A&M University System, prepares students for leadership roles in their chosen profession in an increasingly complex, culturally diverse state, national, and global society ... Through instruction, faculty and student research, and public service, Texas A&M International University embodies a strategic point of delivery for well-defined programs and services that improve the quality of life for citizens of the border region, the State of Texas, and national and international communities.

Academic Program or Administrative/Educational Support Unit Mission

The MPA program was created to serve state, federal, and international needs by preparing students for managerial and leadership positions in public service and advancing research in discovering, sharing, and applying knowledge of public administration. In support of this mission, MPA program faculty are committed to: 1) teaching and providing continuing education and professional and intellectual development to students; 2) facilitating professional and intellectual discourse on public issues; 3) contributing to public administration scholarship; and 4) fostering a future generation of public administration scholars and practitioners.

Identify outcomes and the relationship to Strategic Plan

Outcome 1

Is this outcome related to writing (QEP)?

Students completing the MPA program should demonstrate the ability to apply research and statistical methods/techniques/tools in solving public problems.

Identify Strategic Plan Goal related to Outcome 1

Goal 1 Academics

Identify Strategic Plan Objective related to Outcome 1

1.4: Prepare students for success in their chosen careers.

Identify methods of assessment to be used

Graduating MPA candidates will take a locally-generated comps exam that assesses their ability to appropriately apply research and statistical methods toward solving practical public problems. The comps will be prepared and team-graded by MPA faculty.

Indicate when assessment will take place

Spring

Criteria/Benchmark

At least 80 percent of the MPA candidates will score 80 percent or more in the research and statistical methods question of the comprehensive exam.

Outcome 2

Is this outcome related to writing (QEP)?

Graduating MPA candidates will demonstrate theoretical knowledge and understanding of how to administer publicly defined programs in a democracy.

Identify Strategic Plan Goal related to Outcome 2

Goal 1 Academics

Identify Strategic Plan Objective related to Outcome 2

1.7 Establish and pursue student learning outcomes appropriate for each program with systematic assessment and use of results for continuous quality improvement.

Identify methods of assessment to be used

Graduating MPA candidates will take a locally-generated comprehensive exam that assesses their knowledge and understanding of various theoretical perspectives in public administration.

Indicate when assessment will take place

Spring

Criteria/Benchmark

At least 80 percent of the MPA candidates will score 80 percent or more in the theory question of the comprehensive exams.

Outcome 3

Is this outcome related to writing (QEP)?

Graduating MPA students will have acquired the skills and reasoning abilities needed by public agencies in a continually changing environment.

Identify Strategic Plan Goal related to Outcome 3

Goal 1 Academics

Identify Strategic Plan Objective related to Outcome 3

1.4: Prepare students for success in their chosen careers.

Identify methods of assessment to be used

Graduating MPA students will be surveyed using a locally constructed instrument to gather supporting data concerning how well the MPA program has provided them with knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for their work in the public sector.

Indicate when assessment will take place

Annual

Criteria/Benchmark

At least 90% of graduating students will agree with the statement that the MPA program has provided them with the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for their work in the public sector. This indicates that the majority of graduating MPA students will demonstrate a very favorable perception of our MPA program performance.

Section II: Analysis of Results

When (term/date) was assessment conducted?

Outcome 1

MPA comps were administered in Spring and Fall 2007 and assessment conducted thereafter.

Outcome 2

MPA comps were administered in Spring and Fall 2007 and assessment conducted thereafter.

Outcome 3

No Data.

What were the results attained (raw data)?

Outcome 1

A total of 10 MPA students took the comps in Spring and Fall 2006. Of them, 5 were new students and the rest were repeating one or two sections of the comps that they had failed in an earlier attempt. Of the 7 students who answered the research methods question, 5 (72%) scored 80% while 1 (14%) scored 70% and 1 (14%) scored 60%.

Outcome 2

A total of 10 MPA students took the comps in Spring and Fall 2006. Of them, 5 were new students and the rest were repeating one or two sections of the comps that they had failed in an earlier attempt. Of the 8 students who answered the theory/history question, 5 (62.5%) scored 80% while 1 (12.5%) scored 70% and 2 (25%) scored 60%. A total of 18 MPA students took the comps in Spring and Fall 2006. Sixteen (90%) scored 85% while two (10%) scored 75% on the theory/history question.

Outcome 3

Not collected due to the fact that statistically insignificant number of students (2 out of 5 in each of the sessions) attended the MPA orientation where the surveys are administered.

Who (specify names) conducted analysis of data?

Outcome 1

MPA Faculty

Outcome 2

MPA Faculty

Outcome 3

N/A

When were the results and analysis shared and with whom (department chair, supervisor, staff, external stakeholders)? Submit minutes with data analysis to assessment@tamiu.edu (Please use Minutes Template located on the [Project INTEGRATE](#) web page.)

MPA Faculty and Department Chair

NOTE: Submit all assessment documentation (i.e., surveys, rubrics, course exams with embedded questions, etc.) to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning.

Use of Results: Indicate whether criteria were met/not met and what changes, if any, have been identified based on the data collected?

Outcome 1

Met Not Met

Provide narrative: Assessment criteria were met. However, MPA Faculty agreed that the quality of test responses needed improvement. We have edited the comprehensive questions to make it more clear, and detailed.

Outcome 2

Met Not Met

Provide narrative: Assessment criteria were met. However, MPA Faculty agreed that the quality of responses could be improved. More detailed analysis and an objective assessment of the scholarly literature demonstrating thorough understanding were recommended. We have decided to use questions similar to the comprehensive questions in the courses we teach.

Outcome 3

Met Not Met

Provide narrative: Assessment criteria were not met. We have started to contact the students earlier in the semester and emphasize the significance of the orientation program and its correlation with successfully passing the comprehensive exam.

How have these data-based changes improved your program/unit?

MPA Faculty agreed to make more use of practitioner-guest speakers to emphasize practical knowledge and applications in the next assessment cycle. Faculty also agreed to rotate the research methods class among themselves to enable students to benefit from a variety of perspectives. These changes are being implemented to enable Faculty monitor improvement in MPA program performance.

Section III: Programmatic Review

Are resources affected by the changes identified in Section II? Yes No

If so, specify the effect(s) using the chart below:

| Funding | Physical | Other |
|--|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New resources required | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New or reallocated space | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Primarily faculty/staff time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reallocation of current funds | | <input type="checkbox"/> University rule/procedure change only |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: Enter text here |

Provide a narrative description and justification for requested resources (include linkage to Strategic Plan)

A new faculty with expertise on Public Budgeting will augment Faculty strength and enhance course offerings. (1.5) Hiring a new full-time or at least half-time MPA program staff is required to administer surveys, track data, and monitor programmatic performance. This will free up time for MPA Coordinator and faculty to concentrate on teaching, research, and advisement.

| Identify proposed outcomes for the next assessment cycle: |
|---|
| Continuation of present outcome(s) – (Indicate reason for continuation): More time is needed to monitor performance of present outcomes. |
| New Outcome(s) – (List outcomes below): N/A |
| Modification of present outcome(s) – (Indicate reason for modification): N/A |

****** This section to be completed by dean/director/vice-president ******

Are resources requested a priority for the academic program/AES unit?

Yes No

Comments:

Enter text here

If funding, physical or other resources were requested, what is the impact of the budget decisions on the academic program/AES unit?

Enter text here