Public Administration Graduate Program to Prepare Individuals for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, and to establish Careers as Effective Scholars, Researchers, and Teachers

The SPAA Ph.D. Program in Public Administration consists of the knowledge foundations of the field of public administration and the premise that performance is a key to effectiveness in the field of public administration. As with other academic fields, curriculum of the program is based on the body of received knowledge and current knowledge accepted by the field.

The Ph.D. faculty is responsible for the curriculum and on-going processes of evaluation of curriculum and student performance. PhD faculty members meet regularly during the academic year. A key element of these meetings is faculty members’ evaluation of emerging literature in respective fields, and its importance to students’ learning and directions. For example, a shared focus and emphasis emerging from these dynamics is that of performance. Performance measurement, management, and improvement are important dimensions of competence, knowledge, and service in public and nonprofit sectors. A performance focus encourages both facts and purposes of the public and nonprofit sectors, that is, effectiveness.

Faculty evaluation of curriculum takes place throughout the academic year in both formal and informal meetings and discussions sometimes generating formal proposals and sometimes leading to informal adjustments. On-going measures of curriculum and program performance are:

a. qualities of faculty who teach in the program as measured by faculty performance in relevant academic settings, i.e., scholarly contributions, professional contributions, service contributions, and PhD student performance;

b. curriculum proposals and changes in the context of program and student goals.

c. faculty teaching, assignments and feedback to students as measured by evaluation of faculty teaching evaluations and other feedback from PhD students;

d. evaluation of students’ understanding of knowledge foundations and emerging emphases (e.g., performance) as dimensions of knowledge and practice, measured by grades and faculty feedback;

e. timely student successful completion of curriculum components (course assignments, papers, exams; summary examinations, unexplained student incompletes and withdrawals);

f. feedback from professional colleagues about student competence based on guest lectures and professional conference interactions with students;

g. successful employment in the academy where that is the graduate’s goal, and effective participation in selected areas of the academy (papers, publications, participation in professional associations).

Program Goals

Learning Goal 1: The development and attainment of research, scholarship and teaching skills in the field of public administration.

Learning Goal 2: Conducting and producing original research.