



**SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS FORMS**

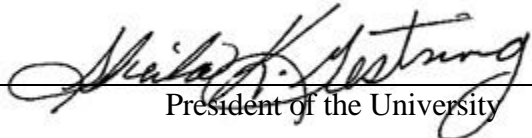
**Institutional Program Review
Report to the Board of Regents**

Use this form to submit a program review report to the system Chief Academic Officer. Complete this form for all units/programs undergoing an accreditation review, nationally recognized review process, or institutional program review. The report is due 30 days following receipt of the external and internal review reports.

UNIVERSITY:	USD
DEPARTMENT OR SCHOOL:	Political Science
PROGRAM REVIEWED:	Master of Public Administration
DATE OF REVIEW:	4/27/2020
TYPE OF REVIEW:	Specialized Program Accreditation Review

University Approval

To the Board of Regents and the Executive Director: I certify that I have read this report, that I believe it to be accurate, and that it has been evaluated and approved as provided by university policy.



President of the University

2/8/2021
Date

1. Identify the program reviewers and any external accrediting body:

External site visitors representing the accreditation officials of the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA) included:

- C. Michelle Piskulich, PhD – Associate Provost, Oakland University, Rochester, MI.
- Lori L. Taylor, PhD – Professor and Head, Department of Public Service and Administration, Bush School of Government and Public Service, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX.
- Fred Eidson, Executive Director, Colorado Federal Executive Board, Denver, CO

2. Items A & B should address the following issues: mission centrality, program quality, cost, program productivity, plans for the future, and assessment of progress.

2(A). Describe the strengths and weaknesses identified by the reviewers

Strengths

- Reviewers had no concerns about the program’s mission as depicted in mission statement and focus.
- Reviewers confirmed that the program has established observable program goals, objectives and outcomes including expectations for student learning, consistent with its mission.

- Reviews acknowledged the program evaluates the activities it identifies and understands the activities as strongly related to each program goal.
- Reviewers confirmed the program has adequate faculty to deliver the program to students and the students report having the ability to talk to professors when needed.
- Reviewers acknowledged the department handles programmatic funds appropriately and that the funds are adequate for current program activities though mixed with departmental funds as a whole.
- Reviewers confirmed the program meets minimal communication requirements outlined by NASPAA.

Weaknesses

- Reviewers had concerns about student recruitment, strategies, and trends and administrative support for such activities.
- Reviewers commented on possible enhanced communication strategies for the program
- Reviewers commented on developing program measures separate from student learning objectives.
- Reviewers commented on being more distinct as to the specific universal competencies each course is intended to cover.
- Reviewers commented on a lack of an advisory board for the program.

Program reviewers commended:

- Program direction and administrative support were commended.
- Students in general with special recognition of their engagement with the program.
- Internship coordinators and employers alike were extremely satisfied with the students they supervise and hire.
- Program alumni were very impressive and clearly gave the program credit for their successes.
- Student organization (SOPA) is very active and significantly adds to the experiences of the students.
- Program faculty for their engagement in the program and discipline and for their commitment to the students and broader community of public administrators.

2(B). Briefly summarize the review recommendations

Reviewers had the following recommendations:

- Consider ways to streamline programs already offered in the department to leverage courses and course enrollments where possible between the EMPA, MPA and MSA.
- Consider how you can reconcile the desire for an accredited degree among those individuals pursuing the online programs. It might be valuable to follow up with students who chose the MSA or EMPA over the MPA to understand the decision.
- Work with the department and the dean to resolve the confusion over the Master of Public Administration MPA and the Master of Professional Accounting MPA degrees.
- Continue to pursue options to expand the 4+1 with other programs.
- Work with Institutional Research to develop program specific reports.
- Once the new advisory board is in place, consider revisiting the mission and strategic plan to affirm the current path or make changes. The SVT met with individuals that

will serve as a nucleus to this group. The individuals are a mix of alumni and local public administrators (see the attachment uploaded below). The SVT recommends that the program consider including individuals from Pierre and Tribal areas if possible to assure they are getting a broad picture of the needs of the field within the state.

- Leverage the We Are South Dakota theme as you recruit and discuss the program's value to the institution. The contributions to nonprofits and local, tribal and state government of the students and faculty could be reported and thus be more obvious. The program might wish to share findings from the student's culminating professional papers with interested parties in the state.
- Try to add a grantwriting component into the curriculum if possible - alumni reported that this would have been helpful to them.

2(C). Indicate the present and continuous actions to be taken by the college or department to address the issues raised by the review. What outcomes are anticipated as a result of these actions?

- The program is required to report to NASPAA annually on its student recruitment plans, progress, and trends.
 - Outcome: Recruitment of students is intended to rise to a program goal of 15 new students a year.
- The program will convene an advisory board.
 - Outcome: This board will meet at least once a year to verify/modify program activities and curriculum to meet the needs of the profession, state, and region.
- The program will develop and report programmatic objectives distinct from current reporting on student learning objectives.
 - Outcome: This will eventually be reflected in Nuventive data to more accurately reflect both aspects of program activities.
- The program will continue discussions about curriculum changes and leveraging courses and faculty resources.
 - Outcome: A curriculum redesign and additional certificate programs are being created.
- The program will continue discussions about how to avoid confusion between the Master of Public Administration MPA and the Master of Professional Accounting MPA degrees.
 - The outcome is unknown, though the MPA designation for public administration is the standard.