

## **Comprehensive Program Review: Public Administration**

### **General and Overview**

1. Describe your program's most significant opportunities and significant challenges.

Public administration at UWGB has significant opportunities, as well as challenges that impact its ability to take advantage of these opportunities. While we have more than 60 current declared majors and minors, there is certainly opportunity for enrollment growth within the program, especially as enrollment is not as high as it has been historically. Current projections estimate that public and nonprofit management as career opportunities will grow faster than any other occupation (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020), representing an opportunity to market the degree to both traditional and nontraditional students. This trend points to another significant opportunity for public administration at UWGB: the potential for a graduate program in public administration (MPA). Adding a graduate degree in public administration is perhaps the largest opportunity for public administration, as it is a natural expansion of the undergraduate major (as one of only two in the state) as well as other programs and certificates offered in other departments on campus. Further, the MPA would likely contribute to undergraduate enrollment in the program as students would be attracted to a major that could include a graduate degree in an expedited time frame. This growth is also coupled with challenges, mainly having the faculty and departmental resources needed for staffing programs. More faculty are needed. The current program uses a number of ad hoc instructors in order to offer the full array of required courses. However, at least one additional position would allow for more consistent course offerings and less reliance on ad hoc instructors. This will be particularly important if UWGB receives approval to offer an MPA program. If this occurs, at least two faculty members likely will be needed to offer the graduate degree in addition to the existing undergraduate program.

As we highlight below, the public administration program is a leader on campus when it comes to classroom engagement with the community in different ways including internships, course projects, applied and/or honors community projects, and guest speaking opportunities. Furthermore, public administration faculty have specialized training in key management/administrative functions of governmental and nonprofit organizations (e.g., grant writing, budgeting, program evaluation, capacity building, and financial management) and are themselves engaged with the community. For example, they have been active in providing workshops, webinars, trainings, and consulting on applied projects for local entities. However, there is room to expand this engagement further. First, as the university as a whole works to increase the quantity and quality of their high impact practices (HIPS), public administration can contribute to this effort by expanding the number and quality of HIPS as teaching pedagogy. This is again directly impacted by the faculty and other departmental resources (challenge) as engagement of this type can be labor intense and requires a significant amount of planning and coordination. Further, for faculty engagement outside of the classroom to increase, the program is currently challenged as engagement of this type cannot be easily accomplished with current teaching, research, and service loads as well as large course sizes.

Collaboration and partnering are a key component of public administration, which means that there are opportunities to partner with other degree programs on campus and/or on other campuses. For example, public administration works with continuing education to develop and teach online courses so the public officials can complete their bachelor's degrees, certificate programs, and/or as part of their other programming. As an interdisciplinary program, there are additional opportunities for the program to expand relationships with other programs in different ways.

2. What are some things that would help make your program and its students more successful?

An MPA is increasingly recognized as necessary for individuals working in governmental and nonprofit administration. We have one of only two undergraduate programs in public administration in the UW System, yet our students are forced to go elsewhere to complete graduate training. A graduate program that includes an expedited track for students who complete their undergraduate degree with us would help students have access to the type of training that is critical for their future careers as well as decrease the time needed to complete that training.

As mentioned above and below, the public administration program has been a leader on campus when it comes to engagement in the community. Building a more formal engagement mechanism, such as a way to assess and vet proposed projects for students, would allow us to ensure that these student experiences are meaningful as well as to develop strong relationships with community partners. This would not only help students to succeed by resulting in deeper learning (than traditional classroom experiences) but also, it would be the hope that this engagement would result in more job opportunities and/or references for the students upon completion of their degree.

Our program relies significantly on the use of ad hoc instructors. First, while some are extremely effective ad hoc teachers, others have less experience and are often not compensated for the development of their courses, resulting in variation in classroom quality. Second, we know from surveying all of our faculty that ad-hoc faculty are much less likely to utilize HIPS as part of their course design. Furthermore, while these instructors sometimes form meaningful and impactful relationships with our students, they are not typically engaging students in individualized learning experiences such as teaching assistants, research assistants, and honors projects, nor are they regularly available for students to meet with in other capacities. Yet we know from research on student success that these relationships and these individualized learning opportunities are strongly correlated with a student's likely success. With only three "regular" public administration faculty, these opportunities become limited quite quickly. Therefore, at least one if not two additional faculty would add significant value to our student's experiences and potential success.

3. What are some program accomplishments worth highlighting?

The public administration program has excellent teachers who are leaders on campus in utilizing high-impact practices for their classes and they are well-versed in other effective teaching pedagogy in all modalities. For example, the program was awarded a \$20,000 grant to develop online course offerings to ensure that courses were utilizing leading practices of online course design, a consistent across different faculty, and offering meaningful opportunities for engaged learning to the students of the program. A survey of courses showed the HIPS, particularly community-based learning, were present in almost 70 percent of course offerings, which does not include a large number of individualized learning experiences, including teaching and research assistantships.

In addition to being excellent teachers, and as illustrated below, the public administration faculty are active scholars that regularly contribute to theory-building and knowledge in their respective areas.

When looking at the alumni of public administration, it is clear that the program positions them to make meaningful impact in their communities, as many are well-positioned in their careers (e.g., Village of Bellevue, City of Menasha, Village of Johnson Creek, State of Wisconsin, State of Minnesota, State of Illinois) or enrolled in prestigious graduate programs (e.g., Loyola University-Chicago, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Florida Gulf Coast University, Rutgers Law School, Marquette University Law School).

4. Have there been any significant changes that have affected your program?

As of Fall 2019, completing the public administration major could be accomplished fully online or in-person; one of only ten majors at UWGB that is able to be accessed fully in the online modality. This includes both areas of emphasis with the program (public and nonprofit management and emergency management).

5. Where do you want your program to be 5 to 7 years from now?

Our first goal would be to increase enrollment both in the major as well as the nonprofit management certificate program that is nested within the major, but can also be completed separately. Our second major goal, and one that we think would be helpful in completing our first would be the addition of a graduate program in public administration.

### **Demand**

*All data in this area is provided with the materials. (Graduates, majors, minors, etc.) This space is for any commentary you would like to apply to that material. (Narrative)*

According to provided data, there were nearly 70 public administration majors and minors enrolled at UWGB during the 2020-2021 academic year. While this represents a decline from previous years, it is reflective of trends witnessed by other programs within the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences (CAHSS). Additionally, with recent changes to emphases, the newly developed online degree option, and a potential graduate degree, there is confidence that enrollment will begin the increase again.

### **Internal**

1. Program goals (Mission, vision, learning outcomes; present as narrative/lists)

The learning outcomes of public administration identify what skills and competencies a student will develop during their course of study. Upon completion of a public administration major at UWGB, students will have:

1. demonstrated an understanding of the process of public policy analysis and policy making.
2. developed the ability to collect, manage, evaluate, and apply data to make decisions and solve public and nonprofit problems.
3. demonstrated knowledge of ethics and the importance of their application to everyday decision making in public and nonprofit organizations and public affairs.
4. demonstrated social responsibility in public service and other intentional engagement in the community.
5. demonstrated core skills of public and nonprofit management including leadership, collaboration, financial management, program evaluation, and human resource management.
6. applied approaches to collaborating productively with diverse individuals and groups to promote effective communities, organizations, programs, and policies.

2. Curriculum development (Lists, brief narrative if appropriate)

Over the last several years, the program has been very intentional about streamlining degree requirements to ensure that students are taking classes that address core public administration competencies, particularly within required, upper-level courses. Upper-level electives were also streamlined to allow students to explore different topics within the field (e.g., politics, environmental policy, nonprofit management, state and local government), while maintaining a strong connection to the field of public administration. Additional efforts have been made to develop new lower-level courses that create additional pathways for students into the degree (e.g., Introduction to the Nonprofit Sector), and nearly every member of the public administration faculty has developed and taught at least one first year seminar course. Overall, however, the bulk curriculum development has focused on expanding and improving HIPs within existing courses, including courses that were modified to be taught in a fully online modality. In recent years, the following courses were developed or modified:

- PU EN AF 198: Introduction to Leadership (FYS)
- PU EN AF 198: Globetrotting for Good (FYS)
- PU EN AF 198: Pawsibilities (FYS)
- PU EN AF 198: Sim City Civics (FYS)
- POL SCI 198: Comedy Central Civics (FYS, GPS)
- PU EN AF 220: Economics, Politics, and Government Action
- PU EN AF 225: Introduction to the Nonprofit Sector
- PU EN AF 326: Philanthropy: Civic Engagement Through Giving
- PU EN AF 306: Regulatory Policy and Administration (hybrid version)
- PU EN AF 406: State and Local Government (hybrid version)
- PU EN AF 408: Public Policy Analysis (hybrid, online versions)
- PU EN AF 415: Public and Nonprofit Budgeting (hybrid version)

3. Connections to other programs (Lists, brief narrative if appropriate)

Public administration as a degree and as a program at UWGB is truly interdisciplinary. As such, the program incorporates courses and concepts from programs across campus (e.g., Political Science, Environmental Policy and Planning, Economics, Organizational Leadership, Business Administration). At the same time, Public Administration courses are used by a significant number of other undergraduate programs to satisfy upper-level requirements and electives (e.g., Political Science, Environmental Policy and Planning, Organizational Leadership, Arts Management, Community Health Education, Urban Studies). Additionally, graduate “versions” of several Public Administration courses are used to satisfy requirement for various graduate programs (e.g., Environmental Science and Policy, Social Work).

In addition, and as noted below, multiple Public Administration courses have a general education designation (e.g., Introduction to Public Policy, Introduction to Public Administration, Introduction to the Nonprofit Sector), and they are used by students across the university to satisfy their Social Science general education requirements.

4. Number of courses offered (Overall number provided in materials. Chairs: short commentary if appropriate. Provide a sub-grouping of various modalities by percentage. For example, what percentage of your program is available online, hybrid, etc.?)

Based on the UWGB 2020-2021 Course Catalog, the Public Administration program offers 34 courses. These courses all have a PU EN AF prefix and are included in the course array for at least one emphasis or the Nonprofit Certificate program. This number includes our capstone course (PU EN AF 430: Seminar in Ethics and Public Action) but it does not include FYS courses, GPS courses, or individualized learning experiences. Not all courses are offered every semester. For example, during the Fall 2020 semester, 20 courses were offered and during the Spring 2021 semester 19 courses were offered (these numbers do not account for multiple course sections).

Regarding modalities, and as mentioned above, the entire public administration degree is available online. This means that all required lower and upper-level required courses are consistently available in a fully online modality and enough upper-level electives are available to satisfy the degree requirements. This does not mean that every public administration class is available online. There are some classes that are currently only available in an in-person format, as faculty capacity limits the number of courses that can be offered each semester. However, the number of classes available in a fully online format has consistently increased over the last several and this trend is likely to continue moving forward. Additionally, several courses were recently offered in a hybrid modality, for the first time, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Overall, roughly 60% of all public administration courses are consistently offered in a fully online modality.

5. Diversity of students, faculty, and curriculum (Overall number provided in materials. Chairs: short commentary if appropriate; provide examples from curriculum if appropriate.)

During the 2020-2021 (current) academic year, 49% of UWGB public administration students are female, 53% are first-generation college students, and 9% are non-White. During the entire seven-year period under review, the percentage of female students was typically much higher (sometimes as high as 65%), while the percentage of first-generation college students and non-White students varied by academic year, sometimes substantially.

Among faculty who teach the majority of Public Administration courses, over 60% are women. Among ad hoc instructors, there tends to be a relatively even split between men and women, though this can change based on the year under consideration.

Diversity and inclusion are common themes within public administration courses. Examples of courses where these topics are regularly covered/discussed include: PU EN AF 225 (Introduction to the Nonprofit Sector), PU EN AF 301 (Environmental Politics and Policy), PU EN AF 380 (Global Environmental Politics and Policy), and PU EN AF 408 (Public Policy Analysis).

6. Gen Ed, FYS/GPS, CCIHS (Lists)

Public administration FYS and GPS courses include:

- PU EN AF 198: Introduction to Leadership (FYS)
- PU EN AF 198: Globetrotting for Good (FYS)
- PU EN AF 198: Pawsibilities (FYS)
- PU EN AF 198: Sim City Civics (FYS)
- POL SCI 198: Comedy Central Civics (FYS, GPS)

Public administration courses with a general education designation include:

- PU EN AF 202: Introduction to Public Policy (Gen Ed, Social Sciences)
- PU EN AF 215: Introduction to Public Administration (Gen Ed, Social Sciences)
- PU EN AF 225: Introduction to the Nonprofit Sector (Gen Ed, Social Sciences)
- PU EN AF 301: Environmental Politics and Policy (Gen Ed, Social Sciences)
- PU EN AF 315: Public and Nonprofit Management (Gen Ed, Social Sciences)
- PU EN AF 326: Philanthropy: Civic Engagement through Giving (Gen Ed, Social Sciences)
- PU EN AF 345: Human Resource and Risk Management (Gen Ed, Social Sciences)
- PU EN AF 380: Global Environmental Politics and Policy (Gen Ed, Social Sciences)
- PU EN AF 425: Fundraising and Marketing for Nonprofits (Gen Ed, Social Sciences)
- PU EN AF 428: Public and Nonprofit Program Evaluation (Gen Ed, Social Sciences)

There are currently no Public Administration courses connected to CCIHS.

7. Program support and staffing (Chairs: History, trends, and future needs. Depending on program, could be connected to accreditation.)

Overall, staffing within the Public Administration program has been relatively stable. One faculty member, with a focus on GIS and planning, left several years ago and was not replaced. While the bulk of her courses primarily contributed to the Environmental Policy and Planning program, she taught a two-course GIS sequence that is popular with public administration majors. These courses have been taught, but by a non-tenure track faculty member in another college. The program also gained a faculty member in 2018, though part of her teaching obligation is committed to the Organizational Leadership program.

Overall, current/future needs include a faculty member dedicated to teaching GIS within the Public and Environmental Affairs (PEA) budgetary unit and one to two additional faculty members to teach in the proposal MPA program, if it is approved.

8. Cost per credit hour (TBD)

### **External**

1. Outreach: student/faculty partnerships, collaborations, participation with organizations or individually (Lists)
  - Safe and Stable Housing for Brown County Consumers: Needs and Policy Options (2017). After successfully securing a contract with Brown County, WI, Professor Warner and Helpap conducted a study that assessed the needs of Brown County consumers who have unsafe or unstable housing and provide recommendations on strategies the County might use to improve housing options for these individuals. Several of the alternatives included in the report have been implemented by the Brown County Department of Health and Human Services.
  - Brown County LIFE Study (2016). Professors Warner, Weinschenk, and Helpap conducted a study that examined ten different dimensions of life in Brown County (i.e., economy, safety, civic engagement, environment, etc.) using quantitative data and resulted in a 130-page report that was widely used by local leaders, governments, and nonprofits.
  - Connection the Dots: Public Performance and Financial Trends in Brown County and the City of Green Bay (2014). Professor Helpap, with the assistance of an undergraduate research assistant, conducted a report that examined fiscal and performance data in

Brown County and the City of Green Bay over a period of five years. He report concluded with a discussion of implications for county and city government and their citizens.

- Public Administration students have obtained a wide range of internships in the public and nonprofit sectors across the region. Examples include: Green Bay Mayor's Office, Algoma City Hall, Village of Bellevue, Village of Little Chute, Village of Allouez, Village of Allouez, City of De Pere Parks Department, Brown County Finance Department, City of Green Bay Legal Department, NEW Water, Green Bay Botanical Gardens, and the Green Bay Children's Museum.

## 2. Contributions to regional infrastructure (Lists)

- Professor Wheat serves on the City of Green Bay's Water Commission.
- Professor Kuenzi serves as a Development Committee Member for the Girl Scouts of the Northwestern Great Lakes.
- Professor Kuenzi serves as an Advisory Board Member and Development Committee Member for the Green Bay Salvation Army.
- Professor Warner provides significant assistance to local nonprofit organizations through panel discussions, training opportunities, and other engagement activities. Examples include:
- Professor Kuenzi provides significant assistance to local nonprofit organizations through panel discussions, training opportunities, and other engagement activities. Examples include: grant writing workshops to local government and nonprofit organizations, consulting on capacity building projects, participation

## 3. Scholarly activity of faculty (Lists that are not all-inclusive; maybe seek to highlight the different areas/types of activity)

Public Administration faculty are highly engaged in scholarship. Over the last several years, faculty have written and edited books and published peer-reviewed articles, book chapters, book reviews, and entries. Examples of research from UWGB public administration faculty include:

- Helpap, David J. 2019. "Public Management in Rural Local Governments: An Assessment of Institutional Differences and Implications." *State and Local Government Review* 51(1): 6-18.
- Helpap, David J. 2017. "Assessing Public Expenditures in Small Towns: Beyond Roads and Fire Engines." *State and Local Government Review* 49(2): 75-86.
- Helpap, David J. 2017. "Guiding the Public Sector: Assessing the Use of Recommended Practices in the Budgeting Process." *International Journal of Public Administration* 40(7): 559-574.
- Helpap, David J. 2016. "The Importance and Complexity of Assessing Urban Fiscal Health" (Review of Richard M. Bird and Enid Slack's *Is Your City Healthy? Measuring Urban Fiscal Health*). *State and Local Government Review* 48(3): 208-216.
- Helpap, David J. 2015. "Explaining the Use of Recommended Practices and Guidelines: The Case of Public Budgeting." *Public Administration Quarterly* 39(2): 259-294.
- Weinschenk, Aaron C., and David J. Helpap. 2015. "Political Trust in the American States." *State and Local Government Review* 47(1): 26-34.

## Student Success

1. High-impact practices and individualized-learning opportunities (Some data provided; lists and/or brief narrative)

The Public Administration program takes considerable pride in the number of high impact practices offered throughout courses in the program. Also, nearly every member of the program consistently supervises multiple individualized learning experiences during any given semester.

Examples of high impact practices in Public Administration courses include:

- PU EN AF 215 (Introduction to Public Administration): Students are required to interview a public or nonprofit administrator within the community. Students write a paper and create a presentation that highlights the career path of the individual, the person's current job and responsibilities, and connections to course material. At the conclusion of the semester, the presentations—when taken together—essentially create a “jobs board” that allows students to see the range of employment options within the public and nonprofit sectors.
- PU EN AF 406 (State and Local Government): At the end of the semester, student engage in a city council simulation that occurs in the City of Green Bay Common Council chambers.
- PU EN AF 306 (Regulatory Policy and Administration): Student are required to research a proposed federal regulation, write a comment either in support or opposition to the regulation, and then submit it to Regulations.gov as a formal comment.

Regarding individualized learning experiences, specifically, public administration faculty consistently supervise independent studies, internships, Honors Projects, teaching assistants, research assistants, and student research project presentations. According to the data provided, over the past five years, faculty have supervised an average of 35 students. Given the relatively small number of core and supporting faculty in the program, this amounts to a significant number of experiences per faculty, per year.

2. Retention (TBD. Note: if program-level data is not provided, maybe list some things your program does that you believe aid in retention.)
  - The Public Administration program engages with students using broader PEA unit (of which Public Administration is a part) social media accounts on Facebook and Instagram. Student engagement includes weekly “student spotlights,” job announcements, campus and program events, and alumni profiles. Over the last several semesters, a student engagement internship has been specifically tasked with maintaining the social media accounting, collecting content from faculty, and posting content.
  - Each year, the broader PEA unit hosts a spring Celebrating Students event. The event highlights graduating seniors, students who have won PEA scholarship, and students who have engaged in individualized learning experiences. The event has generally included an alumni panel discussion, food, and speakers from the community. Over the last several years, the event has been held in the Grand Foyer of the Weidner Center.
  - Faculty participate in multiple campus preview day events each year.
  - Faculty consistently teach FYS classes.

### **Mission Relevant**

1. Relevance to mission (Narrative or lists as appropriate)

There should be no doubt that the courses, research, experiences, and service offered by faculty within the Public Administration program are relevant to the mission of the university. The UWGB mission states, “The culture and vision of the University reflect a deep commitment to diversity, inclusion, social justice, civic engagement, and educational opportunity at all levels. Our core values embrace community-based partnerships, collaborative faculty scholarship and innovation.” As noted throughout this review document, public administration as a field and as a program at UWGB consistently addresses issues such as diversity, inclusion, and civic engagement. For example, there is hardly a component of the Public Administration program that does not directly address civic engagement in some way. Additionally, the work of faculty within the program illustrates a strong connection to regional infrastructure and community collaboration.

The mission continues by stating that the university is committed to “access, career success, cross-discipline collaboration.” Again, as stated throughout this review document, public administration is an interdisciplinary degree and the program’s role in student success initiatives (e.g., FYS, HIPs), individualized learning experiences (e.g., internships, research assistantships), and fully online learning options indicates dedication to both access and career success.

2. Cultural enrichment (Narrative or lists as appropriate)

- Public administration faculty have served as topic experts for a significant number of media interviews over the last seven years. Media outlets include those with a local (e.g., Green Bay Press Gazette, Fox 11), state (e.g., Wisconsin Public Radio), and national (e.g., Stateline) scope.
- Faculty have provided provide a large number of talks and presentations over the last seven years. Examples include:
  - Professor Helpap has provided multiple presentations for the UWGB Lifelong Learning Institute. Topics have ranged from policy making at the state level to the bureaucracy and regulations.
  - Professor Helpap provided a presentation “Toward a Better Budget: Assessing the Use and Value of Recommended Budgeting Guidelines” to the 2015 Wisconsin Government Finance Officers Association Winter Conference.

3. Access (Does the program have any agreements with other institutions? For example, a transfer agreement with a technical college.)

The Public Administration program currently does not have any agreements with other institutions.