

MEMORANDUM

TO: Terry Schwartz
Associate Dean
University of Colorado at Colorado Springs

FROM: RaJade M. Berry-James, Chair
Commission on Peer Review and Accreditation,
Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration

DATE: July 11, 2014

SUBJECT: NASPAA Accreditation Review

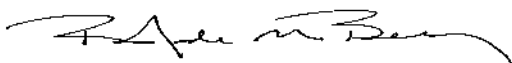
On behalf of the Commission on Peer Review and Accreditation (COPRA), I am pleased to inform you that the Commission found your Master Of Public Administration program to be in substantial conformity with NASPAA Standards, subject to the monitoring provisions outlined in the enclosed report. Your program is accredited for a period of seven years and will be included on the Annual Roster of Accredited Programs. An abbreviated letter announcing your accreditation has also been sent to your Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor, Mary Coussons-Read.

Please accept the Commission's congratulations on the accreditation of your program. By pursuing and achieving accreditation through a rigorous peer review, your program has demonstrated a substantial commitment to quality public service education. You are part of the global community of over 180 accredited graduate programs in public service.

Your program is in substantial conformance with the NASPAA Standards. However, the Commission concluded that questions remain about the following Standards: 2.1/4.2, 3.1, 5.1. Accordingly, COPRA plans to monitor your continued progress, annually, on these specific standards. The Commission asks that you report your progress on these particular standard(s) each year in your annual accreditation maintenance report.

If you have any questions about this decision or NASPAA's accreditation process, I would be happy to answer them via email at rmberryj@ncsu.edu. Questions about this year's annual report should be directed to Heather Gregory at gregory@naspaa.org.

Warmly,



RaJade M. Berry-James
Chair, Commission on Peer Review and Accreditation

Commission on Peer Review and Accreditation
Report on Monitoring Provisions
to the
Master Of Public Administration, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs

July 11, 2014

Item 1: Standard 2.1 – Administrative Capacity/Standard 4.2 – Student Admissions

Standard 2.1 states, “The program will have an administrative infrastructure appropriate for its mission, goals, and objectives in all delivery modalities employed.” Standard 4.2 states, “The program will have and apply well-defined admission criteria appropriate for its mission.”

The 2013 Interim Report noted that student growth could become problematic for a new program without new faculty. The program’s interim report response letter allayed these concerns to some extent, though the program still anticipates student enrollment growth. The Site Visit Report noted that “As the institutional change [separation] proceeds, SPA is becoming increasingly aware of its resource needs. At the same time, ‘SPA and its MPA are emerging as exemplary programs’ and the Chancellor is very supportive of the program in its transition.”

The program seems on a clear path to success with these Standards. However, because the separation from the joint program with Denver will not be fully completed until July 2014, and the information in the Self-Study Report and Site Visit Report is therefore to some extent prospective, COPRA requests that the program report on its administrative capacity as it looks to grow program enrollment.

Item 2: Standard 3.1 – Faculty Qualifications.

Standard 3.1 states, “The program’s faculty members will be academically or professionally qualified to pursue the program’s mission.”

Standard 2.2, Basis of Judgment states, “COPRA accepts as evidence that (for every location and modality) students are being taught by an adequate faculty nucleus who are engaged in the implementation of the program where:

- at least 50% of the courses are taught by full time faculty (employed by the institution)
- at least 50% of the courses delivering required competencies are taught by qualified nucleus faculty members employed by the institution.”

In the Interim Report, COPRA noted that the percentage of face-to-face classes taught by full-time faculty was satisfactory. However, the 50 percent normal expectation was not met for the online modality classes. Accordingly, the Interim Report requested that “the site visit team discuss with the program the disparity in academically qualified and full-time faculty teaching in the online program versus the traditional program.”

Data provided in the Site Visit Report indicated that the 50 percent expectation had not yet been met for the online modality classes, although the program has plans to correct this, and expects to hire full-time faculty to address this issue.

Because the separation from the joint program with the Denver campus will not be fully completed until July 2014, and the transition to the new program could affect progress toward the 50 percent expectation, COPRA requests that the program report on progress toward meeting this standard in its annual report.

Item 3: Standard 5.1 – Universal Required Competencies

Standard 5.1 states, “As the basis for its curriculum, the program will adopt a set of required competencies related to its mission and public service values. The required competencies will include five domains: the ability

- to lead and manage in public governance;
- to participate in and contribute to the policy process;
- to analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions;
- to articulate and apply a public service perspective;
- to communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry.”

The status of the program’s separation from the joint arrangement with UC Denver led COPRA to request clarification on this standard in its Interim Report. The program reported that its summer 2013 discussions led to the creation of a new capstone rubric, piloted in Spring 2014, and that a pre-post assessment of competencies for the capstone course is to be launched in Fall 2014. The Site Visit Report indicates a full assessment cycle for Competencies 3 and 5, with progress on the remaining 3 competencies (“Competencies 1, 2, and 4 have learning outcomes defined, with competency 1 having evidence of learning gathered, analyzed, and courses indicated to cover this competency. Competencies 2 and 4 have courses identified in addition to the learning outcome defined.”) In addition, COPRA’s review of the site visit report and other documents indicates work in this area is still in progress in terms of stakeholder consultation.

The program seems on a clear path to success with this Standard. However, because the separation from the joint program with Denver will not be fully completed until July 2014, and the information in the Self-Study Report and Site Visit Report is therefore to some extent prospective, COPRA requests that the program report on its progress implementing its Fall 2013-2016 assessment plan, involving stakeholders in assessment, and using its student learning assessment as a piece of overall program evaluation and ongoing improvement.

Over time, the Commission expects that its understanding of the Standards and the expectations of what it means to be in compliance will advance and evolve, as programs (and COPRA) become more familiar with the competencies-based approach to accreditation. The Commission will expect accredited

programs to continue to develop their competency measures and use of assessment tools, and that this maturation should be evident in the program's annual accreditation maintenance reports.

Please note that the Commission will review each of your annual accreditation maintenance reports to determine ongoing conformity with NASPAA Standards, including progress in the areas noted above. Your annual reports and COPRA's actions in response to your reports will become a permanent part of your record for your next accreditation review. COPRA's acceptance of the Program's annual reports is contingent on receiving satisfactory responses on the issues noted. If the program does not submit the information requested regarding the monitored standards in annual reports, the Commission may require the program to re-enter the accreditation cycle with an updated Self Study Report. Monitoring provisions remain in effect and must be addressed each year until the program is notified by COPRA that the monitoring has been removed. We look forward to receiving your annual report by **October 1, 2014**. Questions about this year's annual report should be directed to Heather Gregory at gregory@naspaa.org.