



Master of Public Administration Newsletter

Upper Iowa University

Volume 2, Issue 1
March 2011

Special points of interest:

For those students taking their last course in the MPA program: Before you can graduate you will need to complete your PPAT exam. It can be found at <http://www.keysurvey.com/survey/287111/ca0d/>

Graduation applications and transcript requests can be obtained from the Registrar's Office at <http://www.uiu.edu/academics/registrar/index.html>

Registration Dates

Term 5: March 21-May 2
Term 6: May 23-June 27

Drop Dates

Term 4: April 10
Term 5: June 12
Term 6: August 7

Commencement

May 7, 2011

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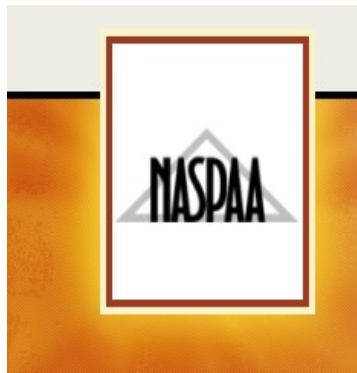


The following students graduated in 2009 but were not listed in the summer newsletter. I apologize for that oversight. Please join me in a belated congratulation to Andrew Burkhart and Ben Bobier.

NASPAA Accreditation Goal for UIU MPA Program

The National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) is an organization of colleges and universities that offer programs in public administration, public policy, and nonprofit management. Founded in 1970, NASPAA currently has over 260 members. Its primary goal is to improve the quality of public service education.

Accredited programs must demonstrate they are mission driven and promote public service values. The UIU MPA program is no different. Our mission: "The UIU MPA program provides an opportunity for a diverse population of adult learners to develop the administrative, analytical, leadership, and managerial skills needed to promote the public good and



For more information about the organization or accreditation process visit the NASPAA website at <http://www.naspaa.org/>

strengthen core democratic values through service in government and non-profit organizations." UIU MPA faculty are committed to helping students understand and appreciate how the skills and knowledge they gain throughout their course of study promotes

key democratic values like equality, equity, justice, liberty, democracy, and due process. The emphasis on core democratic values defines and differentiates the MPA from other graduate programs at UIU.

Earning accreditation adds value to your MPA degree. An accredited program has undergone a comprehensive and rigorous peer review process focused on academic quality and integrity. The process is intended to instill in programs a dedication to continual improvement and compliance with generally accepted standards for the discipline. For you this means being able to tell prospective employers you graduated from a quality program and are well **(story continued on page 4)**

PA590 Research Capstone

Our Research Seminar, PA590, is the final course in the curriculum. It serves an important and vital dual role. In this course you will have the opportunity to demonstrate your ability to identify and answer a research question of your own design. Being able to collect, analyze, and critically evaluate data is an important job skill for every public administrator.

Equally important for the MPA program is the assessment potential of the course. We use PA590 as another assessment tool to gauge whether students have mastered the program's objectives. The program objectives can be found in the MPA Student handbook located at www.uiu.edu/mpa. The paper can employ quantitative

or quantitative methods. Or it can be a policy issue paper that results in policy recommendations based on academic research. Regardless the approach, the important first step is to have an approved research question in place before registering for PA590. Students will generally not be allowed to register **(story continued on page 4)**

5. If you worked full-time before going to graduate school, how many years did you work?

- A. 1 year or less
- B. 2 years
- C. 3-5 years
- D. 6-8 years
- E. 9 or more years

6. . What do you think the program should be focusing on to help MPA students find success in their chosen careers? Be as specific as possible (Topics, methods, techniques, concepts, skills, etc.)

7. Rank the factors that motivated you to pursue the MPA degree (1= most important)

- A. Personal Development
- B. Skill Acquisition
- C. New employment opportunities
- D. Increase income
- E. Career Change
- F. Promotion with current employer
- G. Suggested by employer

8. Age:

9. Gender:

10. Race/ethnicity:

11. State:

12. Emphasis area:

13. How satisfied are you with your MPA progress to date.

14. What adjectives come to mind when you describe the UIU MPA program to others? i.g. Challenging, Interesting, etc.

15. Please provide any other feedback you have concerning your experience with the UIU MPA program.

PA 590 Research Seminar.



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**Find the MPA
Student
Handbook at
www.uiu.edu/mpa**

Looking for a Career?



This site can help you stay informed about jobs in government, the nonprofit sector, and education. Find career advice, internships, and much more! Click picture for more information

for PA590 without an approved research question. The MPA program coordinator is responsible for approving all research questions. Information about the research paper or how to gain approval for the research question can be found in the MPA student handbook located in the current students tab at www.uiu.edu/mpa.



Interested in a Scholarship?

In commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the attacks of 9/11, Professor Craig Smith and the Center for First Amendment Studies, in conjunction with the website www.911plus.org, announce the Richard A. Clarke 2011 National Scholarly Monograph Contest for graduate students in good standing at American Universities. First place: \$20,000, Second Place: \$10,000, and Third Place: \$5,000. Visit <http://www.911plus.org/> for more information or contact Dr. Jerry Poppe at poppeg@uiu.edu. Initial application deadline is **June 1, 2011**. Final deadline is **August 1, 2011**.

NASPAA Accreditation

prepared to meet the challenges of the field. NASPAA accreditation can provide legitimacy for our program especially if employers are not familiar with Upper Iowa University.

To earn accreditation UIU will have to undergo a year-long self study. The self-study critically assesses seven areas including (1) mission, (2) program governance, (3) faculty performance, (4) student service, (5) student learning, (6) program resources, and (7) program assessment.

Once the self-study is completed it is submitted to NASPAA's Commission on Peer Review Accreditation (COPRA). The Commission will review it, seek additional information or clarification, and provide initial feedback. A three member team consisting of two academics and a practitioner will then visit the program to evaluate what is going on. The site team will interview faculty, administration, and students to determine if the self-study is an accurate reflection

of how the program is performing. Using the self-study, COPRA feedback, and what was found on the site visit, the accrediting team will make its recommendation concerning accreditation. Programs can be accredited for up to seven years.

We are taking the preliminary steps to begin the self-study process. A core team of MPA faculty members has been assembled. They include Dr. Rod Erakovich, Dr. Alex Kadrie, Dr. Sharon Chanley, and Dr. John Grummel. These faculty members will provide much needed expertise on curriculum development and program governance.

It is my hope that by summer we will have an advisory board in place. This board will consist of practitioners and alumni and will provide important insight and advice on how to improve program quality. If you are interested in serving on the advisory board please let me know. Fi-

nally, we are going to begin a formal and periodic survey of students and alumni. In this newsletter you will find a survey asking for your views on the current status of the MPA program. I strongly encourage you to fill it out and return it to me. Your opinion matters! Later this summer we will begin the process of soliciting feedback from our alumni because their views will also provide important insights into how to improve our program.

Program accreditation does not come easy or fast. A successful accreditation application can take three to four years to approve. My goal is to earn accreditation by end of the 2013/2014 academic year. Even if we do not meet that goal, I am convinced the process will make us a better program with an even stronger reputation for quality. That will benefit all of us. Please join me on this journey!