

UNT MPA ASSESSMENT
PLAN, 2012-2019

Mission Driven Assessment

The mission of the Master of Public Administration program is:

“to prepare leaders for public and nonprofit organizations through an innovative curriculum and dedicated teaching; creating and disseminating knowledge to the field of public administration through interdisciplinary research and professional development activities; and serving the profession and the community in order to promote democratic governance and enhance quality of life.”

The first efforts at developing a mission statement and vision began in August 1993 and during a retreat in 1994, the faculty developed mission and vision statements for the MPA program along with a five-year strategic plan. Since that time, the department has sought information from stakeholders to inform strategic planning processes which always include a review of mission. Among the stakeholders involved have been department faculty, staff, students, alumni, internship sponsors and employers. Data collection for stakeholders has included informal processes including discussions at faculty meetings, emails, and conversations. Formal data collection has also been received via alumni surveys, student exit surveys, and internship reviews. The program has an active alumni group (many of whom are now employed and active in hiring decisions and sponsoring paid internship for MPA students). The alumni have been involved in shaping mission through their consistent involvement as guest speakers and they have also provided information that can be used in mission formation or alteration through ---- quarterly meetings with the Chair. These core groups of stakeholders have all provided information useful to the program and it has been used by the department in mission related actions.

Universal Competencies

The UNT MPA program assesses NASPAA universal competencies on a periodic basis such that all competencies should be assessed every five years. The process is centered on a one-year cycle for some assessment instruments, two-year cycle for rubric-based assessment instruments, and a five-year cycle for other instruments. Instruments are formally reviewed by the department's CDPC committee. This process enables us to collect multiple data points, assess performance, and make changes to the program on a continuing basis without overburdening staff and faculty with the assessment process. The tables and figures below outline the SLO's associated with each universal competency and the process is detailed below.

Table 1. Student Learning Objectives for Universal Competencies by Core Courses

Universal Competency	SLO	Course
To lead and manage in public governance		
	1. Explain the general practice of leading and managing high-performance public organizations	PADM 5020
	2. Impart and develop analytical thinking skills through practice of human resource management.	PADM 5030
To participate in and contribute to policy process:		
	1. Recall and explain key justifications for public policy, especially those grounded in economic theory and institutions of a market economy.	PADM 5010
	2. Critically evaluate the implications of proposed revenue policy changes for equity, economic efficiency, and administrative feasibility	PADM 5420
To analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions		
	1. Critically evaluate the implications of proposed revenue policy changes for equity, economic efficiency, and administrative feasibility	PADM 5420
	2. Demonstrate how to be an educated and intelligent consumer of statistical analysis results and processes.	PADM 5510
To articulate and apply a public service perspective		
	1. Compare and contrast major schools of thought regarding the role of public administration in the United States.	PADM 5010
	2. To appreciate the multiple perspectives, values, and ethical challenges of public management.	PADM 5020
To communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry		
	1. Appreciate the multiple perspectives, values, and ethical challenges of public human resource management.	PADM 5030
	2. Media relations: preparing for an interview, print versus electronic media, the public information office, media relations in times of crises;	PADM 5035

Elective Competencies

The UNT MPA Program is still developing a strategy for assessing elective competencies derived from sub-fields of study. The development of SLO's is an ongoing process that has highlighted the difficulty of assessing competencies when fields are not audited for graduation requirements. Resolving these issues continues to be a point of discussion for the program.

Assessment Process

The assessment process collects data from multiple sources across multiple time periods to inform the review of student learning outcomes. The overall process is graphically summarized in Appendix 1.1, and a matrix of which instruments are used to assess SLOs is specified in tabular form in Appendix 1.2. Key assessment rubrics are included in Appendix 1.3. The next section provides a narrative description of the application of assessment instruments from data collection to analysis to departmental review procedures.

Assessment Instruments

1. *Comprehensive exam.* Students must pass a comprehensive exam as an exit requirement for the program. The exam is offered three times yearly. In February of even-numbered years, ten exams are randomly selected from the six previous exam offerings. A three-person committee applies a rubric (Appendix 1.3) to assess the following SLOs: 1.1, 2.1, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 5.1. A summary report is submitted to the CDPC committee by May 31st of even numbered years.
2. *Problem-solving projects.* Students complete two significant problem-solving projects in required coursework. The first assignment from PADM 5400 is a budget analysis of a municipality or nonprofit organization. The second is an assignment from PADM 5510 that requires students to employ research design and statistical analysis to answer questions in a problem-solving context. In February of even-numbered years, ten projects from each course are randomly selected from course offerings in the previous four long semesters. A three-person committee applies a rubric (Appendix 1.4 and 1.5) to assess the following SLOs: 3.1, 3.2. A summary report is submitted to the CDPC committee by May 31st of even numbered years.
3. *Student self-evaluations.* Students evaluate their own growth and development, as well as the performance of the program toward the end of their program in PADM 5035. Students provide three points of assessment in this course. First, students provide a qualitative assessment of the program and their experience through a reflective paper. In February of even-numbered years, ten of these papers from all course offerings over the last two years are randomly selected and submitted to the CDPC by May 31st of even-numbered years. Second, students participate in a faculty-moderated focus group. Results are recorded, and all summaries from the previous two years are submitted to the CDPC by May 31st of even-numbered years. Finally, all students complete a closed-ended survey whose results are compiled and summarized by staff. Summary tables are submitted to the CDPC by May 31st of even-numbered years. Student self-evaluation provides assessment of all SLOs.
4. *Practitioner Evaluations.* Practitioners offer evaluations of student performance through internship documentation. The internship coordinator randomly samples 10 evaluations

per long semester and records evaluations from relevant questions. By May 31st of even numbered years, the internship coordinator provides a summary report of finding to the CDPC.

5. *Alumni Evaluations.* The department chair will conduct an alumni survey in the Spring semester of years divisible by five. The instrument will be designed to assess all SLOs from the post-degree experience of alumni. The last available survey is 2007 with the next scheduled alumni survey 2015.

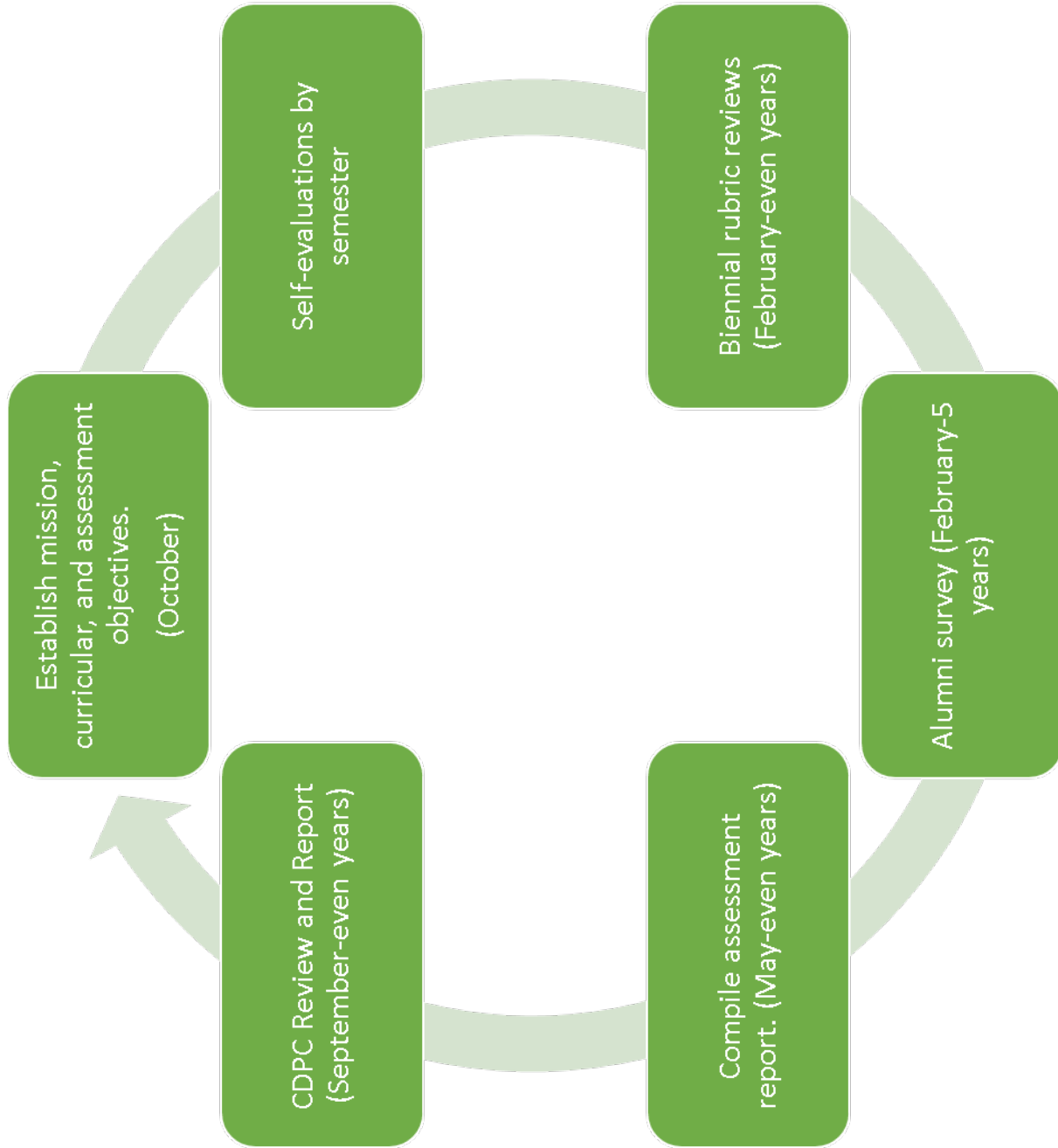
Review Process

All materials from the assessment process and instruments are submitted to the department's CDPC committee by May 31st of even-numbered years. The committee is tasked with reviewing the assessment materials and providing a report to the faculty with recommendations for changes to the program's mission, curriculum, extra-curricular activities, and assessment process. Recommendations are due no later than the October faculty meeting of even-numbered years.

Appendices

Appendix 1.1	Assessment Process
Appendix 1.2	Assessment Instrument Matrix
Appendix 1.3	Assessment Committee Rubrics

Appendix 1.1 Assessment Process



Appendix 1.2 Assessment Instrument Matrix

Universal Competency		Course	Assessment Instruments					
SLO			Comp Exam	Budget Project	Stats Project	Self-Eval	Practitioner Eval	Alumni Survey
To lead and manage in public governance								
1. Explain the general practice of leading and managing high-performance public organizations		PADM 5020	X			X	X	X
2. Impart and develop analytical thinking skills through practice of human resource management.		PADM 5030	X				X	X
To participate in and contribute to policy process:								
1. Recall and explain key justifications for public policy, especially those grounded in economic theory and institutions of a market economy.		PADM 5010	X					
2. Critically evaluate the implications of proposed revenue policy changes for equity, economic efficiency, and administrative feasibility		PADM 5420	X	X				X
To analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions							X	
1. Critically evaluate the implications of proposed revenue policy changes for equity, economic efficiency, and administrative feasibility		PADM 5420	X	X				X
2. Demonstrate how to be an educated and intelligent consumer of statistical analysis results and processes.		PADM 5510	X		X			X
To articulate and apply a public service perspective								
1. Compare and contrast major schools of thought regarding the role of public administration in the United States.		PADM 5010	X			X	X	X
2. To appreciate the multiple perspectives, values, and ethical challenges of public management.		PADM 5020	X			X	X	X
To communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry								
1. Appreciate the multiple perspectives, values, and ethical challenges of public human resource management.		PADM 5030	X			X	X	X
2. Media relations: preparing for an interview, print versus electronic media, the public information office, media relations in times of crises;		PADM 5035				X		

Appendix 1.3 Assessment Committee Rubrics

Core Competency	Unacceptable Proficiency	Proficient	Exemplary Proficiency	Score
	Scoring Range (1-3)	Scoring Range (4-7)	Scoring Range (8-10)	
Explain the general practice of leading and managing high-performance public organizations.	General practices of leadership and management of high performance public organizations not identified. Fails to explain terms introduced.	Correctly identifies two or more general practices of leadership and management of high performance public organizations. Explains them.	Identifies two or more general practices of leadership and management of high performance public organizations, explains and critically evaluates use of them.	
Recall and explain key justifications for public policy, especially those grounded in economic theory and institutions of a market economy.	Identifies only one or none of the justifications for public policy or fails to explain them adequately.	Identifies most of the justifications for public policy and adequately explains them.	Identifies and explains all of the justifications for public policy and critically evaluates these justifications.	
Critically evaluate the implications of proposed revenue policy changes for equity, economic efficiency, and administrative feasibility	Mentions but does not critically evaluate equity, economic efficiency, and administrative feasibility.	Explains the implications of proposed revenue policy changes for: equity, economic efficiency, and administrative feasibility. Sine critical analysis offered.	Critically evaluates the implications of proposed revenue policy changes for equity, economic efficiency, and administrative feasibility.	
Consume statistical analysis results and processes in an educated and intelligent manner.	Fails to interpret correctly linear regression models or to explain adequately elements of research design.	Correctly interprets linear regression models and adequately explains elements of research design.	Correctly interprets linear regression models and adequately explains elements of research design. In addition, communicates results correctly using plain language.	
Compare and contrast major schools of thought regarding the role of public administration in the United States.	Identifies and explains two or fewer major schools of thought. Explanations sometimes inaccurate	Identifies and explains three major schools of thought. Critically compares two schools of thought. Accurate.	Identifies and explains three major schools of thought. Critically compares three schools of thought. Accurate and thorough.	
Appreciate the multiple perspectives, values, and ethical challenges of public human resource management.	Identifies only one or none of the perspectives, values, and ethical challenges of public human resource management. Fails to explain them.	Identifies two or three perspectives, values, and ethical challenges of public human resource management and adequately explains them.	Identifies and explains multiple perspectives, values, and ethical challenges in public human resource management. Critically evaluates these.	
Overall Proficiency	Scoring Range (8-24)	Scoring Range (32-56)	Scoring Range (64-100)	

Exam Semester

Exam ID #

Student Name

Competency III: To analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions.

Assessment Tool: Methods 5510 Final Project

Student ID _____

Indicators	Unacceptable Proficiency Scoring Range (1-3)	Proficient Score Range 4-7	Exemplary Proficient Score Range (8-10)
Can the student formulate and state a research question?	Inability to formulate and state a research question clearly and concisely. Co discussion of important components of the research problem.	Formulates and states the research questions. Also provides some discussion of research questions and important components of the problem.	Formulates and states research question with a clear and concise definition of the problem, using outside information sources to support their research question.
Can the student provide a sufficient literature review that supports their research question?	Failed to review relevant literature. Literature review does not include relevant information or appropriate sources.	Provides some review of relevant and appropriate literature to support their argument.	Thoroughly reviews the literature demonstrated by inclusion of a variety of sources and relevant literature.
Can the student select the correct method of analysis?	Failed to identify the appropriate analysis model given the data measurement.	Demonstrates some effort in selecting the appropriate model for analysis but does not justify their reasoning for using the model.	Demonstrates ability to select he appropriate model based on data collection strategy. They also discuss why the chosen model is appropriate for their analysis.
Can students test for the OLS assumptions in their analysis?	The student failed to test for violation of any OLS assumptions.	The student provides some discussion of the OLS assumptions and provides some effort in addressing any assumption violations.	The student fully tests and correctly discusses the OLS assumptions. All appropriate corrections are made.
Do students select appropriate variables for their regression models?	Provides a superficial justification for the selection of independent and dependent variables. Student is unclear in the operationalizing of concepts.	Provides some justification pertaining to the inclusion of independent and dependent variables. Also provides some discussion of how variables were operationalized.	Identifies independent and dependent variables correctly, with rationale as supported by literature and/or theory. Full discussion of how variables were operationalized.
Overall Proficiency	Scoring range (5-15)	Scoring range (20-35)	Scoring range (40-50)

Competency matrix for the field assignment in PADM 5400, Managing Financial Resources

Student ID _____

Indicators	Unacceptable proficiency (Scores 1-3)	Proficient (Scores 4-7)	Exemplary proficiency (Scores 8-10)	Scores by indicator
Describe budget process in detail	Nonexistent or superficial description	Description sufficient to understand process	Extensive description of process and organizational dynamics	
Interview two budget officials	No evidence of interviews conducted	Evidence that two officials were interviewed	Evidence that more than two officials were interviewed with substantial amount of info collected	
Identify key participants in budget process and their roles	Nonexistent to brief description of key participants and their roles	Description sufficient to understand who key players are and their roles	Extensive description of key players and detailed discussion of their roles and conflicts in those roles	
Identify and evaluate the organization's budget policies	Nonexistent or brief discussion of budget policies	Discussion sufficient to understand organization's values and processes	Discussion demonstrates understanding of the role of policies in the organization's budget processes	
Evaluate process for preparing revenue forecasts	No discussion of revenue forecast procedures or policies	Description of revenue forecasting methods and policies	Discussion of the methods and policies and problems encountered in revenue forecasting	
Evaluate the content of budget document and its presentation of information	Nonexistent or brief discussion budget document and its information format	Description of budget document and the general approach used to budgeting	Extensive discussion of budget document, the evolution of innovations in organization, and its context to innovation in public administration	
Discussed citizen engagement in budget process	No discussion of role of citizens in budget preparation	Discussion of efforts to engage citizens in budget preparation	More extensive discussion of innovations and obstacles to engaging citizens in budget process	
Recommendations made for improving both budget process and content	One or two recommendations offered with limited discussion	At least three substantive recommendations offered and discussed in some detail	At least five substantive recommendations offered and discussed along with obstacles to their implementation	
Overall proficiency	(Score range: 8-24)	(Score range: 25-56)	(Score range: 57-80)	

