



Saint Louis University Program Assessment Annual Reporting

It is recommended program assessment results be used to celebrate achievements of student learning as well as to identify potential areas for future curriculum improvement.

Please email this completed form as an attachment to thatcherk@slu.edu

CAS PROGRAMS: Please email this completed form by July 1 to Donna LaVoie lavoiedj@slu.edu

1. Degree Program(s) included in this report: Master of Public Administration (MPA)
 2. Department: Political Science
 3. School/Center/College: Arts and Sciences
 4. Name(s): Robert Cropf
 5. Email: cropra@slu.edu
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Instructions: Please answer the following **five** questions to the best of your ability for each degree program offered within your department.

1. Summarize your **assessment activities** during the past year for each degree program and how this work relates to the established assessment plan (*e.g. what program outcomes were assessed, faculty discussions, new survey design, data collection, revised assessment plans or learning outcomes, etc.*). Please include how Madrid courses/program were involved.

The MPA program assessed student learning outcomes in the spring 2017 for two outcomes, the students' ability:

- 1) To evaluate methodologies (e.g., qualitative vs. quantitative) for assessing political and social outcomes
- 2) To design original research to test hypotheses in the area of public or urban affairs .

In order to assess these outcomes, we used the capstone project that MPA students are required to do in their final semester. There were only two MPA students who completed a capstone in the spring.

The specific assessment findings are reported below.

2. Describe specific **assessment findings** related to the **learning outcomes** assessed for each degree program, including any pertinent context surrounding the findings. Please include the **learning outcomes themselves**. (*e.g. Our goal was that 75% of students performed at the "proficient" level of competency in problem solving, using a new scoring rubric. 81% of students performed at the "proficient" level in problem solving, exceeding our expectations.*) Do not include student-level data.

Data included in this report should be in aggregate. Please include how Madrid courses/program were involved.

Summary of Student Learning Outcomes in the Capstone (spring 2017)

1. To evaluate methodologies (e.g., qualitative vs. quantitative) for assessing political and social outcomes

Both of the students who did the capstone exceeded expectations for this outcome. They used the appropriate research methodologies in their projects that enabled them to successfully evaluate outcomes in two different policy areas: urban planning and community development. In the former project, the student used a mixed methods approach in analyzing the persistence of segregationary patterns in St. Louis, while in the latter the students used an ethnographic approach in studying perception and community involvement in a working class neighborhood in St. Louis.

2. Design original research to test hypotheses in the area of public or urban affairs

Both of the students who did the capstone met or exceeded expectations for this outcome. One student did original research to test the hypothesis that the city's segregationary spatial patterns were the result of urban planning decisions that were made in the early 20th century. This student exceeded expectations for this outcome. The other students tested the hypothesis that neighborhood perception influenced the amount of social capital available in a St. Louis neighborhood. This student met expectations for this outcome.

**Please attach any tables, graphics, or charts to the end of this report.*

3. Describe how assessment **feedback** has been provided to students, faculty, and staff. (*e.g. report for faculty, executive summary for the dean, web page for students, alumni newsletter, discussion with students in class or club event, etc.*)

Feedback was given to the students during and after their capstone presentations.

In addition, an annual assessment report is sent to department faculty and staff and to the CAS Dean's office.

Additional feedback to faculty is provided at the department's annual fall retreat, in which assessment results are discussed and suggestions made for improving results or for spreading effective practices in the department.

4. In what ways have you **used assessment findings** to celebrate student achievements and/or to improve the curriculum this past year? (*e.g. prizes to students, hosting student parties, changes to curriculum, student projects, learning goals, assessment strategies, etc.*)

One of the students received the MPA Student of the Year in part because of the high quality of his capstone project.

We will celebrate student success by posting the high rate at which students met or exceeded outcomes on our department website.

5. Describe any changes to your assessment plans, or any challenges or educational experiences with the **assessment process** this past year that you would like to share.

The MPA program has been discontinued, and this is the last year for which we will provide assessment results. We will discuss at the annual faculty retreat whether the MA assessment plan will need to be modified to handle the expanded concentration in Public Policy and Administration, which effectively replaces the MPA.

*Please submit any **revised/updated assessment plans** to the University Assessment Coordinator along with this report.*