Expected Outcomes: Understand theories

When they complete this degree program, students will be able to understand and apply major theories in the public administration literature.

Assessment methods

Method: Understand theories

All MPA students must take a Comprehensive Exam. The exam consists of broad essay questions that require the student to apply theoretical knowledge from his or her coursework to deal with a mock public administration problem laid out in case format. The Comprehensive was graded by three members of the MPA Core Faculty (Brown, Clark, and Jung for Spring 2012).

Findings:

During the Spring 2012 semester, 14 MPA students took the Comprehensive Exam. All of them or 100% demonstrated that they understood and could discuss public administration theories that were relevant to the policy problems that were raised, although two only showed this after they were given a chance to rewrite the exam.

How did you use findings for improvement?

Our students seem to do quite well on this outcome. Our faculty is putting more stress on applying theoretical materials to “real world” situations in their classes.

Additional comments:

None

Expected Outcomes: Critique arguments

When they complete this degree program, students will be able to critique arguments in public administration and political science.

Assessment methods

Method: Critique arguments

A survey of MPA students was conducted in the Spring of 2012. This survey contained the question: “In my public administration courses, I learned about a wide variety of administrative theories and approaches to analyzing public management issues.”

Findings:

Of the 14 MPA students who answered this question, 14 or 100% said that they improved their skills in this area.

How did you use findings for improvement?

Our students seem to do quite well on this outcome. Our faculty is putting more stress on ongoing debates in public administration in several of their classes.

Additional comments:
None