

**School of Public and Environmental Affairs (SPEA)
Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis**

**PLANNING FOR LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT
2016-2017 Academic Year Review**

This report concerns the program review and assessment efforts of the School of Public and Environmental Affairs (SPEA) during the 2016-2017 academic year. We identify established learning outcomes for all degrees and summarizes the methods SPEA followed to collect, assess and use quantitative and qualitative data to improve student learning. Also covered in this submission are the steps that SPEA took or plans to take in response to learned information. The focus in this document is on substantial efforts, new developments or changes in our work. Review and assessment tasks that are part of the school's regular process will be noted but not discussed in great detail. More information on these processes is contained prior reports to this committee.

This report begins with a brief description of the school and its programs (Section I). The remainder is organized according by program with a statement of learning outcomes, methods of assessment, findings and current and proposed actions (Sections II – IV).

I. Overview of the School of Public and Environmental Affairs

SPEA is an Indiana University core school, operating on both the Bloomington and Indianapolis campuses. The school on the Indianapolis campus offers certificates and degrees at both the undergraduate and graduate levels in two programs: Public Affairs (PA), and Criminal Justice and Public Safety Management (CJ/PSM). In the 2016-2017 academic-year, SPEA employed 32 full time academic appointments in various ranks as well as 78 adjunct faculty during the academic year under review.

- a. Undergraduate Programs: During the 2016-2017 SPEA enrolled _____ undergraduate majors seeking Bachelor of Science degrees in either Public Affairs (BSPA) or in Criminal Justice and Public Safety Management (BSCJPSM). Criminal Justice remains the most popular undergraduate major. ~~with _____ declared students~~. The Management major (~~_____ declared students~~) and Public Safety (~~_____ declared students~~) are also popular options. For many undergraduate students, SPEA is not a first-entry school, and the majority of undergraduate students transfer into SPEA during or after their sophomore year, most transferring from University College.

In the Public Affairs program, undergraduates pursue a BS in Public Affairs in one of four majors—Civic Leadership, Public Policy, Management, Media and Public Policy or Sustainable Management and Policy. The Civic Leadership and Public Policy majors each have several emphasis areas, allowing students to specialize their studies according to their interests. Minors in these four categories are also available, as are certificates in nonprofit management, public affairs and public management.

The Criminal Justice and Public Safety Management undergraduate program includes majors and minors in Criminal Justice and in Public Safety Management, as well as several certificates. Majors earn a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice, or in Public Safety Management. At the master's level, the program includes a Master of Science in Criminal Justice and Public Safety, with tracks in criminal justice and public safety management. Non-master's graduate students can also enroll to earn a certificate in homeland security and emergency management. The Criminal Justice/Public Safety Management program faculty began planning for an upcoming campus program review. This work will be discussed in detail later in this report.

b. Graduate Programs: SPEA's graduate programs include master's level degrees, non-degree certificates, and executive programs. At the graduate level, students pursue one of four concentrations (Public Management, Nonprofit Management, Policy Analysis or Criminal Justice) in the Masters of Public Affairs (MPA) program. Nonprofit management is the most often chosen course among students pursuing degrees and graduate certificates. Non-degree graduate students can earn certificates in several specialties. Many of those who earn graduate certificates segue into the master's programs. During the review year, ____ graduate students were enrolled. Enrollment in both programs fell during the 2016-2017 year following a trend in public affairs schools across the country. SPEA is currently engaged in a broad examination of its graduate program to determine whether there are other issues relevant to this decrease.

c. Accreditation and Program Reviews: The MPA program is accredited by the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs and Administration. SPEA maintains a full and unconditional accreditation. The program will undergo accreditation review beginning during the 2018-2019 academic year. The faculty of the criminal justice undergraduate program is preparing for a campus-level program review that will occur during the 2018-2019 year. Faculty of the school have been deeply engaged in preparation for this review. The process for this preparation, and the affect of this work on the school's current and future program assessment work will be described more completely later in this report.

c. Significant developments during the review year: During the year covered in this report, SPEA underwent a significant administrative reorganization with the appointment of a new Executive Associate Dean and Assistant Dean as well as a reorganization of faculty into disciplinary teams, each with new leadership. SPEA faculty also initiated an intensive examination of over half of the school's degree programs. This activity is a product of both 1) findings during past assessment and program evaluation activities; and, 2) the timing of upcoming program and accreditation reviews. Program reviews included gathering and considering information and data from a variety of sources, including previously gathered data from course and program outcome assessments, stakeholder input and trends and needs in the field. These discussions resulted in a decision to undertake meaningful redesign of two of our programs: the MPA and the criminal justice major.

II. Program Reviews and Assessments

A. Masters of Public Administration

1. Published Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the MPA degree program, students shall:

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

Concentrations will have the above general outcomes plus the additional ones listed below.

Criminal Justice Concentration

Upon completion of this concentration, students will:

- Identify and critically analyze current criminal justice policies, using available research, and discuss the strengths and limitations of various approaches.
- Communicate effectively within a complex and diverse criminal justice or public safety environment.
- Rigorously analyze criminal justice and public safety policies using a variety of tools, including quantitative research methods and statistical techniques.
- Define crime, discuss and evaluate major theories of crime, and critically discuss criminal justice system and non-criminal justice programs and policies that respond to crime.

Policy Analysis Concentration

Upon completion of this concentration, students shall:

- Demonstrate the ability to rigorously analyze public policies using a variety of tools, including microeconomics, institutional analysis, and other common public affairs models of policy development, implementation and evaluation using quantitative, qualitative and mixed approaches.
- Demonstrate experience in the practical conduct and communication of results of policy analysis.

Public Management Concentration

Upon completion of this concentration, students should:

- Demonstrate the ability to evaluate management practices, using a variety of outcome measurements to assess efficacy, efficiency and economic costs and benefits.
- Demonstrate experience in the conduct of management tasks, and the ability to communicate effectively with the appropriate constituencies.

Nonprofit Management Concentration

Upon completion of this concentration, students will:

- Demonstrate the managerial and policy skills to effectively undertake leadership roles in the nonprofit sector.
- Demonstrate the managerial and policy skills to effectively undertake leadership roles in the public or private sectors as they apply to working with organizations in the nonprofit sector.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the philanthropic tradition in the broadest sense (voluntary action for the public good).

2. Methods of Assessment

The MPA program uses a variety of tools to review and evaluate the success of its academic programs in terms of course level learning, program success, and faculty quality. For example, the school conducts both mid-term and end of course student evaluations. Information collected is analyzed by administrators and reported to practice team leaders and individual faculty members with the goal of improving learning by improving teaching.

Student performance on assigned activities, particularly on common assignments, provides a common measurement for assessing progress toward the professional learning objectives adopted by the program. The capstone project is the most important opportunity for evaluating students' development during the program. Faculty members teaching the capstone course undertake in-depth evaluation of these projects using rubrics and evaluation guidelines incorporating the professional standards established by NASPAA, the School's accrediting body, and adopted by SPEA faculty.

During the subject year, SPEA also completed a thorough survey of graduate program graduates as well as current students. This survey collected information related to student's placement post-completion as well as their satisfaction with the program's success in providing the appropriate and necessary professional skills. A second version of this tool was also used to collect information from actual and prospective employers. This survey was designed to allow faculty to determine whether our current program offerings were providing students with exposure to the skills and knowledge needed in the public and nonprofit workplaces where our students frequently find post-graduate employment.

3. Findings and Taken or Planned Responses

SPEA began implementing a number of new initiatives during the Fall 2017 semester. These changes resulted both from information we learned during routine course and program evaluations and through the above described surveys.

- a. At the teaching level, SPEA identified a need for teacher training for 1) adjunct faculty and 2) new junior faculty. Initiatives at this level will be implemented to mentor junior faculty. Although SPEA had a formal mentoring process in the past, it had fallen by the wayside. This program includes multiple reviews and required consultations with CTL. All faculty, including adjuncts, are able to participate in a newly created on-line teaching sequence that includes pre- and post- testing elements to assess learning within each module.
- b. During the fall semester, the faculty formed an MPA Assessment Committee to revise and revamp the program's mission statement. Members of the MPA curriculum committee spent the fall engaged in a review of the curriculum across the program. The result of this work is a series of proposals that will significantly alter the curriculum in the program. For example, in response to information learned through course assessments and survey's, changes in the content and sequence of courses will better address students' needs for a wider variety of quantitative courses, including a need for courses designed for students who are not prepared for extensive quantitative work. These proposed changes are moving through required faculty and school level approval processes.
- c. Curriculum changes will be immediately followed by development of standard course assignments for required core courses. These projects will also have a standard assessment rubrics which incorporate NASPAA leaning competencies. Students in required core courses will complete these common (though not necessarily identical) course exercises. The subcommittee doing this work will also create a revised process for more systemic review of student performance in courses and toward broad program goals.
- d. Information collected during student and stakeholder interviews revealed concerns about the effectiveness of the capstone course. Currently, capstone groups work with community partners on projects that the partner submits. Although students appreciate the chance to work for real clients, they expressed different levels of satisfaction with their experience based on the nature of the

specific project. In addition, differences in the scope of these projects make it more difficult to assess the program. Over the next year, a subgroup of the faculty will work to evaluate possible alternative configurations of the capstone experience.

B. Master of Science in Criminal Justice and Public Safety

1. *Published Learning Outcomes*

MSCJPS graduates will be able to:

- Manage and lead individuals and organizations with an understanding of the ethical underpinnings and professional standards of criminal justice and public safety agencies.
 - Communicate effectively within a complex and diverse criminal justice or public safety environment.
 - Rigorously analyze criminal justice and public safety policies using a variety of tools, including quantitative research methods and statistical techniques.
 - Identify public safety risks using various risk analysis tools, and describe ways to plan, prepare, manage, and mitigate natural and human made risks.
 - Discuss the philosophical underpinnings and development of law, and critically evaluate how public safety policies balance individual rights and public order.
 - Discuss the nature and extent of crime, discuss and critically evaluate major theories of crime, and critically discuss criminal justice system and non-criminal justice programs and policies that respond to crime.
 - Critically discuss criminal justice and public safety system actors, agencies, and processes; describe the underlying operations of police, emergency management, courts, and corrections agencies, and identify the major policy issues in criminal justice and public safety systems. Identify and critically analyze current criminal justice and public safety policies, using available research, and discuss the strengths and limitations of various approaches.
2. *Methods of Assessment:* The MSCJ program incorporates a variety of assessment tools and processes designed to assess course level learning, program learning and faculty quality. Many of these practices have been described in detail in earlier reports. For example, the school conducts both mid-term and end of course student evaluations. Information collected is analyzed by administrators and reported to practice team leaders and individual faculty members with the goal of improving learning by improving teaching. Because the program remains relatively new, the majority of assessment work remains at the level of evaluating faculty performance and assessing student performance at the course level.

3. *Findings and Taken or Planned Responses*

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- a. During the survey year, the program implemented a new thesis option. Students who prefer an independent research project may submit a thesis in lieu of completing the capstone experience. This option resulted from student interest and information from faculty aware that a growing number of careers associated with criminal justice involve research, analysis and reporting. During the review year, Faculty developed a set of learning outcomes for the option that focus on preparing students for careers in criminal justice research as well as doctoral programs.

C. Bachelor of Science in Public Affairs (BSPA)

1. *Published Learning Outcomes:* Graduates of the Bachelor of Science in Public Affairs program should have the intellectual depth, breadth, and mental agility of learning to anticipate, recognize, evaluate, and solve problems in public affairs using knowledge, skills, and tools appropriate to entry-level management, civic leadership, and policy studies positions. A student who is awarded the Bachelor of Science in Public Affairs will be able to:

- Communicate effectively important information and ideas in public affairs (especially within their major), both with individuals and in group settings, and using oral, written, visual, and electronic modes.
- Recognize, characterize and analyze issues and problems in public affairs using appropriate technology to collect, collate and assess data through statistics and other quantitative tools.
- Apply knowledge and theory of the public, nonprofit and private sectors (e.g., microeconomics) to analyze, evaluate and contribute to the development of solutions for public affairs issues and problems.
- Recognize and incorporate concerns, theories, concepts and other information rooted in the broader concepts of globalization, civic engagement, sustainability, and management in working with public affairs issues and problems.
- Work effectively in a team.
- Recognize and demonstrate sensitivity to diverse points of view.
- Develop an awareness of one's personal responsibility and service to the public, and to seek principled solutions to problems in public affairs.

Students will be able to demonstrate additional learning specific to their major.

Civic Leadership Major The civic leadership major is intended to impart knowledge and skills needed to catalyze community actions. Students electing a civic leadership major will analyze the elements necessary to successful community solutions, and will learn to solve

public problems in the context of shared power and authority. Students in civic leadership will be able to:

- Understand and communicate the nature of civil society.
- Understand and apply theoretical and applied concepts of the political process to civic engagement.
- Understand and apply the theoretical and practical foundations of leadership.
- Engage in negotiations and conflict resolution.

Management Major

The management major is concerned with the functioning of organizations, whether public, private or nonprofit. Students electing the management major will study resource allocation, organizational design, accountability, and other generally applicable principles involved in all organizational structures, with an emphasis on issues specific to public and nonprofit organizations. Students in management will be able to:

- Understand and participate in the management of public and nonprofit organizations.
- Understand the principles of finance and budgeting in the public sector, and be able to undertake basic finance and budgeting activities in that context.
- Understand the principles of finance and budgeting in the nonprofit sector, and be able to undertake basic finance and budgeting activities in that context.
- Understand the principles of human resource management, and be able to apply them in the context of a public or nonprofit organization.
- Manage diversity in a changing workforce.
- Understand the decision-making in public and nonprofit organizations, and be able to contribute to that process in those organizations.

Policy Studies Major

The policy studies major is concerned with the exercise of power and the nature and wisdom of the rules that constrain the use of power. In contrast to the management student, whose focus is on the organization, and the civic leadership student, whose focus is on the community and community networks, the policy studies student will primarily be concerned with the rules we establish to govern our communal endeavors. Students in policy studies will be able to:

- Understand, explain and apply common models of the policy process to problems in public affairs.
- Understand the options for public input into public decision-making and policy implementation.
- Read, understand and evaluate program evaluations and policy analyses reported by others, and communicate those digested findings clearly and concisely.
- Understand and apply basic methods of program evaluation using common quantitative, qualitative and mixed tools.

- Understand and apply basic methods of public policy analysis using common quantitative, qualitative and mixed tools.
- Understand a policy area in depth.

These course and discipline specific learning outcomes are all mapped to PULs. Each course in the BSPA is designed to advance one or more PUL and the course assessments are designed with these outcomes in mind.

2. Methods of Assessment.

The BSPA includes several majors that serve students with a variety of interests. The program uses both formative and summative assessment methods. In class assessment exercises, like exams and problem sets often are used to assess progress in classes teaching quantitative skills. In courses with a qualitative focus, research papers, group projects and case studies, as well as self-reflection, are more common.

Regardless of type, all undergraduate courses involve the completion of mid-term and end of term student evaluations. SPEA also conducts student satisfaction surveys on an annual basis. These satisfaction surveys collect information about student's confidence and personal sense of academic preparations.

SPEA also considers evidence of program success including enrollment trends, course and program level DFW rates, graduate job placement information, and internship and employer surveys when evaluating program success.

3. Findings and taken or planned responses.

- a. Over the past three years, SPEA faculty members have created standard assignments with grading guidelines or rubrics for use in multi-section courses.
- b. During the study year, a subcommittee of the undergraduate faculty convened a group to examine the School's internship program. The group concluded that the internship experience was valuable to students but not designed effectively. The requirements tied to the experience varied dramatically depending on the faculty member who agreed to supervise. This meant that it was not possible to ensure the value of the student or internship sponsor's experience.

The faculty work group decided to create a set of standard expectations that would create a base line for all internships. Faculty sponsoring internship experiences may supplement student requirements above these expectations. During the year, faculty and staff created a canvas site for all internships; approved a standard syllabus; and drafted a set of standard student expectations, including a work journal and a concluding reflection paper.

During this academic year, the faculty group is establishing guidelines for evaluating the student experience artifacts.

- c. As documented in prior reports, SPEA took on a long-term project to improve student performance in quantitative courses. The initial focus of this work was on performance in our required statistics course. SPEA hired a statistics coordinator who has worked with faculty teaching all sections of the class to standardize the syllabus and to create standard assessment tools.

Sufficient evidence now exists to allow faculty to identify areas of challenge for our students and to design approaches to supplement students. On balance, we have seen a slight improvement in student performance, though work remains. SPEA will use this data during the 2018-19 academic year to identify specific improvement targets and design new teaching and learning strategies to reach those.

D. Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice (BSCJ)

1. Published Learning Outcomes: Graduates of the Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice program should have the intellectual depth, breadth, and adaptiveness of learning to anticipate, recognize, evaluate, and solve problems in criminal justice or public safety using knowledge, skills, and tools appropriate to entry-level criminal justice and public safety positions. Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice graduates will be able to:

Communicate effectively important information and ideas in criminal justice or public safety management (especially within their major), both with individuals and in group settings, and using oral, written, visual, and electronic modes.

Recognize, characterize and analyze issues and problems in criminal justice or public safety using appropriate technology to collect, collate and assess data through statistics and other quantitative tools.

Apply extant criminal justice or public safety management knowledge and theory to analyze, evaluate and contribute to the development of solutions for criminal justice or public safety management issues and problems.

Recognize and demonstrate sensitivity to diverse points of view.

Students will be able to demonstrate additional learning specific to their major.

Criminal Justice Major

The criminal justice major is concerned with the functioning of the major elements of the criminal justice system, policing, courts and corrections, including both public and non-

governmental agencies. Students learn what crime is, why and how often it occurs, how we attempt to prevent it, and how we punish those who commit crimes. Criminal justice graduates will be able to:

Define crime, legally and socially, discuss how it is measured, and current trends in crime.

Describe major theories of crime and discuss corresponding public policies to reduce crime.

Discuss the constitutional foundations of the criminal justice system, especially the tension between individual rights and public order.

Discuss the history and evolution of policing, the role of discretion, the nature and effectiveness of police activities, and issues of police misconduct.

Describe the structure, process, and actors in the court system, as well as current issues in processing criminal cases.

Describe the major philosophies of punishment, the history and evolution of corrections systems, and the current issues in corrections.

Describe current crime control strategies, and discuss the strengths and limitations of various approaches.

Read criminal justice research and communicate findings clearly, and apply basic research methods to criminal justice research questions.

Public Safety Management Major

The public safety management major is intended to prepare students to work in agencies that ensure public safety, such as fire departments, emergency management and homeland security agencies. Public safety management graduates will be able to:

Define public safety, and discuss the major components of the public safety system and how they operate.

Define and describe homeland security, how federal state and local agencies work to maintain homeland security, and how it relates to public safety, in theory and in practice.

Discuss the constitutional foundations of public safety, especially the tension between individual rights and public order.

Discuss the history and evolution of terrorism, the motivations that lead to terrorism, and the nature and effectiveness of responses to terrorism.

Describe emergency service agencies, and current issues and trends in emergency service in the United States and around the world.

Discuss technology and how it relates to maintaining public safety, particularly the use of geographic information systems.

Describe current public safety strategies, and discuss the strengths and limitations of various approaches.

Read public safety research, communicate findings clearly, and apply basic research methods to criminal justice research questions.

Articulate methods of recognizing and resolving crisis situations, including crisis planning, crisis management and ethical decision-making processes and practices.

Describe the dynamics and processes (individual, group, institutional bureaucratic and psychological) that can impact decision making during crises, and articulate methods of learning from past approaches/ experience to build future strategies for managing disasters or crises.

2. Methods of Assessment

The BSCJPS includes two majors that serve students with different career objectives. Both majors have a strong professional orientation and are designed to give students a solid liberal undergraduate education while also providing them with the substantive knowledge necessary to allow them to evaluate industry career paths and be prepared for entry-level jobs in the field. The program uses both formative and summative assessment methods. In class assessment exercises, like exams and problem sets often are used to assess progress in classes teaching quantitative skills. In courses with a qualitative focus, research papers, group projects and case studies, as well as self-reflection, are more common.

Regardless of type, all undergraduate courses involve the completion of mid-term and end of term student evaluations. SPEA also conducts student satisfaction surveys on an annual basis. These satisfaction surveys collect information about student's confidence and personal sense of academic preparations.

SPEA also considers evidence of program success including enrollment trends, course and program level DFW rates, graduate job placement information, and internship and employer surveys when evaluating program success.

3. Findings and taken or planned response

- a. During the review year, the CJPS faculty undertook review of the curriculum. The goals were to refresh offerings in line with changing industry needs and to provide a better learning ladder for students working their way through the major. To meet the second of these goals, several courses will be transitioned from 300 to 200 level courses. The requirements of the degree will be amended to reflect these changes.

The first step in this process required agreeing on a rubric to guide expectations about student experience and expectations at different course levels. Faculty then decided which courses should be reduced. In several cases, a new, more advanced class will be created at the 300 level for students who want to go beyond the 200 level course. Work on this project will not be completed until the 2018-2019 year.

- b. The CJPS faculty team also determined that students would be better served if the program increased standardization across courses that have multiple sections taught by different instructors. This is particularly important given that SPEA uses a deep bench of adjunct faculty. Faculty teams began work on strategies to give students common experiences while allowing faculty to bring their own experience and perspective. Faculty teams began work on creating a short list of preferred textbooks that faculty could choose from and will move on to developing required topic lists to govern syllabus development as well as at least one standard assignment to be used in all classes. Work on this project continues.