

# MPA Student Learning Summary Form AY2015-16

## Part One

a. What learning outcomes did you assess this year?	b. What method(s) did you use to determine how well your students attained the outcome? In what course or other required experience did the assessment occur?	c. What expectations did you establish for achievement of the outcome?	d. What were the actual results?	e. Who was responsible for collecting and analyzing the results? How were they shared with the department?
1. Outcome 2, a,b,c and d: communicate with and interact productively with colleagues in a diverse environment	Pre-test / post-test using the first and final online discussions in PA 601 (a and b) and PA 606 (c and d).	The mode for each distribution of scores should be at least 3 on a 5 point scale.	Scored as expected (at least 3) in PA 601 (pre=4/post=3), but scores actually fell, contrary to expectation. Scores remained high in PA 606 (PA personnel). By comparison, last year's scores in 601 were similar, but demonstrated improvement. Scores in 606 this year improved from last year's.	MPA director and course instructor.  Faculty meeting.
2. Outcome 3, a and b: recognize and act on professional and ethical challenges that arise within public administration	Final scores in PA 609 (PA ethics and discussion scores in PA 601 (Intro to PA).	The mode for each distribution of scores should be at least 3 on a 5 point scale.	Scores were below expectations, both in 609 (3a) and 601 (3b). Scores in 609 were similar to last year's, but those in 601 fell.	MPA director and course instructor.  Faculty meeting.

## Part Two

This year, we are assessing the second and third outcomes of the five assessment outcomes adopted by the department for the MPA program. Elements 2a and 2b represent scores in one early and in one late discussion, by student, in the same class (PA 601). The same goes for 2c and 2d (PA 606). Scoring two discussions in two courses allows us to both compare scores internally and to compare each course's scores externally with another course. (Please refer to the accompanying MS Excel file.)

For outcome 3, we score two grading elements. Element 3a consists of the final grades for all students who completed PA 609 (Ethics in PA), Fall 2015. Element 3b consists of my scores for the discussion on ethics in PA 601 (Intro to PA), Fall 2015.

The numbers in red on the first sheet of each file—the tabs at the bottom are labeled All Scores—represent the modal scores for each scored outcome. And so for outcome 3B, the modal score was 3 because there were nine students who scored 3 for that element—more than for any other modal score

**Results:** Our hopes were that our students would for each assessment outcome in the three to five range. This would translate, although not exactly, into a grad of “B+” or better. In this, we are somewhat disappointed this year. And this year's scores suffer somewhat in comparison to last years, which are also provided (in summary only). Below, I describe results for each of the outcomes, and compare them with last year's scores.

**Communications:** Scores for 2a and 2b proved somewhat disappointing in PA 601. Our students in PA 601 actually score less well in the pre-test/post-test comparison between their first and last online discussions. What we had hoped to see was a pattern similar to the one posted in 2014, which indicated that our students improved their skills over the course of

the semester. In PA 606, however, our MPA students scored well and more or less evenly across the board. There seemed to be little change between scores on their first and their last discussions.

Online communication is always through a medium, second hand, and students who are more facile in face-to-face communication may be handicapped when they employ less direct means of communication. And of course, since most of our students are working adults, and some are many years distant from their undergraduate educations, writing skills coming into the program may be rusty.

**Ethics:** We score reactions to ethical challenges in two courses. One of those, of course, is our ethics course, PA 609. The other set of reactions derives from discussions centered on ethics applied to assigned reading cases, upon which at least one weekly discussion is based, in the introductory course, PA 601. It seems that students do better the ethics course than they do in the intro course (PA 601). This is contrary to expectations—PA 609 students are all MPA students in their second or third years of study with us. However, students in neither course scored as well as expected.

**Annual comparisons:** There appear to be some differences between last year's and this year's scores. First, in terms of score outcome 2a and 2b in 601, the pattern was reversed. Last year, scores improved—this year, they did not. On the other hand, students' scores began and remained high over the course of the semester in PA 606 (2c and 2d). Scores for this year's second assessed dimension, ethical challenges, were not up to standard, especially in PA 609 (3a). This is disappointing, especially since scores have not improved since last year. The middling scores in PA 601 (3b) were better than those in 606. This is somewhat counterintuitive, since 609's topic is ethics. In 601, just a couple weeks were devoted to the topic. To add to the disappointment, last year's scores were better in each class.

**Conclusions:** Online discussions continue to be a valuable resource in assessing student outcomes. However, it may be wise to look for other instruments within the curriculum to assess these outcomes, especially in the ethics course (PA 609). More emphasis should perhaps be placed on the final discussions in each course, to help students improve their performances. Next year, as planned, we will perform an assessment of the three remaining outcomes. They are the articulation of a public service perspective; the mastery of an appropriate literature in PA; and the ability to think and act critical, in ways that bear on solutions to public problems.

**Student Learning Summary Report Rubric :: Office of Assessment & Accreditation :: Indiana State University**

Degree Program: Master of Public Administration Date: 8.12.16

	<b>Level 0 – Undeveloped</b>	<b>Level 1 – Developing</b>	<b>Level 2 – Mature</b>	<b>Level 3 – Exemplary</b>
<b>1. Student Learning Outcomes</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> No outcomes are identified.  <input type="checkbox"/> No Curriculum Map was provided.	<input type="checkbox"/> Outcomes were identified.  <input type="checkbox"/> Some of the outcomes are specific, measurable, student-centered, program-level outcomes.  <input type="checkbox"/> A Curriculum Map was provided.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Outcomes are specific, measurable, student-centered, program-level outcomes.  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Outcomes at least indirectly support Foundational Studies Learning Outcomes or the Graduate Learning Goals.  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Curriculum Map identifies where/to what extent each outcome is addressed.  <input type="checkbox"/> At least one outcome was assessed in this cycle.	<input type="checkbox"/> Outcomes are specific, measurable, student-centered program-level outcomes that span multiple learning domains.  <input type="checkbox"/> Outcomes directly integrate with Foundational Studies Learning Outcomes or the Graduate Learning Goals.  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Outcomes reflect the most important results of program completion (as established by an accreditor or other professional organization). <b>I assume?</b>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learning outcomes are consistent across different modes of delivery (face-to-face and online.)  <input type="checkbox"/> Outcomes are regularly reviewed (and revised, if necessary) by the faculty and other stakeholders.  <input type="checkbox"/> The Curriculum Map identifies where/to what extent each outcome is addressed and offers evidence that students have sufficient opportunity to master the associated learning outcomes.

				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Two or more outcomes were assessed in this cycle.
<b>2. Measures &amp; Performance Goals</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> No measures are provided.  <input type="checkbox"/> No goals for student performance are identified.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Measures are provided, but some are vague and/or do not clearly assess the associated outcomes.  <input type="checkbox"/> Measures are primarily indirect.  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Measures include course and/or assignment grades, but there is no evidence that grades are calibrated to the outcomes.  <input type="checkbox"/> Performance goals are identified, but they are unclear or inappropriate.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> At least one direct measure was provided for each outcome.  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Some information is provided to suggest that measures are appropriate to the outcomes being assessed.  <input type="checkbox"/> Measures include course and/or assignment grades, and general information is provided to indicate that grades are calibrated to the outcomes.  <input type="checkbox"/> Clear and appropriate standards for performance are identified.  <input type="checkbox"/> Mechanisms (rubrics, checklists, criterion-referenced exams, etc.) were provided.	<input type="checkbox"/> Multiple measures were provided, and a majority are direct.  <input type="checkbox"/> Detailed information is provided to show that measures are appropriate to the outcomes being assessed.  <input type="checkbox"/> Measures include course and/or assignment grades, and specific evidence is provided to demonstrate that grades are calibrated to the outcomes.  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clear and appropriate standards for performance are identified and justified.  <input type="checkbox"/> If students are required to pass a certification or licensure exam to practice in the field, this was included as a measure.  <input type="checkbox"/> Measures assess some <a href="#">high impact practices</a> (internships, capstone course projects, undergraduate research, etc.)  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Some measures allow performance to be gauged over time, not just in a single course.  <input type="checkbox"/> Mechanisms (rubrics, checklists, criterion-referenced exams, etc.) were provided that demonstrate that the measure

				<p>provides clear evidence of what students know/can do.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> If a measure is used to assess more than one outcome, a clear explanation is offered to substantiate how this is effective.</p>
<b>3. Results</b>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> No data are being collected.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No information is provided about the data collection process.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No results are provided.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Students are meeting few of the performance standards set for them.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Some data are being collected and analyzed.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Some results are provided.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient information is offered to demonstrate that data collection, analysis, and interpretation processes are valid.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Students are achieving some of the performance standards expected of them.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Data are being collected and analyzed.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results are provided.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Some information is offered to demonstrate that data collection, analysis, and interpretation processes are valid and meaningful.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Students generally are achieving the performance standards expected of them.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Clear, specific, and complete details about data collection, analysis, and interpretation of results are provided to demonstrate the validity and usefulness of the assessment process.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Students generally are achieving the performance standards expected of them and demonstrate continuous improvement on standards they have yet to achieve/achieve less well.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> If students are required to pass a certification or licensure exam to practice in the field, the pass rate meets the established benchmark.</p>
<b>4. Engagement &amp; Improvement</b>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> No one is assigned responsibility for assessing individual measures.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Assessment primarily is the responsibility of the program chair.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No improvements (planned or actual) are identified.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> The same faculty member is responsible for collecting and analyzing most/all assessment results.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> It is not clear that results are shared with the faculty as a whole on a regular basis.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Plans for improvement are provided, but they are not</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Multiple faculty members are engaged in collecting and analyzing results.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results regularly are shared with the faculty. ?</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The faculty regularly engages in meaningful discussions about the results of assessment.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> All program faculty members are engaged in collecting and analyzing results.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Faculty regularly and specifically reflect on students' recent achievement of performance standards and implement plans to adjust activities, performance goals, outcomes, etc. according to</p>

	<input type="checkbox"/> No reflection is offered about previous results or plans.	<p>specific and/or do not clearly connect to the results.</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Little reflection is offered about previous results or plans.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> These discussions lead to the development of specific, relevant plans for improvement.  <input type="checkbox"/> Improvements in student learning have occurred as the result of assessment.	<p>established timelines.</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty and other important stakeholders reflect on the history and impact of previous plans, actions, and results, and participate in the development of recommendations for improvement. <input type="checkbox"/> Continuous improvement in student learning occurs as the result of assessment. <input type="checkbox"/> Outcomes and results are easily accessible to stakeholders on/from the program website. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assessment is integrated with teaching and learning.
<b>Overall Rating</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 0 – Undeveloped</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 1 - Developing</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 2 – Mature</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 3 – Exemplary</b>

## COMMENTS

### Strengths, Concerns, Recommendations for Improvement

#### 1. Learning Outcomes

The two outcomes assessed this past year are clear, measurable, program-level outcomes. Do they (in conjunction with the other three) reflect the expectations of NASPAA or ASPA?

#### 2. Measures & Performance Goals

Two methods were used to assess student performance, online discussions (not really tests) that allow achievement to be measured over time, and a course grade. I have no problem with using course grades so long as you can demonstrate that they specifically reflect what students know and can do well (and less well). I am not yet seeing evidence that this is the case. (You could, however, use them as an indirect measure.) In next year's report, please summarize the specific traits and abilities the methods measure. If you are using rubrics to assign scores/grades, please include them as attachments (in Blackboard, not in the document).

#### 3. Results

Numerical results were very detailed in both parts of the report and in the spreadsheet available in Blackboard. I also would like to see some analysis of what the numbers mean: What can a student who earns a score of 3 on outcome #2 do better than the student who earns a 2? These specific details will help you plan appropriate remediation.

#### 4. Engagement & Improvement

Two faculty members are involved in collecting and analyzing assessment results, which are shared (how regularly?) at faculty meetings. Part Two places this year's results in context and reflects on (numerical) changes in student learning. Can you offer some specifics about what they do well/less well? I really appreciate the suggestion that it may be time to identify new assessment instruments. And I would like to hear more about your plans to improve students' performance on the ethics-related measure.

Thanks for sharing this information about the MPA's student learning assessment program. I look forward to hearing more next year!