

**University of Central Florida**  
**Master of Public Administration (MPA)**  
**Strategic Plan**  
**2009-2012**

***I. Vision, Mission, and Values***

*The MPA program vision represents the achievement of the goals identified during our strategic planning process and reflects the mission and values of our organization. Our mission and values were clarified at the outset of the strategic planning process. By definition the mission statement of an organization is a declaration of purpose, which provides meaning and articulates values, while value statements are the desirable codes of behavior to which an organization adheres or aspires.*

**A. Vision.**

The Master of Public Administration (MPA) program aspires to be the preferred program of choice in the state of Florida providing the highest quality graduate education for careers in public management. With a contemporary curriculum, innovative instruction, scholarly and applied research, and community service, the program continues to develop a national model of community partnership and service in an evolving metropolitan environment.

**B. Mission.**

The Master of Public Administration Program provides high quality graduate education for current and prospective practitioners in public and nonprofit organizations. Within an evolving metropolitan environment, the program is designed to develop and enhance leadership and management skills essential to public and nonprofit organizations. The curriculum administers ethical principles, critical functions, and professional skills to help students contribute to the policy process and become leaders and managers in public and nonprofit organizations. The MPA program uses a public governance model that proactively engages the diverse and changing citizenry.

**C. Values.**

In a spirit of collegiality and collaboration, the Program develops effective partnerships with our local community, other college and university departments, and the academic community at large. All aspects of our Program promote leadership through adherence to democratic principles and the highest standards of ethical conduct. The Program values diversity and multiculturalism with an active outreach and recruitment effort to meet diversity goals.

**D. Relationship to the UCF mission.**

The Program is committed to the UCF mission as a multi-campus metropolitan research university. The Program provides high quality graduate education in public administration and offers graduate certificate programs in nonprofit management, emergency management, and urban and regional planning. Through the faculty's research and professional services, the Program promotes the national and international reputation of UCF in the field of public administration. The Program contributes to community partnership and development through

internship opportunities and services offered to students, as well as through applied research and technical assistance conducted by the faculty.

### **Strategic Issues for Master of Public Administration Program**

#### **How can the Program maintain and improve the quality of education offered to students?**

The mission of the Program is to provide the highest quality graduate education for our current and prospective students through a contemporary curriculum, innovative instruction, scholarly and applied research, and community service. The vision of the Program is to develop a national model of community partnership and service. If the quality of the program is not maintained and improved, the mission and vision of the Program will not be achieved.

#### **How can the Program maintain and improve the quality of scholarly applied research conducted by faculty and students?**

The vision of the Program is to conduct scholarly applied research and to become a national model of community partnership and service. If the quality of the research is not maintained and improved, then the mission and vision of the program will not be achieved.

#### **How can the Program meet changing community needs and increase the visibility of the Program locally, nationally, and internationally?**

The Program is committed to the UCF mission as a metropolitan research university with an expanding international focus. If the UCF mission is not advanced, then the future of the program and the university are jeopardized.

#### **How can the Program increase the involvement of faculty interaction with students and meet student expectations for the program?**

The connection between teacher and student is critical to the educational process and the basis for learning. Technological hindrances and competitive scheduling make this connection challenging. If the involvement in the learning and development process between faculty and students is compromised, then the mission of the program is compromised.

## **A. Issue Identification**

**Issue One: How can the Master of Public Administration Program maintain and improve the quality of education offered to students and alumni?**

### **Goal One:**

The Program will maintain and improve the quality of education offered to students and alumni.

*Strategic Initiative:* Utilize the Institutional Effectiveness Plan findings.

*Strategic Initiative:* Conduct a curriculum review of the MPA program.

*Strategic Initiative:* Conduct the MPA self-study for accreditation.

*Strategic Initiative:* Develop service-learning partnerships to enhance learning.

*Strategic Initiative:* Develop a “Live-Long Learning” Plan with students and alumni.

*Strategic Initiative:* Develop conferences and continuing education programs that contribute to life-long learning and provide support for students, faculty, and administration of the program.

*Strategic Initiative:* Develop relationships with alumni and the community that provide support for students, faculty, and administration of the program.

**Issue Two: How can the Master of Public Administration Program maintain and improve the quality of scholarly applied research conducted by faculty and students?**

### **Goal Two**

The Program will maintain and improve the quality of scholarly applied research conducted by faculty and students.

*Strategic Initiative:* Expand the research culture within the program and the department.

*Strategic Initiative:* Develop and utilize the capabilities of the Center for Public and Nonprofit Management (CPNM).

*Strategic Initiative:* Expand and develop community partnerships in long-term research initiatives designed to improve the quality of life in our communities.

*Strategic Initiative:* Increase grant funding that generates funds to maintain and increase the human and monetary resources needed to conduct quality research.

*Strategic Initiative:* Develop a request for proposal process for community engagement in research and capacity building.

**Issue Three: How can the Master of Public Administration Program meet changing community needs and increase the visibility and standing of the Program locally, nationally, and internationally?**

**Goal Three**

The Program will meet changing community needs and increase the visibility and standing of the Program locally, nationally, and internationally.

*Strategic Initiative:* Expand the utilization of service learning projects in core courses to meet changing community needs.

*Strategic Initiative:* Improve the national ranking of the MPA program.

**Issue Four: How can the Master of Public Administration Program increase the involvement of faculty with students and meet the student expectations of the programs?**

**Goal Four**

The Program will increase the involvement of faculty with students and strive to meet the student expectations of the program.

*Strategic Initiative:* Develop a mentoring culture.

*Strategic Initiative:* Utilize the advances in technology to promote interaction.

*Strategic Initiative:* Develop a professional network of alumni, students, and faculty in areas of research and expertise to address community issues.

## **B. Issue Management**

### **Issue One**

**How can the Program maintain and improve the quality of education offered to MPA graduate students, alumni, and community members?**

**Goal 1: To provide the highest quality graduate education in public administration.**

*Objective 1.1: To maintain high quality instruction every semester*

#### **Strategies:**

Instruction by qualified and experienced instructors.

Proportion of full-time and adjunct faculty meets UCF Standards.

Ensure that adjuncts have appropriate orientation and experience.

Utilize Institutional Effectiveness findings to improve programs.

Improve teaching through student feedback.

Conduct a curriculum review for each program.

Collect information to be used for the MPA self-study for accreditation.

#### **Indicators:**

- Qualifications of all (100%) new instructors will be reviewed every semester by the department chair.
- 100% of the departmental course scheduling meets the UCF standards for full-time and adjunct faculty members.
- 100% of new instructors will receive the departmental orientation manual.
- 100% of all new adjunct instructors will attend UCF and departmental orientation
- Adjunct instructors are observed in the classroom at least once.
- All instructors receive performance reviews annually.
- Annual Institutional Effectiveness findings are used to improve the MPA program and modify the next year's plan.
- Data from student course evaluations are assessed every semester to provide instructor feedback.
- Data from graduating students is assessed every semester.
- One program curriculum review is conducted each year.
- MPA Self-Study is conducted in 2010 and 2011.
- All PhD students will be reviewed annually by the major advisor.

## Issue Two

**How can the Master of Public Administration maintain and improve the quality of scholarly, relevant, and applied research conducted by faculty members and students?**

**Goal 2: Promote, conduct, and disseminate relevant research in public and nonprofit management.**

***Objective 2.1: Increase sponsored research by 50% by December 2011***

**Strategies:**

Develop faculty/student teams that specialize in each of the focus areas.

Teams will research and apply for appropriate grant opportunities.

Partner with the CPNM, the Center for Community Partnership, the Honors College, and other University of Central Florida entities for sponsored research.

Explore partnerships with other academic institutes.

Research and apply for major research grants.

Develop and implement a tracking mechanism for sponsored research activities.

Develop and implement outreach and awareness regarding activities.

**Indicators:**

- Research teams developed by fall 2011.
- Each team submits a minimum of three (3) grant proposals per year with partners.
- Grant tracking mechanism developed by CPNM by fall 2011.
- Twenty (20) new research projects completed or underway by December 2011.

***Objective 2.2: Create a culture of research with the program and the department by December 2011.***

**Strategies:**

Create research teams with faculty and students.

Expand community partnerships for long-term research initiatives designed to improve the quality of life in our communities.

Sponsor monthly research colloquiums through the CPNM.

Sponsor the annual Public Administration Research Conference through the CPNM.

Produce publications that share research with the academic and Central Florida communities to improve the management of public and nonprofit organizations.

**Indicators:**

- The PA Fellows Program is developed by fall 2011.
- Research colloquiums presented once a month in the fall and spring semesters.
- A long-term research project is identified by the PA Advisory Board and implemented through the CPNM and the PA Fellows Program by fall 2012.

***Objective 2.3: Increase the number of accepted peer reviewed publications by 5% annually***

**Strategies:**

Research teams will mentor faculty and students through the publication process.

Develop workshops on publishing in peer-reviewed journals.

Promote publication opportunities for faculty and students in the Public Administration Department's course offerings.

Encourage co-authorship between and among faculty and students.

Develop and implement outreach and awareness about publications.

Junior faculty members are supported in their research efforts within the department and the university's Faculty Teaching and Learning Center.

**Indicators:**

- Publication workshop presented every fall and spring semester.
- Research/publication partnerships developed by December 2011.
- Peer-reviewed publications increase by 5% each year.

***Objective 2.4: Increase the number of faculty and student presentations annually by 5%.***

**Strategies:**

Mentor students to present at local, regional, and national conferences.

Sponsor faculty and students to present research at conferences.

Promote community-based research conducted by students in courses.

Develop workshops on presenting research and posters at conferences.

Offer faculty and students opportunities to present at research colloquiums.

Assist with sponsoring the annual Public Administration Research Conference.

**Indicators:**

- Every semester faculty mentor 2-3 students to present at important conferences.
- A workshop on presenting at conferences is offered every fall and spring semester.
- A funding plan is developed annually to sponsor faculty and student presentations.
- The CPNM sponsors monthly colloquiums.
- The CPNM sponsors the annual Public Administration Research Conference.

### Issue Three

## How can the MPA Program meet changing community needs and increase its visibility and standing locally, nationally, and internationally?

### Goal 1: To address community needs through service-learning projects

*Objective 3.1: Increase the directed service learning engaged in by students to improve the capacity of public and nonprofit organizations as evidenced by the initiation of three (3) coordinated projects by December 2011.*

#### Strategies:

Link CPNM partner agencies with departmental service learning and other UCF service-learning opportunities as appropriate.

Partner with the Advisory Boards on service-learning projects.

Encourage and mentor faculty to develop service-learning courses and projects in conjunction with the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning.

Conduct research on service-learning projects to evaluate community impact.

Develop and implement outreach and awareness about service-learning projects.

#### Indicators:

- Develop a process to request service-learning projects by December 2011.
- Expand the capabilities of the CPNM to serve as clearinghouse for service-learning projects by December 2011.
- Strategic planning will be utilized to coordinate three (3) expanded service-learning projects by December 2011.
- One research project will have been conducted on the community impact of service-learning project(s) by December 2011.

*Objective 3.2: Improve national ranking of the MPA program 10% by 2012.*

#### Strategies:

Develop the capabilities and publications of the CPNM.

Support junior faculty in research efforts through assignments and resource allocation.

Share research findings with colleagues through quarterly mailings, our websites, and annual publication (PA FOCUS).

Support faculty research, teaching, and service efforts in applying for awards and conference presentations.

Increase faculty and student participation in national conference committees and presentations – National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration, American Society for Public Administration (ASPA), Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management, Public Management Research Association, and others.

**Indicators:**

- Increase in faculty presentations at prestigious conferences annually.
- Increase in faculty publications in top journals annually.
- Continued support with CPNM publishing research sent to colleagues quarterly.
- National ranking improvement by 2012.
- Increased participation in national conferences.

#### Issue Four

**How can the MPA Program increase the involvement of faculty with students and meet the student expectations of the programs?**

**Goal 1: To increase the involvement of faculty with students to meet student expectations**

***Objective 4.1: Increase the quality of faculty/student/alumni interactions by 2011***

**Strategies:**

Develop a mentoring culture.

Utilize advances in technology to promote interaction.

Develop a professional network of advisory board, alumni, students, and faculty to enhance professional practice.

Increased opportunities provided for socialization between faculty and students.

Enhance student participation through liaison with professional organizations to include ASPA, American Planning Association, Florida City/County Management Association, International City/County Management Association, and Central Florida ASPA.

Create a tracking mechanism for student conference and professional organization participation and publish findings in the *PA FOCUS*.

**Indicators:**

- A formal mentoring program is developed by December 2011.
- An alumni and student listserv is developed by December 2011.
- The creation of departmental a social networking site by 2011.
- One face-to-face social networking event is provided each semester by 2011.
- Increase by 10% number of students and faculty attending professional association meetings by 2011.
- Tracking mechanism for assessing the faculty/student/alumni interaction is in place by 2011.

**Goal 2: To engage students, alumni, and community members in life-long learning.**

***Objective 4.2: To create a culture of life-long learning.***

**Strategies:**

Enhance and increase service-learning partnerships between students, advisory boards, faculty members, and community members to enhance learning.

Develop a “Life-Long Learning” Plan with students and alumni.

Expand relationships with alumni and the community that provide support for the programs, students, and administration of the department.

Enhance and increase colloquiums, conferences, workshops, forums, and continuing education programs that contribute to life-long learning.

**Indicators:**

- Service learning projects are utilized in 50% of MPA core course by December 2011.
- Service learning courses, projects, and agency impacts are tracked each semester.
- Advising incorporates the use of a life-long learning plan by December 2012.
- Alumni networks are developed to support life-long learning by December 2012.
- The CPNM sponsors monthly colloquiums and an annual Public Administration Research Conference.
- The CPNM sponsors at least one continuing education program that promotes the dissemination of research and the development of new skills annually by December 2012.
- Co-sponsor one event with the alumni association annually.