

THE M.P.A. NETWORK

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ISSUE 36 / WINTER 2015

Note from the Director



In this edition of the newsletter we are pleased to announce that accreditation of the MPA Program by the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) has been extended through the 2018-19 academic year. This most recent reaccreditation effort was the first time the program was evaluated on its progress toward meeting the newly revised accreditation standards.

NASPAA changed its standards in 2009, substantially raising the bar for programs seeking their endorsement. The new standards require programs to operate using principles of strategic management, to have clearly articulate learning outcomes, and to develop plans to promote a climate of inclusiveness for all students.

Dr. Greg Plagens Although we have operated for years in a somewhat strategic way, the new standards require us to formalize our efforts into clear, measurable program objectives. In addition, we have begun directly assessing student learning at the programmatic level. Course grades will now be the first level of a two-level, annual curricular assessment program that will help us understand how well students are meeting specific learning outcomes for the program. We will be sharing the results of our progress with you in the future.

In September, leadership of the MPA Program will transfer from me to Dr. Jeffrey Bernstein, who has agreed to serve as interim director for one year while the department searches for a new MPA Director. As part of the reaccreditation process, Provost Kim Schatzel agreed to hire a tenured faculty member as director. She also agreed to hire a support person to assist the program with the work required as part of the new accreditation process. The search for a director, which began in September 2014, will continue in September 2015.

I will be returning to a full teaching load in the department in September 2015 and will remain engaged in the graduate program. I will also be taking a leadership role in working with the undergraduate students in public and nonprofit administration.

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE STATE'S CIO— DAVID BEHEN



David Behen

Governor Rick Snyder appointed EMU Alumnus David Behen as the State's new director of the Office of Technology, Management, and Budget. Prior to this appointment he served as the state's Chief Information Officer in 2011. In his new role, Mr. Behen will retain his duties as CIO.

As the state's CIO, Mr. Behen is responsible for the oversight of all technology used by the State of Michigan's 47,000 employees and 18 agencies, which serve nearly 10 million Michigan citizens. He directs a department of about 1,800 employees. When asked to describe his daily activities, Mr. Behen stated that his job varies from day to day, but above all, his primary focus is on maintaining good relationships with all of the state department's heads and providing quality customer service to the citizens of Michigan.

When asked how the MPA program has helped him throughout his career, Mr. Behen stated that, "[The program] prepared me with a common sense approach to handle real-world situations. The professors challenged me to find creative solutions to real issues facing state and local governments. Which still sticks with me today."

Mr. Behen's advice to recent grads is "Never, pass up an opportunity. If you have an opportunity to speak somewhere; speak. If you have an opportunity to take a position that maybe puts you out of your comfort zone a little bit: take it, that's where you really learn."

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The M.P.A. Network is published biannually by the Department of Political Science at EMU to inform M.P.A. alumni, current students, public officials, and academics about the activities of the M.P.A. program and its graduates.

EASTERN
MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY



ALUMNUS RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS NASPAA AWARD



Garland Doyle Accepts His Award

In October of 2013, MPA alumnus Garland Doyle was awarded the Pi Alpha Alpha Master's Manuscript Award for his paper, titled, "Mapping the 3C's (Competencies, Curriculum and Capacities) of Nonprofit Management Education."

Mr. Doyle's award-winning paper examined how well EMU'S MPA program curriculum is aligning with the professional competencies and the curriculum guidelines established by the Nonprofit Leadership Alliance (NLA), the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) and the Nonprofit Academic Centers Council (NACC). The paper was nominated for the award by Dr. Joseph Ohren.

In January of 2013, he was awarded second place for his capstone graduate research poster entitled "Leadership in the Making: A NLA Graduate Program Case Study" presented at the Nonprofit Leadership Alliance Management Institute Conference in Atlanta, Georgia. In July of 2013, Mr. Doyle presented his capstone research, "Nonprofit Leadership Competencies: A New Way to Develop Leaders and Build Nonprofit Capacity" at the Nonprofit Academic Centers Council 2013 Conference held in Chicago, Illinois.

Mr. Doyle thanks both Dr. Ohren and Claudia Petrescu, Ph.D. (Nonprofit Leadership Alliance Director) for providing him with direction and support during his capstone research. Laura Schultz Pipis, M.P.A., adjunct faculty also served on Doyle's capstone committee. Mr. Doyle is a member of Pi Alpha Alpha. He was inducted in 2011.

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OHREN INTERNSHIP SCHOLAR WINS INTERN OF THE YEAR



Eva Bedford

Eva Bedford, winner of the 2014-2015 Ohren Internship Scholarship, received the Intern of the Year Award for her work with the City of Milan. Ms. Bedford worked on many projects while interning for the city that provided her the skills and network necessary to pursue a career in government. She wrote grant proposals and other reports. She researched rental house fees, water and sewer charges. She also restructured the parks and recreation football program, and made recommendations to city council.

Ms. Bedford graduated from EMU in 2012 with a degree in Business Administration, and hopes to pursue a career in local government when she finishes the MPA Program. This year she received the Intern of the Year Award for the work she was able to undertake thanks to the funds from the Ohren Scholarship.

ALUMNI NEWS

- Bryant Weinert '81 served as Manager of Resource Recovery and Solid Waste Coordinator for the City of Ann Arbor from 1989 to 2009. Now Mr. Weinert works as Policy Advisor & Zero Waste Advocate for Recycle Ann Arbor.
- Jason Kalmbach '06 started his new role as an assistant professor at University of Wisconsin Oshkosh in August 2014. Mr. Kalmbach received his PhD in Political Science at Michigan State university in 2013.
- Tania James '11 has been serving as a director of the Lutheran Social Services shelter for families experiencing homelessness. As well as running a nonprofit in Inkster which focuses on empowering women and girls.
- Joseph Yelick '12 is working for Pershing High school in Detroit as a journalism instructor and college readiness advisor. Prior to this position Mr. Yelick worked as a graduation coach for Mumford High school.
- James Krizan '13 was selected as the new Village Manager of Decatur, Michigan in October 2013. Mr. Krizan has spent the previous six and a half years serving in the nonprofit sector.
- Aaron Desntz '13 accepted the position of Village Manager for Shelby, Michigan in August 2013. Mr. Desntz served as an Emergency Management Fellow for the United States Department of Veterans Affairs in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

BARSON FELLOW PROFILES

CAROLYN POISSANT 2013–2014



Carolyn Poissant

Carolyn Poissant was named the 2013–2014 recipient of the John Barson Fellowship in Public Administration. A Detroit native, Ms. Poissant has demonstrated a deep commitment to public service and an unrelenting passion for environmental issues throughout her academic and professional careers.

She graduated with a Bachelor of Natural Resources, concentrating in Environmental Communications, followed by a Master of Landscape Architecture, concentrating in Urban Design, from the University of Michigan. Ms. Poissant has an extensive background in public sector work, the majority of which has been dedicated to work with environmental and recreational programs, having been employed as a community development planner for the City of Ann Arbor, the City and County of Denver, the Towns of Breckenridge and Snowmass, Colorado, and Washoe County, Nevada.

She entered the MPA program at EMU in the fall of 2011, eventually crafting a rather unique concentration in emergency management planning. Her capstone project involved the development of a GIS application for predicting potential damages from natural disasters, such as a major tornado in Washtenaw County (the subject of the study).

KAYLA COLEMAN 2014–2015



Kayla Coleman

Kayla Coleman was awarded the 2014–2015 John Barson Fellowship. Ms. Coleman received her Bachelor of Science from Michigan State University in Environmental Studies, specializing in environmental science and policy. Currently, Ms. Coleman is systems planning analysis with the City of Ann Arbor. Her work is largely focused on developing and implementing community engagement strategies for the City's projects and programs, handling internal project coordination, and also working externally with community members via public meeting, stakeholder groups and citizen task forces.

Ms. Coleman's past public sector work has included Geographic Information Systems data analysis and mapping, technical writing for Standard Operating Procedures and conducting employee technical competency evaluations. She believes strongly in the importance of facilitating cooperative relationships among interested stakeholders to execute public policies and projects that truly reflect the interests of the community; a robust public engagement process is critical to earning community support and achieving project success.

Her long term career goal is to manage and lead a local government unit, overseeing projects, programs, and policy implementation that provide improved services to the local community.

ELEANOR GETSCHMAN 2015–2016



Eleanor Getschman

Eleanor Getschman received the 2015–2016 John Barson Fellowship. She graduated in December 2013 from the University of Michigan, where she studied history and English Language and Literature. During her final semester, Ms. Getschman took an interest in urban and regional planning, which led her to apply for an internship with the City of Plymouth Building Department. There she broadened her interests to public administration and local government.

Ms. Getschman spent the summer working for the non-profit coalition Transportation for Michigan, where she learned more about local and state transportation policy. She also worked as the building department clerk for the City of Brighton, and began an internship with the city's Community Development department in the fall. This internship allowed her to further explore her interests in both planning related issues and public administration more generally.

Ms. Getschman entered the MPA program in Fall 2014 as well as received a graduate assistantship in the Political Science Department. She plans to concentrate her studies on community development and planning, and obtain the certificate in transportation planning.

THE 'NEW' MPA PROGRAM

Over the past two years, the Public Administration faculty has made major revisions to the MPA program. The changes will take effect in fall 2015 and are designed to make the program more competitive in the marketplace, meet new accreditation guidelines, make better use of limited resources, and improve completion rates.

The "old" MPA was built around a series of 2-credit and 3-credit classes, some of which were taught back to back on the same night. The degree required 17 courses – the highest number in the region. Frankly, the workload was sometimes just as heavy no matter the number of credits. Taking only 5 credits rather than 6 was also troublesome for financial aid and veterans benefits. Taking 17 courses often meant a longer time to complete the program, and the capstone often became a barrier for students working full time.

Going forward, all classes will be 3 credits, with none offered back to back. Our accrediting body now requires a strategic plan and a steady stream of assessment exercises. This can be burdensome to small programs like EMU. Because we would be required to do multiple assessments of every concentration, we cut back from eight to our two most popular concentrations: local government management and nonprofit administration.

Given our growing emphasis on the nonprofit sector, many of our courses have added nonprofit material to their syllabi, and some courses now include "nonprofit" in the title. We are also adding new courses, including Strategic Management and a course cross-listed with Urban and Regional Planning on Local Development Policy, which is especially important given the pressures to promote economic and sustainable development at the local level.

The new MPA will require 13 courses (usually 39 credits), plus a 3-credit internship for those without work experience. Thus, a student taking two courses per semester and one elective for two summers could finish in just under three years. Every student will complete a 24-credit core and a 15-credit concentration. Those not wishing to focus on local government or the nonprofit sector can get approval for an individualized program of study.

The final change of note is the capstone, which is being recast from an individual research project. Starting in winter 2016, the course will be 3 credits and will be built around individual and group problem-solving exercises. We might tap into the expertise of our alumni, who could be asked for feedback on student presentations or other work in the course.

We are really excited about these changes in the Master of Public Administration. We would also appreciate it if you would spread the word and encourage friends and colleagues to apply to the program.

OHREN STUDENT INTERNSHIP SCHOLARSHIP

The Joe Ohren Internship Scholarship helps students placed in unpaid internships gain valuable work experience, which can be a critical factor in the hiring process. Please show your support with a donation to the following link:

<https://www.emich.edu/foundation/give/index.php?fund=01868>

FIND US ON LINKEDIN

Have you ever wondered what the MPA program was up to in between our bi-annual newsletters? The Public Administration program has a LinkedIn group dedicated to connecting alumni, current students, and interested individuals from the surrounding communities. Join the group to receive updates about program activities, networking opportunities, and current events affecting Michigan public administrators. Search for us on LinkedIn under **Eastern Michigan University Master of Public Administration**.



MPA DEVELOPMENT FUND

If you are wondering how you can give something back to the MPA program, please consider making a contribution to the MPA Development Fund. All contributions are tax-deductible and are used to support student and alumni planning and events.

Please mail contributions to:

Eastern Michigan University
Foundation
1349 South Huron Street
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Please make checks payable to:

Eastern Michigan University
Please designate "MPA Development Fund" on your checks to ensure your contribution will go to the MPA program.