



Academic Affairs
UNIVERSITY of ALASKA ANCHORAGE

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Date: January 14, 2020

To: Paul Layer, Vice President for Academics, Students, and Research

From: John Stalvey, Interim Provost, University of Alaska Anchorage

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John R. Stalvey".

Subject: Proposed Master's in Public Policy

As recommended through the UA Strategic Pathways process and in response to state need for a graduate-level public policy program, the College of Business and Public Policy is proposing a Master's in Public Policy degree at UAA.

The program shares a core curriculum with the existing Master's in Public Administration (MPA) degree and aligns with requirements for specialized accreditation with the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA). The program will pursue specialized accreditation within the requisite timeframe.

The program proposal has been approved by the faculty, dean, and appropriate UAA curriculum committees and Faculty Senate.

Attachments: BOR Program Action Request; Prospectus; Catalog Copy; New Courses; Letters of Support



Board of Regents Program Action Request
University of Alaska
 Proposal to Add, Change, or Discontinue a Program of Study

1a. UA University UAA	1b. School or College CBPP	1c. Department or Program Public Policy and Administration
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2. Complete Program Title: Master of Public Policy

3. Type of Program

<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate Certificate	<input type="checkbox"/> Associate	<input type="checkbox"/> Baccalaureate	<input type="checkbox"/> Post-Baccalaureate Certificate
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Master's	<input type="checkbox"/> Graduate Certificate	<input type="checkbox"/> Doctorate	

4. Type of Action	5. Implementation date (semester, year)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Add <input type="checkbox"/> Change <input type="checkbox"/> Discontinue	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fall <input type="checkbox"/> Spring <input type="checkbox"/> Summer Year 2020

6. Projected Revenue and Expenditure Summary (not required if the requested action is discontinuation). Provide information for the 5th year after program change approval if a baccalaureate or doctoral degree program; for the 3rd year after program approval if a master's or associate degree program; or for the 2nd year after program approval if a graduate or undergraduate certificate. If information is provided for another year, specify (1st) and explain in the program summary attached. Note that revenues and expenditures are not always entirely new; some may be current (see 7d.)

Projected Annual Revenues in FY 23		Projected Annual Expenditures in FY 23	
Unrestricted		Salaries & benefits (faculty and staff)	\$149,074
General Fund	\$	Other (commodities, services, etc.)	\$
Student Tuition & Fees	\$260,080	TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$149,074
Indirect Cost Recovery	\$	One-time Expenditures to Initiate Program (if >\$250,000)	
TVEP or Other (specify):	\$	(These are costs in addition to the annual costs, above.)	
Restricted		Year 1	\$
Federal Receipts	\$	Year 2	\$
TVEP or Other (specify):	\$	Year 3	\$
TOTAL REVENUES	\$260,080	Year 4	\$

Page # of attached summary where the budget is discussed, including initial phase-in: 6-7

7. Budget Status. Items a., b., and c. indicate the source(s) of the general fund revenue specified in item 6. If any grants or contracts will supply revenue needed by the program indicate amount anticipated and expiration date, if applicable.

Revenue source	Continuing	One-time
a. In current legislative budget request	\$	\$
b. Additional appropriation required	\$	\$
c. Funded through new internal UA university redistribution	\$	\$
d. Funds already committed to the program by the UA university ¹	\$225,914	\$
e. Funded all or in part by external funds, expiration date	\$	\$
f. Other funding source (specify type):	\$	\$

8. Facilities. New or substantially (>\$25,000 cost) renovated facilities will be required. Yes No

If yes, discuss the extent, probable cost, and anticipated funding source(s), in addition to those listed in sections 6 and 7 above.

9. Projected Enrollments (headcount of majors). If this is a program discontinuation request, project the teach-out enrollments.

Year 1: 10	Year 2: 15	Year 3: 20	Year 4: 25
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Page number of attached summary where demand for this program is discussed: 4

¹Sometimes the courses required by a new degree or certificate program are already being taught by a UA university, e.g., as a minor requirement. Similarly, other program needs like equipment may already be owned. 100% of the value is indicated even though the course or other resource may be shared.

10. Number² of new TA or faculty hires anticipated (or number of positions eliminated if a program discontinuation):

Graduate TA	0
Adjunct	2
Term	0
Tenure track	0

11. Number² of TAs or faculty to be reassigned:

Graduate TA	0
Adjunct	0
Term	0
Tenure track	0

Former assignment of any reassigned faculty: N/A
For more information see page 9 of the attached summary.

12. Other programs affected by the proposed action, including those at other campuses (please list):

Program Affected	Anticipated Effect
UAA MPH	New cross-enrollment of students in methods and policy courses
UAA MBA	New cross-enrollment of students

Page number of attached summary where effects on other programs are discussed: 7

13. Specialized accreditation or other external program certification needed or anticipated. List all that apply or 'none': NASPAA accreditation will be sought after five years.

14. Aligns with University or campus mission, goals, core themes, and objectives (list): UAA: Discover and disseminate knowledge through teaching, research, and engagement (graduate study with opportunities for research, community engagement, and service learning); serving higher education needs of the state (policy analysts to meet a broad array of state needs). UA Academic Master Plan: Educating a responsible citizenry; increasing collaboration, consultation, and coordination across UA.

Page in attached summary where alignment is discussed: 1-2

15. Aligns with Shaping Alaska's Future themes: Issue F (need for advanced graduate degree in Alaska); Issue D (research and development—promoting expertise and research in energy policy, Arctic policy, and Alaska Native business development).

Page in attached summary where alignment is discussed: 2

16. State needs met by this program (list):

- Need for training budget and policy analysts who understand Alaska's unique environment.
- Providing classroom graduate instruction for military personnel stationed in/near Anchorage.
- Providing cross-over training between policy and business on policy creation, particularly related to energy, natural resources, and Alaska Native corporations.

Page in the attached summary where the state needs to be met are discussed: 3-4

18. Program is initially planned to be: (check all that apply)

- Available to students attending classes at UAA campus(es).
- Available to students via e-Learning
- Partially available to students via e-Learning


Page # in attached summary where e-Learning is discussed: 8-9

17. Yes or No (circle one) If this program is an addition, would program be eligible for State's Eligible Training Provider List program? ([Click here for more information](#))

Submitted by the University of Alaska Anchorage.


Provost

11/14/2020
Date


Chancellor

1-17-20
Date

Consensus support of AC

Not supported by AC

NOTE: UAS Expressed concerns about coordination with UAS MPP on-line program and the MPA offerings

Recommend approval by VPASR

Recommend disapproval by VPASR


UA Vice President for Academic, Students & Research

11/29/2020
Date

²Net FTE (full-time equivalents). For example, if a faculty member will be reassigned from another program, but his/her original program will hire a replacement, there is one net new faculty member. Use fractions if appropriate. Graduate TAs are normally 0.5 FTE. The numbers should be consistent with the revenue/expenditure information provided.

Attachments: Summary of Degree or Certificate Program Proposal

Other (optional)

Revised: 12/12/2017

Master of Public Policy Prospectus

Program Overview

UAA proposes a Master's in Public Policy (MPP) degree. The MPP will share a core program with the current Master's in Public Administration (MPA) degree and provide students with the option to earn an MPP or MPA degree in the College of Business and Public Policy. A number of MPA courses have been updated to align with this new, shared program structure.

The UA System currently lacks a graduate public policy program. UAS offers an MPA online. Both UAA and UAF offer graduate programs that touch on policy, such as the UAA Master of Public Health and the UAF Rural Development and Arctic and Northern Studies programs. However, none of these programs have a sole focus on developing the knowledge and skills students need to be a policy maker, policy analyst, or policy researcher. Nor are they able to provide students with the ability to engage across a broad array of public policy fields or the methodological depth to carry out sophisticated analyses using both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The intention is for the MPP to fill this gap.

The impetus for the program emerged from the Strategic Pathways process. On September 15, 2016, the Strategic Pathways Implementation Team charged UAA with changing its MPA program to an MPP program in conjunction with the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) by June 2017. A committee was formed, and it recommended a joint MPP-MPA program in a report submitted to then-Provost Gingerich and President Johnsen. The committee developed a draft program plan for the new MPP, which called for a sharing of existing or modified MPA courses at the program core, in conjunction with new courses to be developed specifically for the MPP. This curriculum is now developed. CBPP is also coordinating with the UAS online MPA program director to identify synergies between our respective course schedules so students in either program will have a broader selection of courses available.

A director for the two degree programs was hired in 2019. The new director has been involved in developing the curriculum and ensuring that it aligns with requirements for specialized accreditation through the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA). Application for specialized accreditation will take approximately five years.

Mission and Strategic Alignment

The program strongly aligns with UAA's mission to "discover and disseminate knowledge through teaching, research, engagement and creative expression. Located in Anchorage and on community campuses in Southcentral Alaska, UAA is committed to serving the higher education needs of the state, its communities and its diverse peoples. UAA is an open-access university with academic programs leading to occupational endorsements; undergraduate and graduate certificates; and associate, baccalaureate and graduate degrees in a rich, diverse and inclusive environment."

The MPP program will become an accredited graduate professional program that prepares students for a broad array of public, non-profit, academic, and Alaska Native organization positions in Alaska and across the North. The program will collaborate with existing and new partners, including state agencies (e.g., Department of Labor, Department of Education and Early Development), Native policy

organizations (e.g., First Alaskans Institute, Aleut International Association) and policy research institutes (e.g., SRI International, the McDowell Group) to ensure currency in addressing the skills graduates need to be successful policy analysts in the public, academic, Alaska Native and non-profit arenas. This program also will support UAA's goal of moving toward more advanced graduate study; the program can serve as a stepping stone toward doctoral studies for students seeking that pathway. MPP students interested in research careers or experience will have opportunities through ISER and other partners in the community.

The MPP program will actively promote community engagement and service learning, especially through the capstone project or thesis, which typically will directly address a community issue or need in collaboration with a community partner. ISER has worked with students on research such as the impact of the PFD on poverty, and the 6-credit MPP capstone can allow applications from fiscal policy to fisheries, rural development, public and behavioral health, education, natural resource management, and workforce development.

The program aligns with the UA Academic Master Plan goals. Educating a responsible citizenry is at the foundation of a program devoted to policy analysis and policy making skills. Through its connection with ISER faculty, students in the program will have the opportunity to advance their research and scholarship skills. The program will provide a home for lifelong learners as we anticipate a fair number of older and mid-career students returning to the university for a graduate degree. Graduates will be prepared to respond to state needs as the trained decision-makers Alaska requires to carry our state into the future. Finally, the program will offer a mechanism to increase consultation, collaboration, and coordination across UA--specifically through our developing relationships with the UAS MPA program and the UAF Center for Arctic Policy Studies (CAPS).

This proposal addresses key goals of UA Shaping Alaska's Future (SAF). Under the area of Student Achievement and Attainment, Issue F reads: "Alaska has serious unmet needs for advanced degree graduates, and UA has opportunities to meet those needs both internally and through partnerships with other institutions." The new MPP degree will directly address this issue, providing both a new, quality two-year master's degree but also a program that will prepare students interested in pursuing doctoral studies. The state of Alaska lacks academic preparation for serving in government advisory and analyst positions, particularly for roles such as budget analyst, policy director, or government relations. The proposed program can not only train students for such roles at the local, state and federal levels, but provide content relevant to Alaskan policy priorities.

Under the SAF area: Research and Development and Scholarship to Enhance Alaska's Communities and Economic Growth, Issue D reads: "Circumpolar communities are experiencing rapid social and economic transformation due to changes in climate, ecological systems and global interactions. These communities need research-based and indigenous knowledge in order to adapt. UA has the expertise to assist these communities, and to do so must effectively communicate with those who need it." The MPP program will develop faculty expertise in these areas related to energy, environmental, and climate risks, building upon existing backgrounds of ISER and Public Administration faculty. The state of Alaska currently lacks courses in energy policy, while students attending the UAA MPP can take advantage of cooperative agreements to take courses on environmental policy, climate change, and tribal governance from UAF and UAS. Students will explore the issues impacting Alaska and the Circumpolar North such as the

changing climate and expanding global economy in an evolving Arctic policy landscape. They will develop research and analysis skills to find solutions to regional problems.

Student Demand and State Needs

As noted above, there are no graduate offerings that provide all the skills and knowledge provided by an MPP program at UA. The potential local demand for an MPP program is considerable. Our emphasis will be on a face-to-face program that will include evening and weekend course offerings. We anticipate serving: (1) the Anchorage-based professional community, (2) UAA students desiring more locally based graduate programs, and (3) students from outside Alaska looking for graduate opportunities in Arctic policy.

1. Anchorage-based professional community

The Anchorage region has the largest number of public and non-profit program administrators in the state, as well as the majority of individuals working for the state in public policy development and implementation. Anchorage serves as home to most of Alaska's public, private, and non-profit headquarters. It is also home to twelve Alaska Native Corporations' regional headquarters, as well as well as many tribal related organizations. Twenty federal agencies and 40 federal regional offices are located in Anchorage. There are a total of 204 administrative positions at the Municipality of Anchorage and individuals occupying them may be looking to obtain an advanced level degree to further their careers or an advanced degree to help meet minimum requirements. Of those 204 positions, a review by the committee demonstrated 142 associated with MPA, 12 with the MPP, and 50 with both MPA and MPP.

According to the Foraker Group, since 2000 growth in the Alaska nonprofit workforce has continued to outpace other sectors of the economy, growing five times faster than private, for-profit employment. Anchorage has over 80 non-profits. Each of these non-profits has boards of directors, management and non-management personnel and future employees. Anchorage is also home to the state's largest medical establishments, including four hospitals (one public, one military- the VA, one nonprofit, and one private) and other medical institutions and organizations.

As part of the 2015 UAA MPA program development initiative, a series of focus groups were held with current UAA MPA students and alumni. Both groups expressed how they preferred the traditional face-to-face classroom setting over online programs and indicated if they did not attend the UAA MPA, they would be unlikely to seek an online degree in Alaska. The UAA Office of Military & Veteran Student Resources has also confirmed there is a preference for traditional programs for both active duty military personnel and veterans. The current UAA MPA program draws a considerable number of students from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER), the largest military installation in Alaska. Inclusion of security expertise in the MPP (e.g. the addition of Dr Briggs, the program's new director) can attract students from local military installations, where officers are required to earn a master's degree in order to reach field grade rank (O4 and above). Alaska currently has over 22,000 active duty military personnel, with many more veterans residing in the Southcentral region.

2. UAA students desiring more locally based graduate programs

In the spring semester of 2017, the Strategic Pathways report committee sent out a survey to current UAA undergraduates primarily majoring in the social sciences, i.e. political science, justice, economics, public health, and sociology, to gauge potential interest in a graduate level public policy program. Forty-four students responded to the survey.

About half of the respondents indicated they were “definitely yes” interested in pursuing a master’s degree and in completing that degree in Alaska. A little over half were also interested in the idea of a UAA master’s degree in public policy. When asked what policy areas interested them, social policy, crime/law/public policy, health policy, and environmental policy were the most cited. These topics are relevant to the proposed concentrations in Alaska and Arctic policy.

3. National and international demand

The course offerings proposed for the MPP program are well suited to capture U.S. and foreign students because the academic and practically oriented skill sets provided by the program may be employed universally. The program will also be designed to address the growing national and international demand for Arctic policy content and logically fits within CBPP’s efforts to foster international collaborations such as the UAA-Nankai partnership. The ongoing Strategic Pathways effort provides a unique opportunity to introduce a more relevant master’s degree that meets contemporary trends in policy analysis schools and professional needs, as well as preparing for future developments.

The proposed focus of the program expertise, in coordination with faculty at UAF and UAS, on Alaskan and Arctic policy and energy policy, would present a unique degree program for students both in Alaska, from the lower 48, and from abroad, who are interested in the emerging topics and challenges in the region. Currently, students wishing to study applied Arctic policy must attend programs in places like Washington state, Canada, or Europe. There is increased interest in Arctic policy from countries such as China and South Korea, as well, where studying in Alaska could be a logical choice (see:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/24/climate/china-arctic.html>;

[https://www.nato.int/docu/review/2019/Also-in-2019/the-changing-shape-of-arctic-](https://www.nato.int/docu/review/2019/Also-in-2019/the-changing-shape-of-arctic-security/EN/index.htm)

[security/EN/index.htm](https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/chinas-growing-arctic-presence) and <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/chinas-growing-arctic-presence>)

Enrollment Projections

Student enrollment numbers are based upon community surveys, outreach, enrollment for the current MPA, and are extrapolated based upon the fact that this would be the only degree of its kind in the region- the closest MPP program with Arctic expertise is in Calgary. The impacts of state politics and budget may affect these projections.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Enrollment Headcount	10	15	20	25

Student Opportunities and Student Success

As described earlier, this program fills a gap in academic offerings for the UA System. We anticipate three types of students entering the program:

- 1) Recent college graduates interested in pursuing a career in policy analysis or research in public, NGO or Alaska Native entities;
- 2) Recent college graduates interested in preparation for advanced graduate students in public policy (e.g., a master's degree that prepares them for a PhD); and
- 3) Employees of public, NGO, Alaska Native or policy research organizations interested in advancing their skills and careers via advanced training in policy analysis and research.

As noted above, there is demand in state, nationally and internationally for employees with the skills that an MPP degree provides.

The program will require that students engage in research as part of their capstone coursework and students will either complete a community engaged research project or an applied policy topic research thesis in order to complete their degree.

With ISER faculty members providing courses and research opportunities, students will have unique opportunities to engage in meaningful research on critical public policy issues facing Alaska and the Circumpolar North. We expect that this will add significantly to the other supports available to graduate students at UAA.

Current Capacity and Quality

CBPP will cooperate with ISER to provide faculty for the MPP. The current MPA program has five dedicated, full-time faculty members teaching in the program, all with PhDs and experienced in their respective fields. The program can also draw upon related CBPP faculty (e.g., Alaska Native Business minor) and a pool of experienced adjunct faculty from the community.

Students will have access to the CBPP Student Advising Center, as well as experienced graduate program and faculty advisors. All new students will be assigned a faculty advisor to develop and approve graduate study plans. In addition, all CBPP students have access to the college computer labs, and all CBPP courses fund this through a course technology fee.

The UAA Consortium Library, other UA libraries and the state library system possess policy-related texts and background materials. The program will not require new library resources, but rather build on already existing resources, including the SAGE Research Methods database, which contains numerous free-to-students resources for supporting public policy research and analysis.

The program will work with the UAA Business & Government Information Librarian to identify existing resources for the program, including materials in the ARLIS, Government Documents and archives collections at UAA. The program also will introduce students to online state and federal databases and repositories that will support both their classwork and subsequent professional work.

For the focus areas, Arctic journals such as Polar Geography, ARCTIC and Polar Record are all available, and there is a library liaison for that topic. In addition, ISER has an online catalog of Alaska policy research extending back 55 years.

Current subscriptions include journals such as:

- Journal of Public Policy
- Journal of Policy Analysis and Management
- Policy Analysis
- Perspectives on Local Public Finance and Public Policy
- Politics and Policy
- Political Research Quarterly
- Policy Studies Journal
- Public Policy and Administration
- Congressional Quarterly Researcher
- Research in Social Problems and Public Policy
- Energy Policy
- Environmental Policy and Law

Resource Implications

UAA received strategic funds from the UA System, including base funding for a director to oversee the MPA and MPP and three years of start-up funding. The new director, Chad Briggs, started at UAA in August 2019.

The director works in Rasmuson Hall along with the MPA faculty members and other CBPP faculty. MPP courses will be taught in Rasmuson Hall as are MPA courses already.

In addition, the provost has committed \$7500 to allow the MPP program to bring in an external consultant to help UAA develop a plan for meeting the requirements for accreditation from NASPAA - the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration.

The program anticipates the future need to obtain funds for the accreditation process, currently estimated at \$10-20,000 per year. This expense will be recurring as accreditation is an ongoing process with a 7-year cycle. The accreditation process and cost is detailed in the "Strategic Pathways Report: UAA Master in Public Policy and Master in Public Administration" submitted to Provost Gingerich and Vice President White in 2017.

The program otherwise builds on existing faculty appointments at UAA. The MPP degree includes courses already offered in the MPA program as well as new courses developed specifically for the degree. At least three ISER faculty members will have teaching assignments in the MPP program and as it grows ISER is likely to have more faculty involved. Faculty teaching in the MPA program (which includes ISER faculty) will continue to teach those courses, and the new director will teach one course each semester either for the MPP or one of the courses that counts for both the MPA and MPP. Like other graduate programs at UAA, we will draw on faculty members from other departments and ISER faculty not teaching in the program to serve on thesis committees.

Affected Programs

As proposed in Strategic Pathways, ISER is playing an important role in the development of the MPP program. The program will afford ISER faculty members the opportunity to make their applied Alaska research experience more visible and relevant through teaching. Individual ISER research projects have the potential to intersect with MPP capstone projects and/or theses and MPP students could potentially work as research assistants on ISER projects. ISER faculty members have a wealth of experience in economic research, Alaska policy issues, and communication with policymakers that is currently underutilized at the university. ISER's involvement in the MPP program will provide an additional pathway to meeting its mission of enhancing "the well-being of Alaskans and others, through non-partisan research that helps people understand social and economic systems and supports informed public and private decision-making." Through UAA's MPP program, ISER will be able to help train Alaska's next generation of policy analysts and policy makers.

The MPP will also interact closely with the existing MPA program, with students in both programs taking similar core courses, including a joint introductory course (601). MPP students will also have access to existing policy and administration courses at UAS and UAF, and electives can be encouraged from other campuses when classroom options are not available at UAA.

MPA students at UAA have traditionally had access to courses in Public Health (MPH), and MPP will likewise be able to draw upon such courses for skills such as research methodologies and program evaluation. As joint MPP/MPH programs are common in other universities, this is a possible future path should both programs enjoy suitable enrollment.

The MPP and MPA also have overlaps with the Alaska Native Business minor at CBPP (Professor William Hensley), which provides instruction on management of and policies related to Alaska Native Corporations, many of which are based in Anchorage. A course such as A401 (Alaska Native Corporation Business Management) would be available as an elective for MPP students.

CBPP students in the MBA program will be eligible to take MPP courses, particularly A601 (Introduction to Public Administration and Policy), A650 (Alaska Policy Studies) and A651 (Issues in Arctic Policy).

Program Accreditation and Special Certifications

We expect that the MPP program will go up for accreditation under [NASPAA \(Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration\)](#) in five to seven years. The timeline for accreditation is long-term, as minimum requirements for applying include a program being in existence for at least five years, and with five full-time faculty dedicated to the program. As stated above, the university has allocated budget to be used to fund a consultant for the accreditation process, and the annual cost of maintaining accredited status is also taken into account.

As a "gold standard" for the field, the long-term viability and reputation of the program depends upon striving for the standards set out by NASPAA.

Learning objectives for the MPP are aligned with NASPAA, with the addition of policy context for the state of Alaska and Arctic region.

Program Student Learning Outcomes and Plan for Assessment

The MPP learning outcomes, assessment program, and course structure are designed with NASPAA standards in mind. Upon completion of the program, students will be able to:

1. Lead and manage in public policymaking and governance
2. Apply, participate in, participate in and contribute to the public policy process
3. Create and apply methods and tools to analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions across a broad set of policy issues
4. Articulate a public service perspective to engaging in public policy work
5. Communicate and interact productively with diverse communities and institutions
6. Analyze the Alaska and Arctic public policy and economic contexts and how to work successfully within them

The assessment plan is modelled after similar small, state university programs, where NASPAA expectations include a periodic focus on one of the six learning outcomes over a three-year period, with each outcome becoming the primary focus for one semester at a time, following initial baseline assessments at the start of the program. The assessments include course-level evaluations by instructors of how well each student has met learning outcomes matched with each course. Program-level assessments will also be made according to course feedback, capstone research applicability, and post-graduate surveys of alumni. The evaluations will help judge how well course methods, delivery and assignments are designed for non-traditional students, distance learners, and those from different educational backgrounds.

Schedule for Implementation of the Program

Critical milestone	Date
Admission opens	March 2020
First students enrolled/classes begin	August 2020
Assessments begin	Fall 2020
First graduates	Spring 2022
NASPAA accreditation application begins	Fall 2025

E-learning Options

MPP courses will be offered in a variety of formats, and as with the MPA courses, will be offered either at night or in a hybrid format, allowing those working full-time to attend. The in-person formats take advantage of the greater population of the Southcentral region, and are a requirement for some funding

mechanisms (e.g. military education). When fully running with both the MPA and MPP, allowance will need to be made for course spacing (i.e. using a 5:30-8:15 slot four days a week would quickly create too many conflicts), which hybrid formats allow for, and is a successful model for other CBPP programs. The CBPP policy for its graduate MBA program states:

“Our MBA is designed around an 8:00am-5:00pm work schedule to accommodate your current employment. Immense flexibility in degree design coupled with interdisciplinary electives, allows you to build a degree relevant to your profession and interests.”

In addition, students will have the option to take equivalent courses from the MPA program at UAS, and online policy electives at UAF.

Faculty and Staff

The MPP will draw upon existing full-time and adjunct faculty for the existing MPA program, who collectively have extensive experience with Alaska policy issues at the state and local levels, including Alaska Native communities. The overlap between the MPA and MPP allows use of expertise in financial management (budget policy), program evaluation, research and data methods, and policy courses in Alaska and Arctic policy governance. The new director also brings expertise in energy and environmental policy, security and defense policy, and comparative policy.

The MPP will also draw on the public policy expertise of ISER faculty members. Drs. Marie Lowe and Diane Hirshberg will be appointed to teach in the MPP program. Dr. Hirshberg studies education policy, Arctic policy and Indigenous education issues and has an extensive background in public policy research. Dr. Lowe is an applied anthropologist focusing on cultural dimensions of resource management, economic development, and social policy with deep experience in youth policy issues. ISER faculty will also contribute expertise in economic analysis and advanced quantitative research methods as well as opportunities for students to work on policy research projects.

As the program attracts students, the course requirements for the MPP allow space for elective courses that dovetail with the needs of Alaska students, such as energy policy, transport policy, Alaska Native Regional Corporations, and defense/homeland security policy.

Pending resolution of University of Alaska budget issues, there are two open faculty lines, one with the MPA program and one at ISER. These would be filled via a national search, and focused on providing research and teaching directly applicable to the MPP program.

Master of Public Policy Catalog Copy

Admission Requirements

- Complete the [Admission Requirements for Graduate Degrees](#).
- Complete a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution in the US or foreign equivalent, preferably in a policy discipline, e.g., political science, justice, economics, sociology, anthropology, environmental studies, public health.
- Complete a minimum of 12 credits in baccalaureate level Microeconomics (3 credits), Macroeconomics (3 credits), Political Science (3 credits), and Descriptive/Inferential Statistics (3 credits) with a minimum grade of B. (*Provisional admission is possible if this criterion is not met.*)
- Submit the following additional documentation:
 1. Minimum B grade point average (3.0 on a 4.0 scale) or equivalent at an accredited college or university, or 3.5 or equivalent for graduate-level work.
 2. Have a combined undergraduate GPA plus GRE Analytic score totaling 7.0 or higher. The GRE test is not required for students having already earned a graduate degree from a regionally accredited institution in the United States or foreign equivalent, provided they have the minimum GPA listed above.
 3. A "Statement of Intent," two to three pages long, outlining prior work and/or policy experience, and academic and career objectives.
 4. An academic or professional writing sample.
 5. A resume listing education and employment history, particularly any previous policy experience. Please include three references on the resume.

Acceptance into the program is based on the prospective student's overall credentials as well as the availability of appropriate faculty for student practica and/or research.

Applicants without the minimum credits of undergraduate coursework in economics, political science, and statistics or who have other important deficiencies identified in their undergraduate training may be provisionally admitted to the MPP program. Provisionally-admitted students are notified of identified deficiencies and required to complete leveling coursework at UAA, normally within a period of one year, before admission to regular status in the program is conferred. In some cases, deficiencies can be made up at another academic institution. Provisionally-admitted students cannot receive graduate teaching assistantships.

Advising

Prospective graduate students are strongly advised to contact potential research/advisor faculty at an early stage of their admission process. An initial advisor is assigned to students based on interests and other academic criteria.

Graduation Requirements

- Satisfy the [General University Requirements for Graduate Degrees](#).
- Complete the program requirements below.

Academic Requirements

A full-time student in the MPP program is expected to complete a minimum of 9 credits (or 6 in the final semester of coursework) applicable to the program per semester with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0. Part-time students must complete at least 3 credits per semester and maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0. Students who fail to satisfy provisional-admission conditions may be removed from the program. Leaves of absence may not total more than four semesters.

Code	Title	Credits
Complete the following courses:		
PADM A601	Introduction to Public Administration	3
PADM A604	Research Methods in Public Administration	3
PADM A606	The Policymaking Process	3
PADM A628	Public Financial Management	3
ECON A625	Economics and Public Policy	3
PADM A632	Public Policy Analysis	3
Or PADM A688	Program Evaluation and Performance Measurement	
PADM A650	Alaska Policy Studies	3
PADM A651	Issues in Arctic Policy	3
PADM A660	Public Policy Capstone A	3
PADM A661	Public Policy Capstone B	3
Advisor-approved graduate electives		6
Total		36

Candidacy Requirements

See UAA [Advancement to Candidacy](#) requirements. A student advances to candidacy by doing the following:

1. Select a graduate studies committee by the end of the second semester of graduate study.
2. Submit an official [graduate studies plan](#) (GSP) by the end of the first semester of full-time graduate study.
3. Complete at least 30 semester credits of non-thesis/non-practicum coursework applicable to the MPP program.
4. Demonstrate research or statistical competence needed to complete the degree program (by earning a passing grade of B or higher in PADM A604 or pre-approved equivalent), as approved by a student's graduate studies committee.
5. Receive from the graduate studies committee approval of a thesis/practicum prospectus.

Master of Public Policy New Course Descriptions

PADM A650: Alaska Policy Studies

Employs analysis and problem-solving skills to gain an understanding of Alaska's dynamic, contemporary, and unique policy issues. Topics include the state's government structure and political environment, economy, federal influences, Alaska Native perspectives, and Arctic futures.

PADM A651: Issues in Arctic Policy

Provides an overview of current Arctic policy issues from sustainable development to national security, and introduces major actors and governance structures. Examines the rapid political, social, economic and climate changes occurring across the circumpolar north.

PADM A660: Public Policy Capstone A

Synthesizes Master of Public Policy graduate level course work through a final capstone project. Refines student knowledge and skills to identify a client, define a topic, and conduct research. Integrates research, critical thinking, and communication skills as well as experiential and theoretical learning.

PADM A661: Public Policy Capstone B

Synthesizes Master of Public Policy graduate level course work through a final capstone project. Second part of the capstone experience, this course focuses on translating research data into a public presentation and publication, and how to demonstrate leadership in policy creation.

January 13, 2020

Regent Sheri Buretta, Chair
c/o Brandi Berg, Executive Officer
University of Alaska Board of Regents
PO Box 755300
Fairbanks, AK 99775

Dear Chair Buretta:

I write today as a former Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Administration (DOA) to support the proposed Masters of Public Policy, and its emphasis on quantitative and economic analysis skills. I served as Deputy Commissioner and Commissioner of DOA for four years between 2015 and 2018. In my time at DOA, I saw a real need for more programs at the University of Alaska (UA) to train our workforce in public administration and public policy with an emphasis on analysis.

Because DOA has the Divisions of Retirement and Benefits, Finance, Shared Services, Personnel and Labor Relations, Shared Services, and Internet Technology, DOA is often tasked with administering very large programs and systems that affect every state department.

In my time at DOA, we completed the implementation of IRIS, the State of Alaska system for accounting, financial, procurement, payroll and human resource management, and we started and completed an \$8 million system upgrade at the Division of Motor Vehicles. As I left the department, DOA was in the beginning stages of a multi-million dollar upgrade to our state retirement system—a project that will take at least five years to plan and implement. In addition to the major projects that DOA directly administers, DOA also advises and assists in implementation of many other projects to benefit specific agencies.

For every project of this size and scope, the state needs analysts to assist in preparation of Requests for Proposals and for needs assessments. They need analysts to review data and performance and the return on investment for all projects. Every project needs an analyst as the project is defined, funded, and completed—a process that sometimes takes several years.

Chair Sheri Buretta

January 13, 2020

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One of the biggest hurdles in implementing and planning needed projects for the State of Alaska is the ability to hire needed policy analysts. The state often relies on Outside contractors because there are not enough analysts living and working in Alaska. Because many, if not most, of the big projects in the state take several years to implement, we often saw a revolving door of analysts on projects—this can be a disruption to business.

The proposed Masters of Public Policy with an emphasis on quantitative and economic analysis skills will help prepare Alaskans for important work in Alaska. Those of us who have lived and worked in Alaska for many years know that Alaska is a unique place to do business. Having an analyst on a project who understands Alaska's needs, our economy, the size of our service area, and how our people live and work is essential. There simply are not enough of those people living and working in Alaska today.

I encourage the Board of Regents to look at this proposed program favorably and to support it. I think the return to Alaska's economy and workforce will be invaluable.

If I can answer any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at 907-240-2088 or LeslieRidle@gmail.com.

Sincerely,



Leslie Ridle

Former Commissioner

Alaska Department of Administration

January 12, 2020

To Whom it May Concern:

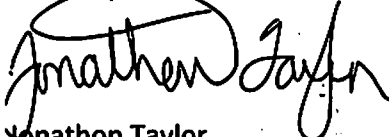
I am writing to support the proposed Masters in Public Policy program at the University of Alaska Anchorage. As an alumnus of UAA, a supporter of the University, and a person who is very supportive of the University's overall mission to educate Alaskans, I believe this type of program is needed in this state and would help move our knowledge and policy-making into a more data-driven and research-based direction.

The proposed MPP would focus on Alaska and Arctic-policy issues, further developing regionally specific expertise of benefit to a variety of stakeholders in both the public and private sector. In the absence of this program, those wishing to pursue an MPP must do so either via distance or out-of-state. While graduates of those programs may indeed stay in the Last Frontier and use their advanced knowledge to help build a stronger Alaska, the programs from which they graduate lack studies in and awareness of the issues facing Alaska and the Arctic. Housing this type of program at UAA would allow prospective students to engage in applied research that meets our local, regional, and state needs on critical policy issues that face us here and now.

During times of fiscal uncertainty, it is more important than ever that we continue developing future generations of Alaskans. For the third year in a row, Alaska's population has declined – this troubling trend indicates that many Alaskans simply cannot find good enough reasons to remain here. Creation of the MPP would not only provide an incentive for Alaskans to stay in Alaska, but would also attract and retain those seeking to contribute to building a wealth of knowledge that can be used to help solve the problems we face. We have excellent faculty and existing structures to make this program functional, and putting them to good use through an MPP program would be of immense benefit to Alaskans.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jonathon Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

Jonathon Taylor

B.A., Political Science; '16