

**Master of Arts in Public Leadership Program
College of Arts & Sciences, University of San Francisco
Assessment Report for Academic Year 2022-2023
Due Date: November 3, 2023**

1. Identifying Information

Name of program and degree type: Master of Arts in Public Leadership (MAPL)

Type of Program: Graduate Degree

Submitters:

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2. Mission Statement

The mission of the Master of Arts in Public Leadership program is to foster a learning community where service-oriented students from across the ideological spectrum, particularly veterans and military families, together with faculty, can build on their leadership and public service experience, engage in productive political dialogue, and emerge as ethical and strategic public leaders. The curriculum blends theory and practice and equips students for a Second Service in public office, legislative affairs, campaign management, advocacy, and civic leadership.

This mission statement has not been updated since the last assessment cycle.

3. Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

- 1. Demonstrate advanced skills in writing, research, statistics, analysis, and oral presentation suitable for political and policy professionals*
- 2. Comprehend theoretical models and concepts of democratic participation and accountability, as well as current policy challenges, and demonstrate the capacity to apply these lessons in real-world settings*
- 3. Apply knowledge gained in the classroom to various political settings in the community*
- 4. Understand the nature of political power, mechanisms for aggregating interests, and how to influence the process in an ethical manner*
- 5. Interact with politicians as well as professionals from fields including campaigns, advocacy, community organizing, strategic communications, public policy, and public service*

The PLOs have not been updated since the last academic cycle.

4. Current Curricular Map

Since the last assessment, no new courses were added. Current curricular maps have been submitted with this assessment, and can be viewed at the following links:

- [PLOxILO Curricular Map January 2021](#)
- [PLOxCourse Curricular Map January 2021](#)

5. Assessment Schedule

The following annual assessment schedule is flexible and may be modified based upon our findings, but in any case will enable us to comprehensively assess our PLOs prior to our first Academic Program Review (APR), which we expect to occur in 2030.

- 2020 - Remote/Distance Learning
- 2021 - PLO 1 (Direct)
- 2022 - PLO 3 & 5 (Indirect)
- 2023 - PLO 2 (Direct)
- 2024 - PLO 4 (Direct)
- 2025 - PLO 1 (TBD)
- 2026 - PLO 3 (Direct)
- 2027 - PLO 5 (Direct)
- 2028 - PLO 2 (TBD)
- 2029 - PLO 4 (TBD)
- 2030 - APR

The AY 2022-2023 assessment will focus on PLO 2.

6. Description of Assessment Methodology

PLO-2: Comprehend theoretical models and concepts of democratic participation and accountability, as well as current policy challenges, and demonstrate the capacity to apply these lessons in real-world settings

For purposes of review, this learning outcome was split into two segments. The first segment focuses on student learning of democratic participation and accountability and the second focuses on current policy challenges. A distinct rubric to be applied to relevant student work was created for each segment.

Segment 1

*Comprehend theoretical models and concepts of democratic participation and accountability;
Demonstrate the capacity to apply these lessons in real-world settings*

	1: Mastery	2: Developing	3: Introductory	4: Insufficient	N/A
Understands fundamental structures of democratic participation at multiple levels of government.	Advanced understanding of government structures Uses different formats to inform strategy in creative ways	Solid understanding of government structures Can recite how different formats impact strategy	Emerging understanding of government structures Can articulate differences in process, cannot connect to strategy impacts	Limited understanding of government structures, cannot differentiate between levels of government	
Calculate likely electorate, likely voters, and win number. Assess if numbers are realistic based on historical trends and contemporary factors.	Can calculate likely electorate, likely voters, and win number Provide advanced viability assessment in a real community case study	Can calculate likely electorate, likely voters, and win number Provide basic viability assessment in a real community case study	Understands the formulaic principles to calculate likely electorate, likely voters, and win number Cannot assess viability in a real context	Cannot calculate likely electorate, likely voters, or win number Does not understand what likely electorate, likely voters, or win number are	
Identify voter priorities and integrate into campaign and	Advanced understanding of using research tools to understand voter priorities Creative	Strong understanding of using research tools to understand voter priorities Detailed	Basic understanding of using research tools to understand voter priorities Limited	Cannot utilize research tools to understand voter priorities Does not use voter priorities to	

messaging plan	implementation into campaign strategy	implementation into campaign strategy	implementation into campaign strategy	inform campaign strategy	
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Segment 2

Comprehend theoretical models and concepts of current policy challenges; Demonstrate the capacity to apply these lessons in real-world settings

	1: Mastery	2: Developing	3: Introductory	4: Insufficient	N/A
Identify a real societal problem, understand the context, and connect it with public policy solutions.	<p>Identify a real societal problem</p> <p>Connect rich historical and contextual roots to viable public policy solutions</p> <p>Draw on diverse sources and perspectives</p>	<p>Identify a real societal problem</p> <p>Connect with some historical context and viable public policy solutions</p> <p>Draw on standard sources and perspectives</p>	<p>Identify a real societal problem</p> <p>Limited understanding of historical context, present public policy solutions with limited viability</p> <p>Draw on limited sources and perspectives</p>	<p>Unable to clearly identify a real societal problem</p> <p>Present a societal problem without historical context, no solution offered</p> <p>Draw on very limited sources and perspectives</p>	
Identify stakeholders (ex. government, community partners, individuals) and their motives, powers, and	<p>Map the stakeholders across sectors</p> <p>Identify stakeholders' role in the challenge and offer creative ways to</p>	<p>Map the majority of stakeholders across sectors</p> <p>Partially identify stakeholders' role in the challenge and</p>	<p>Limited map of stakeholders across sectors</p> <p>Haphazard ability to identify stakeholders' role in the</p>	<p>Unable to identify more than one stakeholder in issue</p> <p>Lacks understanding of their involvement</p>	

responsibilities to address a societal problem.	engage them in a solution Address the motives, powers, and responsibilities of all stakeholders	ways to engage them in a solution Address the motives, powers, or responsibilities of some stakeholders	challenge and ways to engage them in a solution Identify the motives, powers, or responsibilities of some stakeholders	in the issue	
Weigh possible solutions, taking into account both diverse research as well as the specific needs of the community.	Weighs the strengths and weaknesses of various policy solutions Puts into dialogue both research and best practices as well as the specific needs of the community Addresses the “human element” of the challenge	Weighs the strengths and weaknesses of a policy solution Considers both research and best practices as well as the specific needs of the community Acknowledges the “human element” of the challenge	Includes the strengths and weaknesses of a policy solution Consider research and best practices. Can identify the specific needs of the community Has limited understanding of the “human element” of the challenge	Does not consider multiple sides of a policy solution Fails to consider external research and best practices. Cannot identify the specific needs of the community Does not consider the “human element” of the challenge	

Samples of student work were randomly selected to measure against these rubrics.

For Segment 1 of PLO 2, samples were taken from a single assignment from three different classes. The classes and assignments included the following:

1. MPL 624 Survey Research Methods - Final Memo: Write a 3-page memo based on a national poll making a case about who is better positioned in a Trump-Biden rematch.

2. MPL 607 Grassroots Mobilization - Precinct Assessment/Ladder of Engagement:
Calculate a win number and outreach needs for a chosen district, based on the vote deficit and then select one community that to organize and build an engagement pipeline that would specifically appeal to this population.
3. MPL 601 Proseminar in Applied Politics - Final Plan: Choose a specific campaign and then write a detailed campaign plan designed for that particular election

These assignments represent a range of complexity and approaches to the learning outcome. Students take these classes at various points in their curriculum giving us insight into their growth. Three random students samples were selected for review for each assignment.

For Segment 2 of PLO 2, samples were taken from two assignments from one class. The class and assignments included the following:

1. MPL 608 Public Policy Challenges - Policy Memo: A policy memo on a domestic or foreign policy issue, addressed to a specific US policy maker, that outlines the issue, its background and importance, and lays out 2-3 policy options while promoting one specific solution.
2. MPL 608 Public Policy Challenges - Local Policy Deep Dive (Final Assignment):
Research a real-world local policy issue that was recently addressed at the county level or below. The report of your research and interviews should include: how the problem or issue was identified, what challenges were faced by those striving to address it, how the challenges were addressed or overcome, and how the issue was finally resolved.

This class is the primary policy course in the MAPL program. The policy memo is the first piece of graded work in the class and the Local Policy Deep Dive is the final assignment. By selecting these two assignments we aim to examine student progression in this course in particular. Three random students samples were selected for review for each assignment.

Segment 1 - Student Work Reviewed

MPL 624 Survey Research Methods: Final Memo, student 4, 10, 14

MPL 607 Grassroots Mobilization: Precinct Assessment/Ladder of Engagement, student 4, 9, 18

MPL 601 Proseminar in Applied Politics: Final Plan, student 2, 7, 8

	1: Mastery	2: Developing	3: Introductory	4: Insufficient
Understands fundamental structures of democratic participation at	MPL 624: student 10	MPL 624: student 4, 14		

multiple levels of government.	MPL 601: student 2, 7 3/9	MPL 607: Student 4, 9, 18 MPL 601: student 8 6/9		
Calculate likely electorate, likely voters, and win number. Assess if numbers are realistic based on historical trends and contemporary factors.	MPL 624: student 10 MPL 607: Student 4, 9 MPL 601: student 7 4/9	MPL 624: student 4, 14 MPL 607: Student 18 MPL 601: student 2, 8 5/9		
Identify voter priorities and integrate into campaign and messaging plan	MPL 624: student 14 MPL 601: student 7, 8 3/9	MPL 624: student 4, 10 MPL 607: Student 9 MPL 601: Student 2 4/9	MPL 607: Student 4, 18 2/9	

Segment 2 - Student Work Reviewed

MPL 608: Policy Memo, Student 3, 11, 15

MPL 608: Local Policy Deep Dive, Student 1, 11, 13

	1: Mastery	2: Developing	3: Introductory	4: Insufficient
Identify a real societal problem, understand the	MPL 608 Local Policy: Student 1, 13	MPL 608 Memo: Student 3, 11	MPL 608 Memo: Student 13 1/6	

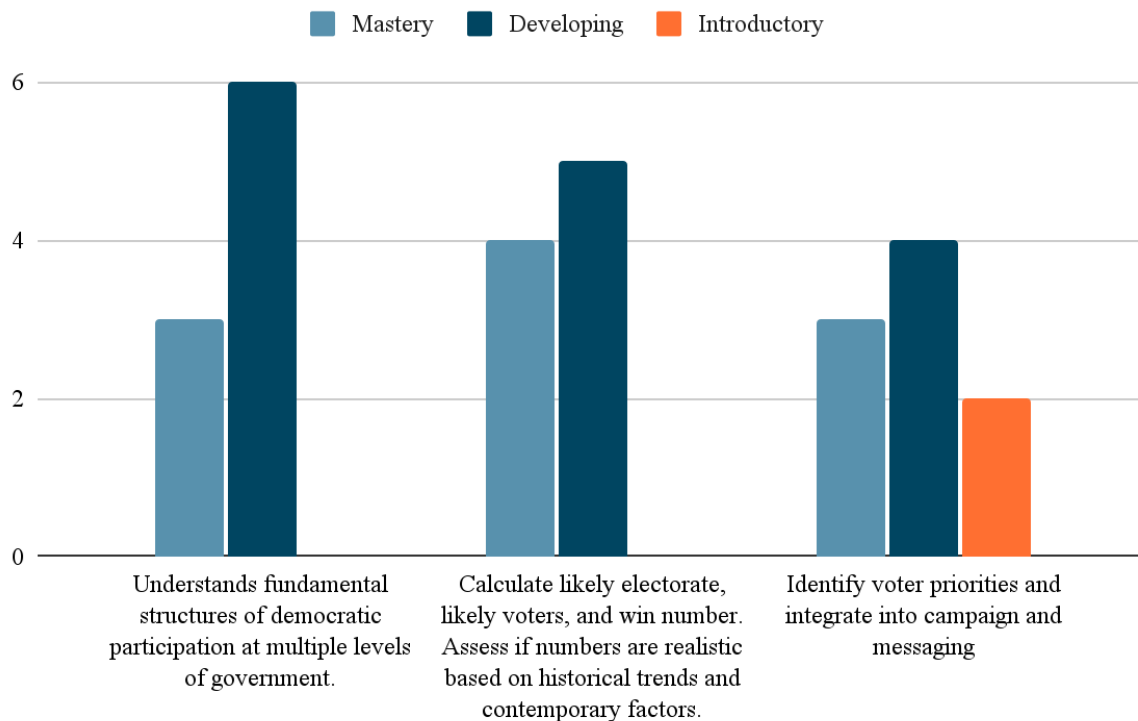
context, and connect it with public policy solutions.	2/6	MPL 608 Local Policy: Student 11 3/6		
Identify stakeholders (ex. government, community partners, individuals) and their motives, powers, and responsibilities to address a societal problem.	MPL 608 Local Policy: Student 13 1/6	MPL 608 Memo: Student 3, 11, 13 MPL 608 Local Policy: Student 1 4/6	MPL 608 Local Policy: Student 11 1/6	
Weigh possible solutions, taking into account both diverse research as well as the specific needs of the community.	MPL 608 Local Policy: Student 1, 13 2/6	MPL 608 Memo: Student 3, 11, 13 MPL 608 Local Policy: Student 11 4/6		

7. Discussion of Assessment Results

In reviewing student work from three classes to assess the first segment of Program Learning Outcome 2 (Comprehend theoretical models and concepts of democratic participation and accountability; Demonstrate the capacity to apply these lessons in real-world settings) we generally found growth in student learning from more introductory courses (such as MPL 607 Grassroots Mobilization and Voter Targeting) to more advanced coursework (MPL 601 Proseminar in Applied Politics).

We were pleased to see that students progressed from an introductory or developing understanding of assessing an electorate and building strategic outreach plans in beginning courses to applying these principles in original strategy in their communities in more advanced courses, indicating greater mastery of this learning outcome.

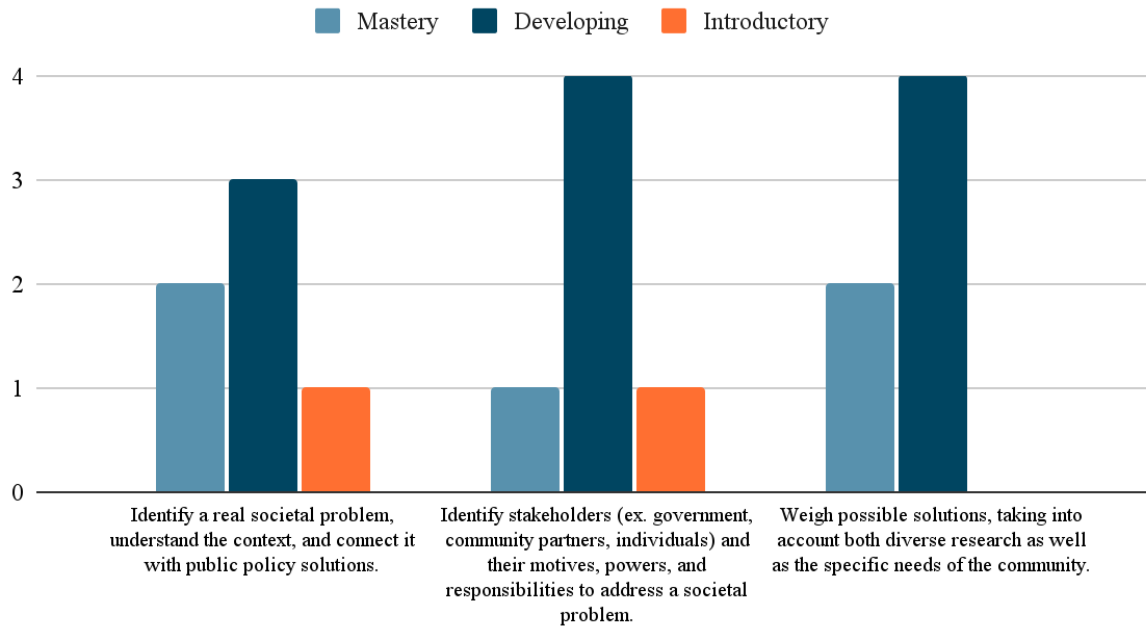
Student Performance Rating - PLO 2 Segment 1



We reviewed student work from the beginning and end of the primary policy course in the MAPL program (MPL 608 Public Policy Challenges) to assess the second segment of Program Learning Outcome 2 (Comprehend theoretical models and concepts of current policy challenges; Demonstrate the capacity to apply these lessons in real-world settings.) While other courses engage with public policy, the bulk of the curricular emphasis takes place in this course. While there was improvement in student work throughout the course, we are concerned about the lower level of mastery displayed in the reviewed work from this course. MPL 608 Public Policy Challenges is the primary course focused on current policy challenges and while students are certainly in the developing stages, we would hope to see higher levels of work and greater growth in student performance.

In order to gain a better understanding of student learning on this PLO segment we plan to review policy related coursework and components in other courses such as MPL 602 Writing for Public Leadership and MPL 605 Civil Military Relations and Public Leadership.

Student Performance Rating - PLO 2 Segment 2



8. Integrating Assessment Results into the Curriculum

We are heartened by the student competencies around understanding and implementing models of democratic participation and accountability and do not plan to make any adjustments to curriculum at this time.

In order to strengthen student competency on understanding and implementing models of current policy challenges we plan to take a multi-pronged approach.

We will:

- Address course standards with MPL 608 Public Policy Challenges faculty. Encourage providing students with additional fundamental lessons on policy writing to push them to a higher level of thinking and analysis.
- Discuss the need for additional policy analysis in the program with faculty as a whole. Support faculty in making adjustments to existing curriculum to increase policy practice in their courses, particularly in regards to stakeholder identification and balanced analysis of policy proposals.
- Partner with additional programs and departments at USF including UPA/MPA and USF in DC/Politics to build more cross listed policy related electives to offer students more breadth and depth of course options in this area.