

Master of Arts in Public Leadership Program
College of Arts & Sciences, University of San Francisco
Assessment Report for Academic Year 2021-2022
Due Date: November 8, 2022

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.

- 2021 - PLO-1
- 2022 - PLO-3, PLO-5
- 2023 - PLO-2
- 2024 - PLO-4

The AY 2021-2022 assessment will focus on PLO-3 and PLO-5. The reintroduction of in-person sessions gave us a unique opportunity to intentionally reintroduce our students to our traditional hybrid format and we chose to utilize this year to examine how our curriculum in the classroom is interacting with the world outside of it.

6. Description of Assessment Methodology

To assess PLO-3 and PLO-5 we needed a macro view of students' work and experience across the duration of their time in the MA in Public Leadership program. The assessment tool we used in the past, the assessment to review PLO performance within student Capstones, was too limited for this assessment.

To assess PLO-3 (*Apply knowledge gained in the classroom to various political settings in the community*) we reviewed student's public facing work, tracked through Google News Alerts and self-reported via student and alumni surveys.

The Google News Alert data set can be found [here](#).

The survey that was sent to students, alumni, and former students can be found [here](#).

To assess PLO-5 (*Interact with politicians as well as professionals from fields including campaigns, advocacy, community organizing, strategic communications, public policy, and public service*) we collected data on guest speakers in classes from all program Canvas courses and syllabi, the program events calendar, and event invitations.

The professional interaction data set can be found [here](#).

7. Discussion of Assessment Results

PLO-3

In our review of media alerts for AY 21-22, we found that 23 students and alumni were mentioned in print 235 times. This was tracked via Google News Alerts and may be undercounting articles written by students or alumni and may double count mentions in syndicated or wire articles. 217 of these articles mention or are by 9 students.

These articles represent the public work of our students and alumni and include stories about their political campaigns, political appointments, issue advocacy, non-profit work, and community leadership. It also includes pieces they have written in business and political thought leadership, editorials, and articles about veteran and military families.

Some of our students are very visible and active, putting working in high profile roles and intentionally building public profiles. The majority of these articles are about a handful of students but we know through surveys and personal testimony that other students are utilizing what they've learned in the program in public settings as well. This methodology limited the scope of what we were able to see in student's work. An expanded survey of student's public social media posts would have given us a larger understanding of how they are applying lessons learned into the real world.

In our survey of students and alumni, we received responses from 9 out of 43 currently enrolled students (21% response rate) and from 5 out of 45 alumni (11% response rate.) When asked, "How have you applied the things you've learned in MAPL to your work outside of the program?" with an open response field for answers, 7/9 students and 5/5 alumni responded that they had applied components of the curriculum into work outside of the classroom. They included examples including the following:

"The writing piece has been important, as well as connection building. Data analysis and visualization has also been important as we collect data on birth/feeding outcomes. Fundraising as well as budgeting!! That was very helpful as I took over my new position"

"I work for a State Representative, my writing has definitely gotten better. I'm preparing my portfolio for Writing for Public Policy and I'm really excited to be wrapping my brain around how to engage with media."

"I am using my capstone related to Veterans' health care as an interface with my job. It is an opportunity to reach out to people at my VA to find ways to improve my service line. The MAPL program has led me to attend local political events and fundraisers that I would not have attended before the MAPL program."

“I ran for office. I applied much of what I learned to my race. I was a nobody, but I had a very good race, coming in 3rd in a field of 8 by just a few hundred votes out of ~43K cast. Knowing about everything from "kitchen cabinets" to GPRs, impressions and share vs performance directly contributed to this showing.”

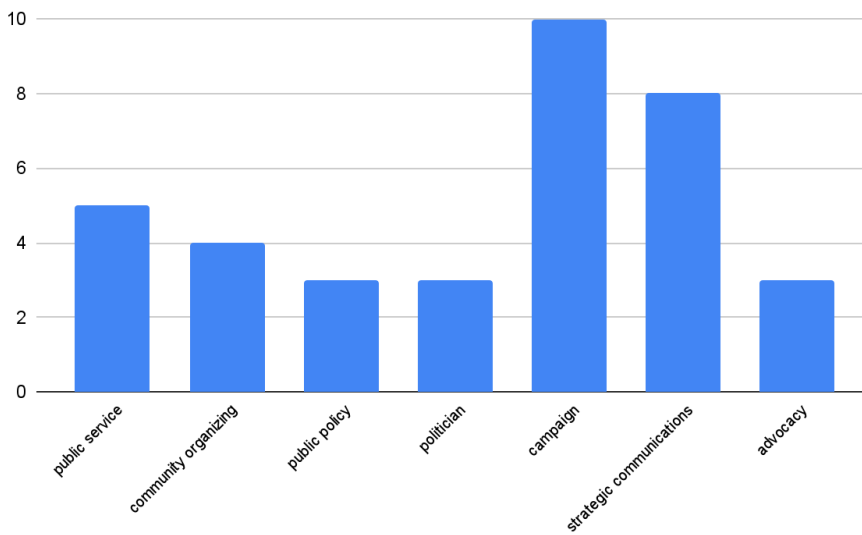
The two students who said that they had not applied things learned in MAPL to their work outside of the program both began the program in Fall 2022, and have not yet had an opportunity to apply what they learned.

These survey results are certainly skewed by a response bias that led more engaged students to participate. Whether these results would hold with students who are less responsive to the program outside of the classroom is unknown.

PLO-5

Half of our faculty brought in guests at some point during the year, amounting to 20 outside speakers in classes. Outside of the classroom, we hosted 6 guest speakers and brought students to 1 conference. Faculty themselves are all professionals in the fields that are outlined in PLO-5. In assessing the fields represented by these professionals, we see a plurality of speakers come from the campaign (10) field. This is fitting since the overarching goal of the program is to prepare students for campaigns, and professionals in this field likely have a range of specializations. We also had a high number (8) of strategic communications professionals. We hosted the fewest professionals from the public policy (3) and advocacy (3) fields, as well as politicians (3.)

Number of Guest Speakers by Professional Category in AY 21-22



This tally of speakers does not include interactions students had with classmates and alumni at receptions and networking events. Many of our students and alumni are professionals and leaders in advocacy, community organizing, strategic communications, public policy, and public service and fulfill the outcome for our students by interacting with their peers. This also does not include individuals that students may have interviewed for classes such as MPL 601 Proseminar in Applied Politics, MPL 602 Writing for Public Policy, or MPL 609 Capstone in Public Leadership, all of which include opportunities or requirements for students to do independent outreach to industry leaders and professionals.

We would like to see an increase in the number of politicians that we introduce to our students as well as public policy and advocacy professionals.

8. Integrating Assessment Results into the Curriculum

PLO-3

We are already meeting our expectations on this PLO and we will continue to track the same metrics.

PLO-5

While some classes certainly lend themselves to speakers more than others, we will further support faculty in bringing forward speakers by clarifying the process for honorariums and what the goals for bringing in a guest speaker should be. Namely, meeting PLO-5, offering different perspectives in the classroom, and giving students opportunities to build relationships that could lead to jobs or stronger campaign outcomes. We will work with faculty to create an easy system to track these speakers to keep them in the MAPL network and share their information with students for 1-on-1 interaction outside of class.

In order to create more opportunities for students in all stages of the program, we will increase consistent, hybrid speaker opportunities outside of the classroom. We have prioritized bringing these speakers in during intersessions, however these are important opportunities for students and alumni to interact with each other so we would like to seek more balance in our scheduling.