

**2016-2017 Yearly Assessment Report  
Master of Arts in Urban & Public Affairs  
College of Arts and Sciences (CAS)**

**1. Identifying Information**

**Name of program:** MA in Urban and Public Affairs

**Type of Program:** graduate program

**College Arts and Sciences Division:** Social Sciences

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**2. Mission Statement** (updated March 2017)

The Master of Arts in Urban & Public Affairs prepares students for employment in various policy-related fields by educating them in fundamental concepts of public policy, urban history and planning, community organizing and advocacy, and community-engaged research, while developing a policy specialization through an independent capstone project. The program serves the broader Bay Area community by engaging students with community in multiple ways, in service of the common good.

**3. UPA Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)**

At the end of the program, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a theoretical, practical, and ethical understanding of community change, through practices including public policy advocacy, campaigns, and/or political/community organizing;
2. Critically analyze problems in urban and regional policy and politics using a variety of research methods;
3. Demonstrate the capacity for effective oral and written communication;
4. Evaluate and develop urban and regional policy, while learning to situate models of social change within historical and regional contexts;
5. Contribute to informed public discourse around contemporary political and urban policy issues through addressing issues in public policy, advocacy, community organizing, politics, and public service.

**4. Brief Summary of Most Recent Assessment Plan**

Using direct methods, we assessed student outcomes regarding the following PLO: *#4 Evaluate and develop urban and regional policy, while learning to situate models of social change within historical and regional contexts*. The assignment we have chosen to evaluate this PLO through is

the spring public oral presentations for student capstone projects. We created a rubric for evaluating student performance on this final assignment in order to analyze student performance and draw data-based conclusions on the assignment, student progress, and to develop insights for building on this analysis in coming years.

## **5. Assessment Analysis**

**PLO-** Evaluate and develop urban and regional policy, while learning to situate models of social change within historical and regional contexts;

**Assignment-** Capstone Oral Presentations (15-minute presentation, followed by 15 minute Q&A; open to the public)

**Rationale-** This is a mandatory component for successful completion of the MA program. In these presentations, students must demonstrate their capacity to design and carry out a yearlong capstone research project that reflects engagement with urban and public policy issues.

In past years, we have evaluated a similar assignment in the first year of the curriculum. We envision comparing these evaluations across cohorts and across time in the future so that we can test our claims around student growth and learning.

**Rubric criteria-** The rubric used to assess student performance of the selected PLO draws on both program wide goals and specific outcomes set by the Masters Capstone Seminar. The categories established for evaluating the oral presentations are as follows:

1. Clearly identifies urban and public affairs issue;
2. Designs a research question for capstone project;
3. Employs appropriate research methodologies;
4. Demonstrates comprehension of theories and concepts in urban and public affairs;
5. Interprets, analyzes, and evaluates information from multiple sources;
6. Offers insight or solutions for urban or public affairs problem.

## 6. Rubric and Raw Data

The following rubric assesses student performance for the spring capstone symposium presentations. The data is pulled from the same assignment required in two courses, which represented the full graduating class of Urban Affairs (now titled Urban & Public Affairs). Masters Capstone Project UA 642 -01 (Brahinsky) and UA 642-02 (Negrin)

Key:

O—Outstanding

S—Satisfactory

I—Incomplete

	Clearly identifies urban and public affairs issue	Designs a research question for capstone project	Employs appropriate research methodologies	Demonstrates comprehension of theories and concepts in urban and public affairs	Interprets, analyzes, and evaluates information from multiple sources	Offers insight or solutions for urban and public affairs problem analyzed
Student 1	O	O	S	S	O	O
Student 2	O	S	S	O	O	S
Student 3	O	S	S	O	O	O
Student 4	O	O	S	O	S	O
Student 5	O	S	O	O	S	O
Student 6	O	S	S	S	S	S
Student 7	I	I	I	I	I	I
Student 8	O	S	S	O	O	S
Student 9	O	O	O	O	O	O
Student 10	O	S	S	S	S	S
Student 11	O	S	O	S	S	S

Student 12	O	O	O	O	O	O
Student 13	O	S	S	S	S	S
Student 14	O	O	O	O	O	O
Student 15	O	O	O	O	O	O

## **7. Assessment Results and Conclusions**

We evaluated student presentations as outstanding, satisfactory (student meets all major course competencies) or incomplete (for those students who were unable to finalize their capstone project within the normative timeline). Of the fifteen-member cohort, one received an incomplete because she was unable to finish a full draft of her capstone by the established deadline. Said student has now completed draft and is conducting revisions.

Analysis of the rubric results shows that all students who completed their projects scored outstanding in their ability to identify an urban or public affairs issue. All students were able to competently design and carry out their capstone research projects, with more than half scoring outstanding on their comprehension of key theories and concepts in the fields of urban and public affairs.

The area that showed the greatest need for improvement relates to whether or not students demonstrated comprehension of theories and concepts in urban and public affairs; 64% of students received a satisfactory score and 36% were considered outstanding in that category.

For evaluation categories 2 and 3, 57% of students scored satisfactory and 43% outstanding. And finally, for evaluation categories 5 and 6, 57% of students scored outstanding and the 43% satisfactory.

The categories that showed a greater number of satisfactory designations indicate the areas where we can improve our curriculum and practices: use and emphasis of appropriate methodologies across the curriculum, enforcement of the use of broader research sources to develop complex thinking, and better supporting students in developing and expressing insights for solutions to urban and public affairs issues.

We are making improvements in these areas now by regularizing our research methods offerings as we roll out the revised/merged curriculum. With these courses, more emphasis is being placed on strengthening a variety of qualitative and quantitative research methods so as to better prepare students to develop and analyze significant research outcomes.

## **8. Academic Program Review**

Most recent APR External Reviewer Visit: October 2016

Most recent Action Plan Meeting: December 2016

Brief Summary of the Action Plan:

The plan included seven points, with the most immediate being the program's need to finish the process of merging the curricula from the two former Urban and Public Affairs programs into one new curriculum and program. We have focused primarily on this important and time-consuming goal for the time being. The revised curriculum passed its first stage of approval in October 2017.

Other goals in the Action Plan included increasing the number of Full-Time faculty with an emphasis on securing tenure lines, increasing program collaboration with cognate programs across campus, and expanding recruitment in a variety of ways. We look forward to progressing on these goals in the coming year.

Master of Arts in Urban & Public Affairs	PLO1	PLO2	PLO3	PLO4	PLO5
<b>Program Learning Outcomes X Courses/ Requirements</b>	Demonstrate a theoretical, practical, and ethical understanding of community change, through practices including public policy advocacy, campaigns, and/or political/ community organizing.	Critically analyze problems in urban and regional policy and politics using a variety of research methods.	Demonstrate the capacity for effective oral and written communication.	Evaluate and develop urban and regional policy, while learning to situate models of social change within historical and regional contexts.	Contribute to informed public discourse around contemporary political and urban policy issues through addressing issues in public policy, advocacy, community organizing, politics, and public service.
<b>Courses or Program Requirement</b>					
<b>Requirements</b>					
UPA 601: Urban Power Seminar	I	I	I	I	
UPA 602: Rhetoric of Social Controversy			I		I
UPA 603: Understanding Public Finance		D		D	
UPA 604: UPA Colloquium	I/D	I/D	I/D	I/D	I/D
UPA 605: Practical Politics Saturday Workshops	D				D
UPA 640: Community-Engaged Public Policy Research		I	D		D
UPA 641: Leadership for the Common Good	D	D	D		
UPA 642: Masters Capstone Project	M	M	M	M	M
UPA Internship	D	D	D	D	D
	Demonstrate a theoretical, practical, and ethical understanding of community change, through practices including public policy advocacy, campaigns, and/or political/ community organizing.	Critically analyze problems in urban and regional policy and politics using a variety of research methods.	Demonstrate the capacity for effective oral and written communication.	Evaluate and develop urban and regional policy, while learning to situate models of social change within historical and regional contexts.	Contribute to informed public discourse around contemporary political and urban policy issues through addressing issues in public policy, advocacy, community organizing, politics, and public service.
<b>Electives</b>					
UPA 610: Issues in Public Policy	D				
UPA 611: Urban & Regional Planning	D	D		D	
UPA 612: Non-Profits and Public Policy		D			D
UPA 613: Globalization, Social Justice & the City	D		D		
UPA 614: Cities, Law & Inequality		D		D	
UPA 615: Urban Racial Politics		D		D	
UPA 616: Applied Democratic Theory	D		D		
UPA 617: Housing, Community & Public Policy	D				
618: Campaigns and Political Mobilization	D				D
619: Urban Field Class					
UPA 620...: Policy Theme Seminars (Housing, Urban Education, Land Use, Economic Development)	D			D	
Practical Politics Saturday Workshops (various topics)	D				D
<b>Program Learning Outcomes X Courses</b>	Demonstrate a theoretical, practical, and ethical understanding of community change, through practices including public policy advocacy, campaigns, and/or political/community organizing.	Critically analyze problems in urban and regional policy and politics using a variety of research methods.	Demonstrate the capacity for effective oral and written communication.	Evaluate and develop urban and regional policy, while learning to situate models of social change within historical and regional contexts.	Contribute to informed public discourse around contemporary political and urban policy issues through addressing issues in public policy, advocacy, community organizing, politics, and public service.
<b>Key:</b> I = Introductory D = Developing M = Mastery					