

WKU Master of Public Administration Program Alumni Survey Results 2015

This survey was sent out by mail to 43 recent MPA graduates on April 6, 2015. The survey was sent to those who had graduated within the past two years since the last survey was sent out. Four surveys were returned as non-deliverable. The surveys were returned over a period of several weeks. The last survey was returned on May 15, 2015. 11 surveys were returned, and 11 were usable (28% response rate), although not all questions were answered on all survey forms. Further, 11 alumni directory sheets were returned. Alumni directory sheets and identifying information were removed before the data was entered and analyzed. Data was entered during the month of May and double-checked for accuracy. Several open-ended questions were included on the survey.

This survey was designed with several purposes in mind. The primary purposes were as follows:

1. To gather input on the revised Mission Statement of the MPA program;
2. To gather input on the learning outcomes for students based on the graduates professional experience;
3. To understand what sector our graduates are employed in and if they are gainfully employed;
4. To understand if our graduates are satisfied with the MPA program as it was delivered to them, and to gather ideas for improvement to the program, courses, internship, networking and mentoring opportunities, etc. for our current and future students.

The survey results were disseminated to faculty, MPA advisory committee, students, and alumni. Results were posted on the WKU MPA Program website, and selected results were included in the Summer 2015 newsletter which was distributed to current students and alumni. All written responses to open-ended questions are available in a separate document.

The MPA and Employment History

What was your primary student status while completing the MPA degree?

 5 full-time 6 part-time

What was your primary objective when you entered the MPA program?

 6 job advancement 1 career change 4 personal goal 1 other

(note one person selected two responses on this question so total n=12)

Please explain. _____

What type of position did you hold immediately prior to entering the MPA program? _____

If employed while a student, which of the following best describes your employment sector?

Federal	<u> 2 </u>	(18%)
State or regional	<u> 5 </u>	(45%)
City, County or other Local	<u> 2 </u>	(18%)
Nonprofit	<u> 1 </u>	(.09%)
Private sector	<u> 1 </u>	(.09%)

Please list your current job title and how long you have been in this position.

Title _____ Length of time in this position 5 yrs avg (min. 7 mo. & max. 18 yrs)

Which of the following best describes your current employment sector?

Federal	<u> 2 </u>	(18%)
State or regional	<u> 5 </u>	(45%)
City, County or other Local	<u> 2 </u>	(18%)
Nonprofit	<u> 1 </u>	(9%)
Private sector	<u> 1 </u>	(9%)

What is your current annual salary?

Less than \$20,000	<u> </u>	\$60,000 to 69,999	<u> </u>
\$20,000 to 29,999	<u> </u>	\$70,000 to 79,999	<u> 1 </u>
\$30,000 to 39,999	<u> 3 </u>	\$80,000 to 89,999	<u> </u>
\$40,000 to 49,999	<u> 4 </u>	\$90,000 to 99,999	<u> </u>
\$50,000 to 59,999	<u> 2 </u>	Over \$100,000	<u> 1 </u>

Overall, how important was your MPA degree in obtaining your current position?

 2 Very important
 Important
 7 Not too important
 2 Not important at all

Comments? _____

If you are not employed, which best describes your current situation?

In transition and looking for a position	<u> 1 </u>
Obtaining further education	<u> </u>
Unemployed and not currently job hunting	<u> </u>

Comments? _____

Overall, how satisfied are you with the education you received in the MPA program?

 8 Very satisfied (73%)

 3 Satisfied (27%)

 Dissatisfied

 Very dissatisfied

Comments? _____

Overall, would you recommend the WKU MPA program to a colleague or friend?

Yes 11

No

Comments? _____

At the time you attended the WKU MPA program, what were the Program's strengths?

At the time you attended the WKU MPA program, what were the Program's weaknesses?

Demographic Information

In what subject area was your undergraduate degree? _____

When did you start your MPA degree (month and year)? Earliest August 2009

When did you finish your MPA degree (month and year)? Most recent December 2014

At which campus did you primarily attend classes?

Bowling Green 3 (27%)

Owensboro 4 (36%)

Ft. Knox/Elizabethtown 3 (27%)

Glasgow 1 (9%)

What is your gender?

Male 6 (55%)

Female 5 (45%)

What category best describes your ethnic background?

Hawaiian/Pacific Islander _____

Native American or Alaskan Native _____

Asian _____

African-American _____

Hispanic _____

Caucasian/White 11

Two or more races _____

Other _____

During the time you were an MPA student, were you considered to be an international student?

Yes _____ If yes, country of origin? _____
No 11

Are you currently active military?

Yes 2
No 9

Are you currently a military veteran?

Yes 1
No 10

Please indicate your current age category:

20-25 _____
26-30 3
31-35 2
36-40 2
41-45 1
46-50 _____
51-55 1
56-60 1
Over age 60 _____

Current home zip code: _____ Only 1 outside of KY

The WKU MPA Program is accredited by the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration



NASPAA is the Global Standard in Public Service Education

The MPA program mission statement currently reads as follows:

The MPA program prepares graduate students from diverse backgrounds to be productive leaders and managers in public service by sharing knowledge, encouraging excellence in research and practice, and fostering an environment of professionalism within the communities we serve.

Do you think the above MPA program mission statement adequately describes the mission of the MPA program as you experienced it?

Yes 10
No _____ 1 did not respond

What changes would you make to this mission statement? Please explain.

As part of the mission statement review and revision process the following questions and concerns came up with regard to learning outcomes for MPA students. Please answer the following questions based on your professional experience.

To what extent in your current position do you prepare, administer and/or monitor budgets?

4 Very Often ___ Often 2 Occasionally 3 Never

To what extent in your current position do you conduct financial analyses?

3 Very Often ___ Often 3 Occasionally 3 Never

To what extent in your current position do you conduct surveys?

1 Very Often 3 Often 3 Occasionally 2 Never

To what extent in your current position do you interpret and apply statistical concepts?

1 Very Often 2 Often 4 Occasionally 2 Never

To what extent in your current position do you conduct data analyses that require the use of statistical software packages, such as SPSS?

1 Very Often ___ Often 2 Occasionally 6 Never

To what extent in your current position do you access, apply and evaluate large data sets, such as U.S. Census data?

___ Very Often 1 Often 3 Occasionally 5 Never

To what extent in your current position do you prepare grant applications?

___ Very Often 1 Often 2 Occasionally 6 Never

To what extent in your current position do you administer grants?

___ Very Often ___ Often 3 Occasionally 6 Never

To what extent in your current position are you required to communicate in a technical, clear and concise manner?

7 Very Often 2 Often ___ Occasionally ___ Never

To what extent in your current position are you required to communicate with the media?

2 Very Often 1 Often 4 Occasionally 2 Never

Reflecting on each of these questions above as they apply to your specific job, are there particular areas in which you wish the MPA program had better prepared you? Please describe what training might have helped you be better prepared.

To what extent do you believe that the MPA program prepared you to the following based on your professional experience?

Lead and manage in public governance

 6 Very Prepared 4 Prepared Unprepared

Participate in and contribute to the policy process

 6 Very Prepared 4 Prepared Unprepared

Analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, make decisions

 7 Very Prepared 3 Prepared Unprepared

Articulate and apply a public service perspective

 7 Very Prepared 3 Prepared Unprepared

Communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry

 7 Very Prepared 3 Prepared Unprepared

If you could name one area of focus that was not offered as a part of the MPA program that would assist in preparing students for future employment in the public sector, what would it be?

In what specific ways do you think the MPA program could and/or should better utilize its alumni?

Please feel free to make any additional comments or suggestions about the MPA program here. We want and value your input!

Alumni Directory and Helping the MPA Program

Please provide complete contact info here.

Name _____

Address _____

Best Email _____

Best phone number _____

Current job title: _____

Current employer: _____

Year you graduated from MPA program: _____

May we include this info in a MPA alumni directory?

Yes 10

No

Would you be interested in participating in networking opportunities with former and current MPA students?

Yes 8

No 1

Would you be interested in providing an internship for a MPA student?

Yes 3

No 6

Would you be interested in serving as a mentor for a MPA student?

Yes 4

No 5

Would you be interested in serving on the MPA Advisory Committee?

Yes 6

No 3

If you do not want to return this page with the survey, you may return this page to the following address:

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