

Reviewed & Approved by Provost Warwick Bayly

Washington State University



Health Policy and
Administration
Department
Business Plan:
2011-2015

Updated December 1, 2010

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Health Policy and Administration (HPA) Department was founded in 2001 and was the first academic department “established and centered” at a WSU urban campus as well as the first new Department in the University since 1990. HPA offers the Masters of Health Policy and Administration (MHPA), is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation Healthcare Management Education (CAMHE), and is ranked nationally by *U.S. News and World Report* as 40th among all healthcare management programs and 22nd among public universities.

In the past 5 years, HPA has successfully managed a number of challenging transitions. In 2007, three HPA faculty members (Melissa Ahern, Tracey Skaer, and David Sclar) were transferred to the Department of Pharmacotherapy, reducing the number of HPA faculty to 4.0 FTE. In the spring of 2009, two HPA faculty (Winsor Schmidt and Fevzi Akinci) accepted prestigious faculty positions at other universities. Such faculty turnover led to accreditation concerns and unusually high transfer rates by HPA students to other graduate programs in both 2009 and 2010. Faculty searches to fill the two vacancies were approved in June 2009, and then one of the two vacancies was filled in August 2010 with the hiring of a new junior faculty member, Dr. Sean Murphy. HPA staffing was further disrupted when the Academic Coordinator accepted another position in the late Spring 2010 semester, and the secretary senior resigned in the early Fall 2010 semester. An adjunct faculty member, Dr. Gary Smith, and a new Academic Coordinator, Adrienne Lara, were hired in Fall 2010.

Despite the current economic uncertainty in the state, HPA faculty and staff are optimistic and working hard to stabilize and improve the MHPA degree while also increasing student enrollments. In academic year (AY) 2011, the HPA Program will be in a period of self-study for CAMHE reaccreditation (the current accreditation term is for 6 years). A number of significant administrative actions have been initiated by the HPA faculty and staff with ratification by the 25-member HPA Advisory Board, including:

- 1) A revision of the HPA mission, vision and values to reflect the international scope of the degree and the research potential of the field.
- 2) Streamlining the curriculum, with uniform formatting requirements, explicit links to CAMHE competencies, and simplification of the graduate project and thesis requirements.
- 3) Establishment of uniform application and admissions deadlines.
- 4) Improvement and reorganization of the HPA Policies and Procedures.
- 5) Updating and expanding the HPA website.

- 6) Developing an ambitious marketing plan to improved recruitment and retention of MHPA students.
- 7) Establishment of an active HPA alumni association with critical alumni leadership.

The following business plan systematically reviews the current costs and tuition revenues for the HPA Department and calculates how the combination of tuition increases and new enrollments will allow the Department to achieve a break-even point by the fiscal year 2015. This business plan projects the number of total students to increase by three, five, two, and four, respectively over the next four admissions cycles – a challenging but feasible strategy with existing and projected resources.

Over the long term, additional FTE faculty and substantial portfolio of extramural research funding are anticipated as the DHPA assumes a primary roll in the development of a health sciences academic center. Given this five year business plan and the expectations of the HPA faculty and staff, the HPA Department will play a pivotal role in “America’s next great academic health sciences center” at WSU Spokane.