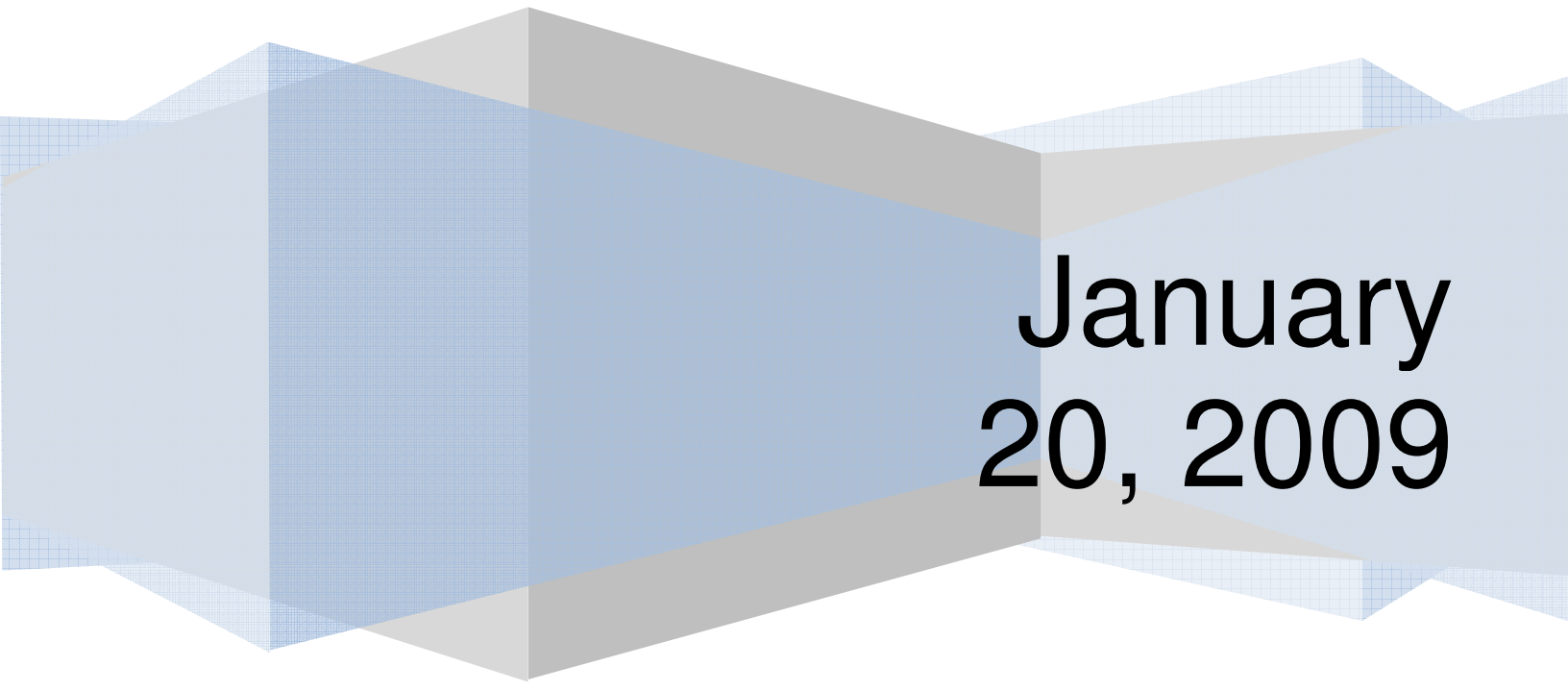


The University of Texas at San Antonio

MPA Alumni Survey Report

Prepared by the Department of Public Administration



January
20, 2009

Introduction

The alumni survey was designed to assess demographic and programmatic information from the graduates of the MPA program. The survey was mailed to all alumni whose current email contact information was available to the department. SurveyMonkey.com was used to create, distribute and analyze the survey. Of the 74 alumni contacted, 32 completed the survey for a response percentage of 43%.

Survey questions were based on four areas: Employment History and Current Information, Value of the MPA Program, Alumni Services, and Personal Data (Demographics). Not all of the survey questions were mandatory, but all of the responses provided have been used in the data reported.

Findings

Who They Are

The average respondent was a 30-39 year old Hispanic female.

While at School

Most respondents completed their degrees as part-time students while working full-time.

Where They Work

Most respondents (87.5%) are currently employed full-time. Education (School District, College or University), the Private Industry (Non-Consulting), and City/U.S. Federal Government were the top three employment areas.

One-third of respondents say that their current job is an upward transition from another organization. A total of 93% of all respondents have a salary above \$35,000, and almost 26% have a salary above \$65,001.

Value of the MPA Program to Careers

A strong majority (83.3%) of respondents agreed the MPA program has contributed to their career success. However, hard work, work experience and personal competence were also very important factors to their careers.

Overall, respondents found most core subject classes to be somewhat significant to understanding and performing his or her job. With elective courses alumni felt that they were able to focus on personal interests and strongly apply that knowledge in the workplace. In contributing to personal competence, the MPA program was most significant in the following areas: Program Planning and Evaluation, Political Institutions & Processes, Policy Analysis & Implementation, Oral Communication, Written Communication, and Quantitative & Statistical Techniques.

Assessing Support Services to the MPA Students

Respondents were satisfied overall with the MPA faculty, but some respondents felt faculty assistance in gaining employment and career advising was average. Alumni were especially impressed by the faculty's knowledge of their respective subjects and ability to communicate clearly in class. Only 6 of the respondents had an internship during their studies, and most had a positive experience during their internship, but some expressed problems concerning using the experience to decide on a career path and job placement.

Alumni also approved the idea of creating a newsletter and directory specifically for them.

General Findings

Who They Are

Age

Under 30	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 or older
25%	46.4%	10.7%	17.9%	0%

Gender

Male Respondents	Female Respondents
35.7%	64.3%

Ethnicity

African American	Asian American	Hispanic	White/Caucasian	International	Other
7.1%	0.0%	46.4%	42.9%	0.0%	3.6%

Graduation Year

	Number of Respondents
2006	11
2007	10
2008	7

Year Started Program

	Number of Respondents
1999	1
2000	1
2003	5
2004	14
2005	5
2006	2

While at School

Student Status While in the MPA

Full time Student	25%
Part time Student	59.4%
Mix of Full and Part time	15.6%

Where They Work

Current Employee Status

Employed Full Time	87.5%
Employed Part Time	6.3%
Not Employed	3.1%
Full Time Student	3.1%
Part Time Student	0.0%

Type of Employment

Industry	Response Percent
U.S. federal government / Executive ,Congressional or Judicial Branch	9.7%
State government agency/State legislature	0.0%
Regional government	3.2%
Non-profit agency/"Third Sector" organization	16.1%
School District, College or University	22.6%
Public interest group	0.0%
Private industry - non-consulting	19.4%
Consulting - government/nonprofit	0.0%
Consulting - private sector clients	6.5%
County government	3.2%
City government	9.7%
Other local jurisdiction	3.2%
International organization	0.0%
Judiciary	0.0%
Military Service	0.0%
Law Firm	0.0%
Other*	6.5%

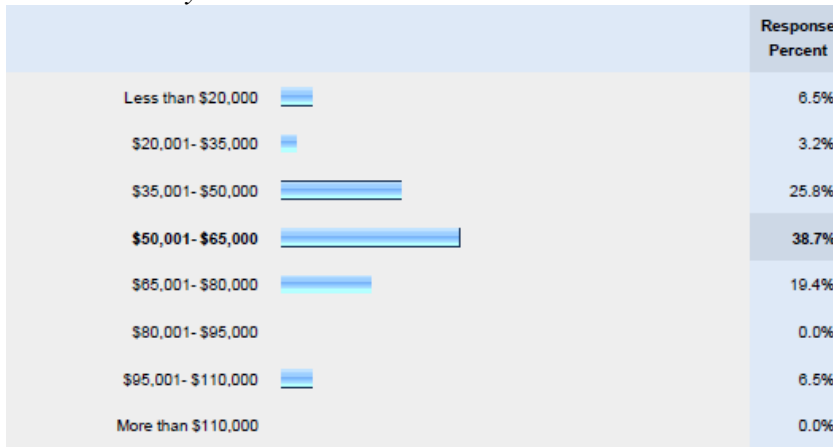
*Responses marked as other were: 1 non-profit and 1 unemployed respondent.

For most respondents their current job is either an upward transition from another organization (34.4%) or a promotion within the same organization (31.3%). Lateral transitions accounted for 15.6% within the same organization (18.8%) from another organization.

Length of Employment

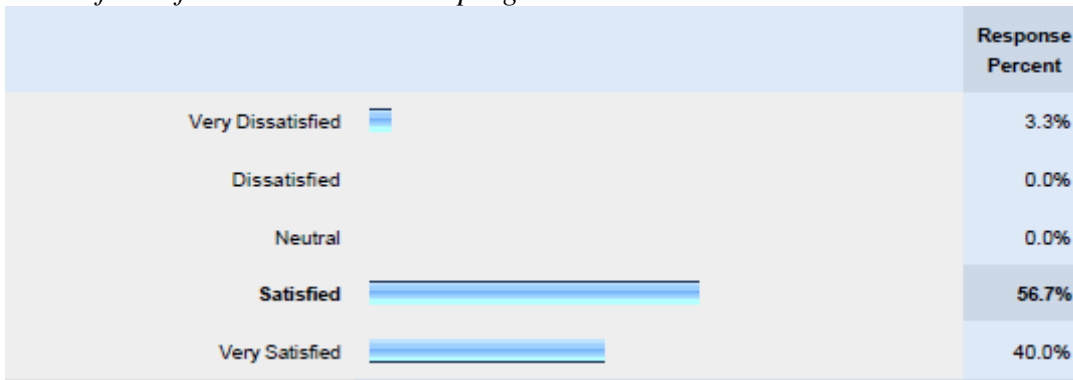
For those who reported the year started for the position they currently hold, the average length of current employment was 3 years.

Current Salary



Value of MPA Program to Career/Program Experience

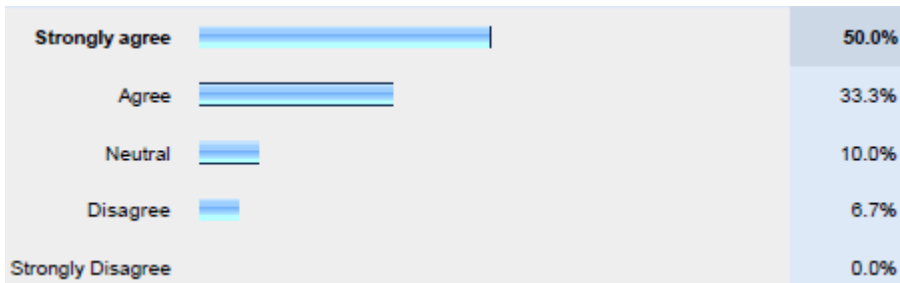
Level of Satisfaction with the MPA program overall



Importance of Various Factors on Career

	Very important	Important	Somewhat important	Little importance	Not at all important
MPA education	46.7% (14)	36.7% (11)	10.0% (3)	6.7% (2)	0.0% (0)
Work experience	70.0% (21)	23.3% (7)	6.7% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)
Other advanced degrees/education/training	26.7% (8)	33.3% (10)	30.0% (9)	6.7% (2)	3.3% (1)
Hard work	60.0% (18)	26.7% (8)	13.3% (4)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)
Undergraduate education	33.3% (10)	33.3% (10)	23.3% (7)	3.3% (1)	6.7% (2)
Personal competence	60.0% (18)	33.3% (10)	3.3% (1)	3.3% (1)	0.0% (0)
Network and personal contacts	46.7% (14)	16.7% (5)	26.7% (8)	10.0% (3)	0.0% (0)
Opportunity/luck	20.0% (6)	40.0% (12)	30.0% (9)	3.3% (1)	6.7% (2)

MPA contribution to success



Core courses –contribution of the MPA program

	Significant	Somewhat Significant	Neutral	Somewhat Insignificant	Insignificant
Introduction to Public Administration	46.7% (14)	38.7% (11)	6.7% (2)	6.7% (2)	3.3% (1)
Quantitative Methods for PA	40.0% (12)	50.0% (15)	6.7% (2)	3.3% (1)	0.0% (0)
Theories of Public Bureaucracy	38.7% (11)	53.3% (16)	3.3% (1)	6.7% (2)	0.0% (0)
Public Policy Formulation & Implementation	44.8% (13)	51.7% (15)	0.0% (0)	3.4% (1)	0.0% (0)
Human Resource Management in the Public Sector	38.7% (11)	50.0% (15)	6.7% (2)	6.7% (2)	0.0% (0)
Public Sector Financial Management	50.0% (15)	33.3% (10)	10.0% (3)	6.7% (2)	0.0% (0)
Economics for Public Administrators	33.3% (10)	50.0% (15)	10.0% (3)	6.7% (2)	0.0% (0)

Elective courses

Elective courses that were found to be particularly useful included (the numbers in parentheses represent the number of mentions) :

- Urban/Regional Economic Development (2)
- SA Politics (4)
- Nonprofit Mgt (4)
- Environmental Policy, (3)
- Ethics (2)
- Grant Writing (3)
- Strategic planning (2)
- Personnel Management(1)
- Public Policy and Policymaking in San Antonio (1)
- Bureaucracy (1)
- Program evaluation (3)

Electives courses the alumni would like to see added to the MPA program include:

- Urban Planning
- More on non-profits, working w/ volunteers
- Classes with more of a leadership focus, personal development and assessment
- Accounting/Budgeting
- Maybe a business class to help relate operations; fund development
- Additional stats classes
- Health care administration
- Something about consulting, ascertaining needs of clients...not so much sales as it is practicing the professional interaction of meeting with someone whether you are a lobbyist or a consultant and start to finish practice
- Courses designed for those who want to work for public agencies separate from non-profits
- More in regards to Health Care Management and/or case management
- Public engagement, outreach, participation

Exit paper

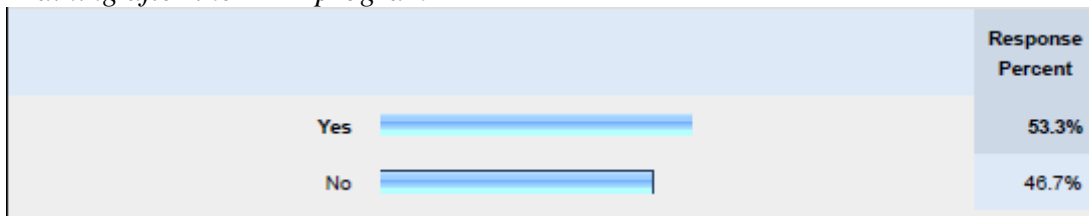
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I received adequate faculty guidance/support	0.0% (0)	3.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	40.0% (12)	56.7% (17)
I had a clear understanding of what was expected for an "acceptable" exit paper	3.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	3.3% (1)	43.3% (13)	50.0% (15)
I produced a final paper that I was proud of	3.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	3.3% (1)	40.0% (12)	53.3% (16)
I was able to complete my exit paper in a timely fashion	3.3% (1)	3.3% (1)	3.3% (1)	43.3% (13)	46.7% (14)
I was able to use the skills I learned in the MPA program in preparing my exit paper	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	3.3% (1)	33.3% (10)	63.3% (19)
The MPA program should consider adopting an applied group (or "capstone") project to replace the exit paper requirement.	30.0% (9)	10.0% (3)	40.0% (12)	10.0% (3)	10.0% (3)

MPA contribution—skill sets

	Significant	Somewhat Significant	Neutral	Somewhat Insignificant	Insignificant
Decision-Making & Problem Solving	40.0% (12)	46.7% (14)	3.3% (1)	6.7% (2)	3.3% (1)
Human Resource Management	33.3% (10)	50.0% (15)	10.0% (3)	6.7% (2)	0.0% (0)
Budgeting & Financial Management	36.7% (11)	50.0% (15)	10.0% (3)	0.0% (0)	3.3% (1)
Program Planning & Evaluation	46.7% (14)	36.7% (11)	10.0% (3)	3.3% (1)	3.3% (1)
Information Management	16.7% (5)	40.0% (12)	23.3% (7)	10.0% (3)	10.0% (3)
Organizational Design & Mgt.	30.0% (9)	60.0% (18)	10.0% (3)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)
Political Institutions & Processes	60.0% (18)	30.0% (9)	10.0% (3)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)
Policy Analysis & Implementation	70.0% (21)	16.7% (5)	13.3% (4)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)
Ethical Decision Making & Democratic Values	40.0% (12)	43.3% (13)	13.3% (4)	0.0% (0)	3.3% (1)
Economic Institutions & Processes	33.3% (10)	50.0% (15)	16.7% (5)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)
Leadership	33.3% (10)	43.3% (13)	16.7% (5)	3.3% (1)	3.3% (1)
Oral Communication	43.3% (13)	36.7% (11)	10.0% (3)	6.7% (2)	3.3% (1)
Written Communication	62.1% (18)	31.0% (9)	6.9% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)
Quantitative & Statistical Techniques	66.7% (20)	30.0% (9)	3.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)
Computer Applications	13.8% (4)	34.5% (10)	37.9% (11)	6.9% (2)	6.9% (2)
Strategic Planning & Management	33.3% (10)	56.7% (17)	6.7% (2)	3.3% (1)	0.0% (0)
Organizational Behavior & Group Processes	33.3% (10)	53.3% (16)	13.3% (4)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)

Two respondents had these responses: 1)Not applicable, as I did not take any courses pertaining to these topics and 2)Non-profit management.

Training after the MPA program



As indicated above, 53.3% of respondents have felt the need to seek further training or education in connection to his/her career development. Of the respondents who have sought further training, the areas of training and study included:

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Software-related training | Sales training |
| Pursuing PhD (2) | Statistics |
| CFRE | Certified insurance counselor designation, CPCU |
| Project Management | Qualitative Analysis |
| Program Evaluation (2) | Public Admin |
| Teaching Certification | Workforce Development |
| Job specific training | Adult Education |
| Finance | |
| Leadership | |

Services

Internships

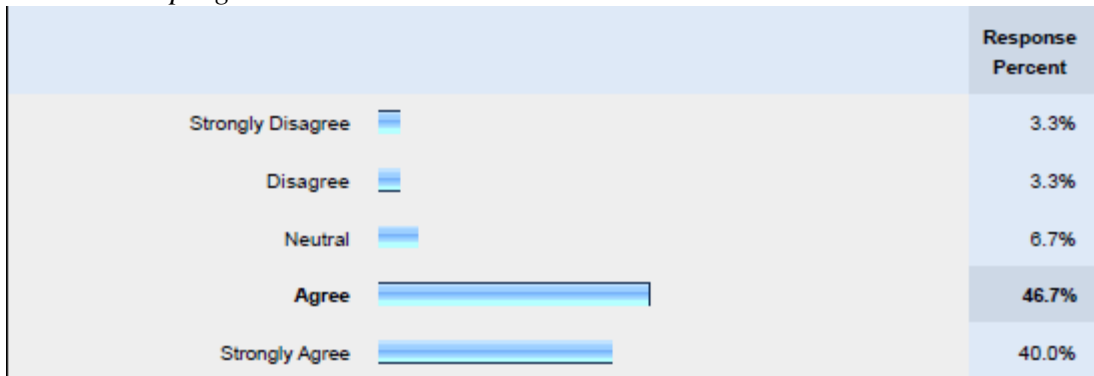
Level of Agreement or disagreement concerning internship experience:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Helped me to see the relationship between MPA course work and the practice of PA	0.0% (0)	16.7% (1)	16.7% (1)	66.7% (4)	0.0% (0)
Provided me with training and experience useful in my career	0.0% (0)	16.7% (1)	0.0% (0)	66.7% (4)	16.7% (1)
Helped me decide upon a career	16.7% (1)	50.0% (3)	16.7% (1)	16.7% (1)	0.0% (0)
Aided me in getting a job	16.7% (1)	16.7% (1)	33.3% (2)	0.0% (0)	33.3% (2)
Offered an interesting variety of assignments	16.7% (1)	16.7% (1)	0.0% (0)	33.3% (2)	33.3% (2)
Received good direction and support by my employer	16.7% (1)	0.0% (0)	16.7% (1)	33.3% (2)	33.3% (2)
Received good direction and support by the MPA program	16.7% (1)	16.7% (1)	33.3% (2)	33.3% (2)	0.0% (0)

MPA Faculty

	Inadequate	Below Average	Average	Good	Outstanding
Exposure to a variety of points of view	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	13.3% (4)	50.0% (15)	36.7% (11)
Preparation of your professors for class	0.0% (0)	3.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	56.7% (17)	40.0% (12)
The faculty's knowledge of their respective subjects	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	30.0% (9)	70.0% (21)
Ability to communicate clearly in class	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	3.3% (1)	46.7% (14)	50.0% (15)
Accessibility of the faculty outside the classroom	0.0% (0)	3.3% (1)	10.0% (3)	60.0% (18)	26.7% (8)
Opportunity to interact socially with the faculty	6.7% (2)	13.3% (4)	30.0% (9)	40.0% (12)	10.0% (3)
Assistance by the faculty in gaining employment.	20.7% (6)	20.7% (6)	27.6% (8)	24.1% (7)	6.9% (2)
Effective use of practitioners in the classroom	3.3% (1)	23.3% (7)	16.7% (5)	43.3% (13)	13.3% (4)
The quality of academic advising	10.0% (3)	10.0% (3)	16.7% (5)	50.0% (15)	13.3% (4)
The quality of career advising	21.4% (6)	17.9% (5)	21.4% (6)	35.7% (10)	3.6% (1)

Recommend program



Alumni services

A strong majority (83.3%) of respondents provided contact information for an Alumni Directory and 90% would like to see the creation of an Alumni Newsletter. 43.3% were interested in hosting a current MPA student as an intern.

Conclusion

Results from this 2009 Alumni survey will be an important resource for the Department of Public Administration, alumni, and current and prospective MPA students. The results clearly indicate that students are overall satisfied with their experience in the MPA program and the curriculum's ability to translate into tools and skills in respective work environments. Additionally using the results of this and the MPA Advisory Board survey, the department will be able to strengthen its understanding of area organizations' needs for qualified MPA graduates.

More information on UTSA's MPA Program is available here:

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