

FINDINGS OF THE EVANS SCHOOL 10-YEAR REVIEW COMMITTEE

1. INTRODUCTION

The 10-year review panel was asked by the Graduate School at the University of Washington (UW) to conduct a review of programs administered through the Evans School of Public Affairs (ESPA). Members of the panel included 3 UW faculty -- Daniel Huppert (School of Marine Affairs) who served as Chair, Mary R. Gillmore (School of Social Work) and Michael S. Knapp (Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, College of Education) -- plus external reviewers Joseph J. Cordes, (Associate Director, School of Public Policy and Public Administration, George Washington University), and Astrid E. Merget (Dean and Professor, School of Public and Environmental Affairs, Indiana University). Our evaluation is based on two primary sets of documents and a site visit. The documents include those provided as Review Committee Materials assembled by the Graduate School and those presented at the April 2005 Self-Study Report prepared by ESPA. During our May 17-18, 2005 site visit, the committee conducted interviews of ESPA faculty, graduate students, research center administrators, and administrative staff. Additional materials were provided during and following the interview process.

The most important objective of this review is an assessment of the academic and educational quality of the Evans School's M.P.A. degree program. The important questions are: Is the Evans School doing what it should be doing with this program? Is it doing it well? How can things be done better? How should the University aid the School?

2. FINDINGS:

a . CONTEXT

In the decade since its last 10-year review, the Evans School of Public Affairs has emerged as a leading institution among the 250 universities that confer the MPA degree. The competitors in this field include institutions across the nation that belong to the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) and the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM). These same institutions are the focus of the rankings in public affairs conducted by the US News and World Report. Its survey located the Evans School in its overall position as 26th among all graduate programs and 14th among those housed at public universities. The Evans School garnered even higher rankings—in the top ten-- for two fields of expertise—environmental policy and nonprofit management. To be sure, many deans and program directors may assail the methodology invoked to rank programs, but the results do signal that the Evans School is in the top tier among competitors. Further, the School mounts the only MPA program of such stature within a broad sweep of geography— west of the Hubert Humphrey Institute at the University of Minnesota, northwest of the programs at the University of Kansas and University of Colorado, and due north of the Goldman School at the University of California at Berkeley.

The high ranking confirms both the reputation the School commands and also its academic maturity. Those marks of maturity include: the market niche and distinctive

competency the School asserts; the balance of academic rigor and professional preparation the degree program offers; the institutional integrity of the School and its underlying support system; the national recognition of its faculty and its recent succession of deans; and the vitality and growth of its several tracks for the degree program.

Market Niche and Distinctive Competency. Unlike many other leading programs, the Evans School has truly balanced strengths in *both public policy and management*. In the MPA curriculum the balance between these two areas varies across the four tracks, which are customized to serve different constituencies of students—the traditional MPA for pre-service students, the Mid Career MPA, the Executive MPA and the Peace Corps Masters International. Clearly, the School does not subscribe to a “one size fits all” program philosophy, which could narrow the intellectual and professional range of prospective students and eventual graduates.

Beyond that *distinctive niche of public policy and public management*, the program provides advanced expertise in five gateways to the MPA. The Plan of Study guides students to focus on: (1) Education and Social Policy, (2) Environmental Policy and Natural Resources Management, (3) International Affairs, (4) Nonprofit Management, and (5) Urban and Regional Affairs. The School faculty carefully combined a previously diffuse collection of fourteen areas of specialization into these five, thus solidifying the MPA program into a more coherent cluster of advanced studies. The gateways highlight authentic distinction in both national and regional markets and capitalize on the assets of the larger university with its academic strengths in natural resources, international affairs as well as social work among others. Wisely—both in an entrepreneurial and educational sense-- the School has amplified the marketplace for its academic and professional expertise by bracketing a few fields for certificate programs. The formula of marrying public policy and management with selected areas of expertise affords the School versatility in competing for students and faculty and in accommodating to changing pathways for careers of graduates.

Balance of Academic Rigor and Professional Preparation. The balanced, integrated and coherent structure of the MPA, with four distinct tracks that correspond to segments of public service, confirms that the School has opted to broadly educate students to be informed and enlightened about substantive issues; through analysis to be critical and discerning in thinking; and by skill acquisition to be effective in performance. In this manner, all Evans School graduates are prepared for the complex challenges at diverse stages of career and at assorted avenues of public service—whether channeled in the public, nonprofit or private sectors. The multi-disciplinary character of the faculty as well as the adroit use of practitioners in the classroom assures that *all students excel at knowing, analyzing and performing*.

Institutional Integrity. At the University of Washington the Evans School is anomalous as a small, graduate-only, autonomous entity with a dean in direct line to the Vice President/Provost. But this institutional autonomy fosters not only faculty governance over programs of teaching, research and service but also institutional integrity and coherence. Most MPA programs of acclaimed excellence—whether by rankings or other marks of maturity—are organized as a free-standing academic unit within a university. Many less distinguished programs in NASPAA and APPAM reside within broader academic units—sometimes as extensions of a Department of Political Science; sometimes as cross-disciplinary programs

within a College of Arts and Sciences; sometimes as smaller programs within a Management or Business School. Seldom do these programs vault into the top echelon. In those settings, an MPA program must succumb to disciplinary norms rather than the protocols of professional peers; marginalizing its salience and diminishing its resources. *The autonomy of the Evans School allows it to calibrate its academic and professional norms to those of peers, engendering collegiality across disparate disciplines and underscoring the public service mission of the larger public university.*

The autonomy enjoyed by ESPA as a free-standing school also facilitates marshalling resources both internally and externally to support the program in its professional character with established offices for career development, for alumni and for outreach. Competition in the league of MPA programs to attract students turns not only on the quality of the curriculum but also on administrative support for placing graduates, connecting to alumni and donors, extending expertise to critical constituencies in the public and nonprofit sectors, and the like. As a free-standing unit, the Evans School can configure its resources to compete on both the academic and professional dimensions of the field.

Further, the School has enjoyed a sequence of deans who possessed both sterling academic credentials and leadership talents. The School benefits from a champion with clout in the larger arena of public affairs and with the authority to deliver on commitments made both within and beyond the University. In effect, the deanship provides a platform for projecting the School into many creative and profitable arenas with governments, nonprofit agencies, professional and scholarly societies, foundations and other funding sources including individual donors.

2.b. SPECIAL STRENGTHS OF THE EVANS SCHOOL

As indicated above, the Evans School of Public Affairs is a strong, mature school with an impressive curriculum in each of its four MPA tracks that has been responsive to the needs of students and the field. It has a strong and dedicated multidisciplinary faculty that includes a cadre of research-active senior faculty, an outstanding group of assistant professors, strong centers, certificate programs that help bridge the gap between academics and professional practice, and a capable and dedicated staff. It has a national reputation, particularly for its non-profit management and environmental policy areas. Over the past 10 years, the School has experienced considerable growth and currently is in the process of developing a new Ph.D. program that will contribute to even more growth. The School is a mature unit poised to develop a Ph.D. program. Particularly noteworthy areas of strength are:

National Recognition of Faculty and Deans. A number of faculty at the Evans School capture national stature for their scholarship and their participation in national conferences. Their scholarship across diverse disciplines can thrive in a multi-disciplinary setting like the Evans School. Recent recruitments of junior faculty from outstanding institutions promise a robust future. With the formation of Centers at Evans, the School is *forging a scholarly identity as an institution* not just a collection of individual scholars. Until recently the School was the home for the major journal in the nonprofit and voluntary sectors. For many years, the School has

supported the innovative Electronic Hallway that enriches pedagogical pathways for other peer programs. All the deans from the inaugural to the current one have occupied roles of leadership in major national associations of the field like NASPAA, APPAM, and National Academy of Public Administration. Claiming these roles and positions attests to the standing of the parent institution as well as the individual and also spotlights the School into national arenas of note.

Commitment to Teaching and Sense of Community. The multidisciplinary faculty is the fulcrum of the Evans School's success. The faculty comprises a highly qualified group of individuals who bring together a unique blend of interdisciplinary and international perspectives that are evident in both their scholarship and teaching. The assistant professors are a talented, enthusiastic group of young scholars whose strong commitment to the school is evident. The committee was particularly impressed with the faculty's unusually high level of commitment to teaching, their sense of shared mission, shared decision making, and their strong sense of community. The latter is particularly noteworthy given the diverse disciplinary backgrounds of the faculty, several of whom have joint appointments with other departments. Several assistant professors commented that the shared sense of community was especially important in their decision to come to the UW.

Student Satisfaction. The faculty undertook a major revision of the MPA programs in 1999 – 2002. The result is a strong innovative curriculum that is responsive to student needs, intellectually coherent, experiential, and provides considerable flexibility for students. Students choose an area of policy emphasis among five "Gateways" and can customize their programs through choice of electives, several of which are taken in other disciplines. The students in all four degree programs seem very dedicated to their programs of study and are satisfied with their programs overall. As one mid-career student put it, the Integrated Management Series is an "incredible series of core courses." Full time day students were especially appreciative of the combination of traditional academics with a practical emphasis. Students in the Executive MPA program also view their program quite positively. One student remarked that the program "applies to public administration more than anything else I've seen." Overall, student evaluations of the programs are quite positive.

The Evans Student Organization (ESO) seems to be performing as an effective conduit for communication between the students and the teaching and administrative staff.

Vitality and Growth. Enrollment numbers for the School also track the stature of the School and the demand for the degrees that it offers. This trajectory is all the more admirable since the decade of the late eighties and early nineties has witnessed a diminished role of government and its declining popularity as a preferred profession. To be sure, the period after 9/11 did restore some respect and buoy enrollments across many national programs aimed at government, as did the growing emphasis on professionalism of the nonprofit sector. In the case of the Evans School, the *growth in applications and enrollments is as much a result of leadership in adapting its MPA program to the changing marketplace and in segmenting the markets for the degree by stage and type of career.*

Connections Across the Campus. The School has done an excellent job of forging interdisciplinary teaching and research collaborations with other units on campus. It has

especially strong ties with the Departments of Economics, Political Science and Sociology, which have agreed to provide access to their graduate programs for students in the Ph.D. program that the Evans School proposes to offer, as well as concurrent master's degree programs with International Studies, Forestry, Law, Public Health, and Urban Planning.

Research Centers are Valued Assets The School is home to six dynamic centers that include research, public outreach, training, technical assistance, and applied problem solving. These centers are valuable assets to the School, making major contributions to the School's research, teaching, and service missions.

Service and Recognition in the Community. The School has made major contributions to the university, community, and the field. Especially noteworthy are the Public Service Clinics through which students can fulfill their research requirements by working collaboratively with organizations in the community. This linkage of degree project requirements with real needs of community organizations enhances the educational experiences of students in "real life" situations while at the same time providing direct benefits to the community organizations, thereby strengthening "town/gown" relationships. The continuing education programs have provided training in leadership for national and international professionals, and the Certificate programs have provided a valuable source of training for persons holding positions in government and NGOs. The Electronic Hallway, developed and maintained by the Evans School, is a highly innovative electronic file of public policy and management teaching cases that have been accessed by about 2,000 faculty and over 950 institutions worldwide.

2.c. CHALLENGES

Enhanced Capacity. During the Committee's site visit, we were strongly impressed with the faculty's interest and focus on developing and improving the master's degree program. While not suggesting that the School weaken its commitment to offering a high quality masters-degree program, if the School seeks to broaden its scope by offering the Ph.D., it will need to make some strategic choices about resource allocation. In large part because of its success in offering a high-quality MPA program, ESPA faculty and staff are quite fully occupied at present with the various master's degree programs. Barring an infusion of additional faculty and staff, the resources needed to launch and maintain a high quality doctoral program will need to come from a reallocation of resources in the school, plus a willingness of other departments to either offer courses relevant to the PhD or to allow ESPA doctoral students into their regular courses.

Internal Resource Reallocation. There seemed to be a general recognition among faculty that it may not be feasible to continue offering all four current master's degrees and a PhD program. Some Evans School faculty are considering whether one of these degrees – the Mid-Career program -- might either be dropped altogether, or perhaps "merged" into the "traditional" MPA. Although ESPA faculty have the requisite disciplinary and research backgrounds to cover required courses in the proposed PhD, help in offering these courses from related departments would clearly help stretch ESPA's faculty resources (which still need to be devoted to offering high quality master's degree programs).

Advising of Master's Students. Given the complexity of the four MPA tracks, with five “gateways”, five concurrent degrees, and several certificate programs, keeping track of the 280 masters students’ progress and providing them with advice and assistance in choosing courses from multiple departments is a challenging task. The School’s Director of Graduate Studies, the Student Services staff, the faculty advisors, and the Peer Advisor are all engaged in this task. And, according to the student responses to the 2004 Student Climate Survey, most students understand the graduate requirements and the advising staff provided “useful information and support”. Still, only 36 percent of the students agreed that faculty are accessible and available when needed. As the proposed PhD program comes in to being, either additional Student Services will be needed, or the MPA program will need to be simplified or reduced in size in order to maintain the high level of advising for master’s students.

Mentoring of Junior Faculty. While the Evans School is blessed with several new faculty hires, bringing enthusiastic and highly trained young faculty into the classroom, this also raises the challenge of mentoring the Assistant Professors. The junior faculty need to be given clear expectations regarding teaching assignments and expectations regarding journal publications. Also, the junior faculty should not be given major administrative assignments that will detract from their teaching and research functions. There have been a number of “slow promotions” that may be related to mentoring of the faculty.

Creating a Stronger Research Culture. As has been highlighted elsewhere in the report, ESPA currently benefits from having a deep and thoughtful “culture of graduate teaching” which involves multiple ongoing “conversations” among the faculty centered on the master’s degree programs. The strong commitment to high quality graduate teaching by ESPA faculty is major contributor to the current strength of the master’s programs offered by ESPA. At present, however, there is no corresponding “culture of research.” Indeed the evaluation team was struck by the frequency with which a commitment to high quality graduate professional instruction was mentioned as defining feature of ESPA, while research was barely mentioned, even though the ESPA faculty has a solid cadre of research-active faculty. To paraphrase one faculty member: “the research is there, but there is not a faculty-wide conversation about research in the same way that there is about teaching.”

Research needs to become an object of conversation throughout ESPA in the same way that teaching has. This will be especially important if a Ph.D. program is to be launched. Recent steps taken by the Dean are clearly moves in the direction of fostering such a research culture. These include creation of a Dean’s seminar series to bring outstanding scholars in public and non-profit management to discuss research, the initiation of a weekly research seminar with funds allotted to bring younger scholars to Evans, and the creation of a standing research committee to focus on research issues and the research agenda in ESPA. ESPA also provides funds for its faculty to participate in the main research conferences in public policy and management (and ESPA faculty have been regular participants in these conferences).

Again, it is important to stress that the gap is not in the level or quality of faculty research per-se. Rather it is the extent to which research is seen by the faculty as a core part of the ESPA collective mission on a par with teaching. What is called for is a “rebalancing” of the collective focus on these two areas of activity.

Student Financial Aid. The proposed PhD program would initially admit classes of three to five students per year. This is a feasible number given existing faculty resources, and is also probably the minimum size needed to develop a community of PhD students at ESPA. Yet, if the objective is to provide full-funding for incoming students, it will be necessary over time to generate funding sufficient to support between 12 and 20 fellowships (assuming that each student were to receive 4 years of support).

Employing PhD Students. Aside from raising funds from donors to support fellowships, the main other avenue would be to provide doctoral students with positions as teaching or research assistants. PhD programs are part instruction in the classroom, part learning by doing through participation in faculty research, and also part socialization into the community and culture of research in the relevant discipline (in this case, social science research applied to public policy and public management). The needed socialization in which PhD students “learn” to think and act like researchers is most likely to occur if PhD students have multiple opportunities to engage in discourse about research, and be exposed to different examples of faculty research. However, with no undergraduate program, the Evans School offers few opportunities for Teaching Assistantships for PhD students. And without an expanded research enterprise, the school will have insufficient research funding for the anticipated PhD students. Whether this will be possible will depend in part on ongoing discussions between ESPA and its affiliated research centers on ways in which the work of the centers might be better integrated into the academic programs of ESPA.

3. MAJOR PROGRAM INITIATIVES

As indicated above, the School’s proposed PhD program raises important questions of program design and resources allocation. This section attempts to summarize and characterize the nature of the problems and decisions that this is likely to raise.

(1) RE-FORMING THE MPA PROGRAM

Despite the documented growth of the MPA program, some refinements in programmatic structure are under discussion and invite caution as deliberations about the future unfold. Not all of the four degree tracks within the framework of the MPA appear vital. Of paramount concern is the fate of the Mid-Career Program where numbers are dwindling and students register concern over matters of advising, faculty deployment etc. By deftly segmenting the markets for the degree, the School may have unleashed internal competition across programs to the detriment of the Mid-Career students and strained its resources for effective delivery. Quite possibly, the School may also have exhausted its market share of middle managers who populate the Mid-Career track. Its offering at evening times may also add stress for part-time students, for professors as well as for support staff. The migration of resources away from that program may be further accelerated with the advent of the new doctoral program. Within the constraints on the School’s capacity to deliver effective programs, reassessing the split between the Executive and Mid-Career programs may be propitious.

Another undercurrent-- less empirically evident in numbers--is the professional penchant for skills over substance and rigor or, more colloquially put: the pitch of the MPA program to distinct segments of student markets. Some discussion of segregating the curriculum into two degrees (e.g. a Master of Public Administration and a Master of Public Policy or Policy Analysis) may be a worthwhile academic exercise but could undermine the distinctive niche the School has carved as both public policy and management. Bifurcating the single degree into two also could exaggerate internal competition for resources already attenuated with the prospect of a PhD; could create an invidious distinction now in balance across "applied vs. basic" learning; and could segregate faculty in now a cohesive School. Such "costs" merit alternatives such as simply recalculating the balance across knowledge, analysis and practice for distinct categories of students within a single degree and such as mounting another gateway for advanced skills.

More generally, the prospect of the doctoral program portends a paradox of success. A doctoral program would surely add another mark of maturity to the Evans School and help solidify its institutional signature in research. However, with a growing MPA program and a small faculty, the prudent allocation of resources becomes paramount across the professional masters and the doctorate.

(2) PROPOSED PH.D. PROGRAM:

The proposal by ESPA to offer a PhD in Public Policy and Management would initiate a significant change in the ESPA's culture and operations. It is clear that the proposal to offer a PhD has been developed in the same careful, deliberative style that we heard from all stakeholders is a hallmark of decision-making in ESPA. What has emerged is a faculty consensus (with perhaps a few skeptics, who nonetheless support the proposal) in favor of creating the new PhD program. The following will summarize the main strengths and weaknesses of the proposal.

Demand for Graduates from the Proposed Degree. There is a steady and growing demand for recipients of PhD degrees in Public Affairs (used here as a generic term to include the PhD in Public Policy and Management proposed by ESPA). When the PhD in Public Affairs first began to be offered, the demand for graduates came mainly from research organizations in the private sector and policy research and development units in the government. Since then, however, a number of academic programs have come to value the ability of well-trained PhDs in public affairs to contribute to interdisciplinary teaching and research. These programs include graduate programs in public administration and public policy, education policy, environmental policy, urban affairs, and nonprofit management. The future demand for well-qualified PhD recipients in fields such as public policy and public management is likely to increase due to faculty retirements in many public administration programs.

Moreover, one interesting feature of the market for PhDs in public policy and management is that, compared with disciplines such as economics and political science, there is somewhat less pressure for placement to be "downstream" (e.g. from a higher-ranked to a lower ranked program). Given that ESPA is recognized by its peers as a nationally-ranked program, successful graduates of the proposed PhD program who seek academic employment stand a good chance of finding academic positions at other highly-ranked graduate programs in public

administration/policy or in other multidisciplinary graduate programs at highly ranked research universities.

Curriculum and Faculty. If the program is to successfully produce high quality graduates, it requires a coherent curriculum, and a doctoral faculty competent to teach the curriculum. With regard to the former, the proposed PhD curriculum, perhaps not surprisingly, is grounded in the blend of policy analysis and management that is the signature of the existing graduate programs in ESPA. This strategy is wise, not only because it plays to existing strengths, but also because it results in a curriculum that should produce graduates who will be attractive to the two main employers of PhDs in public affairs: graduate programs in public administration and policy, and research institutes and think-tanks. The proposed doctoral program is well-designed to provide prospective graduates with the needed foundational competencies to undertake public policy research through the eight course core, plus provide exposure to a substantive area of policy research, and to one of several foundational disciplines in public policy research. In identifying the proposed substantive research areas, the faculty has also appropriately chosen to focus on areas of existing research strengths such as public management, environmental policy, and nonprofit management.

In addition, faculty in other key departments, notably economics, political science and sociology have agreed in principle to participate in the proposed PhD program. Such buy-in from the related disciplines is important because it could help alleviate some potential capacity issues raised by adding a new degree. But the willingness of faculty in other disciplines to participate should also be taken as a signal that offering an interdisciplinary PhD in Public Policy and Management is seen as an “academically appropriate” venture by key disciplinary faculty in fields that overlap with public policy and management.

Research Needs – As noted in the Section 2.d the Evans School faculty may need to expand and deepen their research commitments and research funding in order to fully support the proposed PhD program.

Admissions Requirements - Regarding its intended PhD admissions requirements, it is envisioned that the program will neither require, nor necessarily favor, in terms of granting advanced standing for prior coursework, that applicants have earned a related master’s degrees such as the MPA or MPP. As a possible alternative, we recommend that ESPA consider a general policy in place at a number of other doctoral programs in public affairs that (a) indicate a preference for applicants who have already earned a related master’s degree --- while also being open to applications from students who do not have such degrees, and (b) grant credits toward the PhD for students possessing such degrees. The advantage of such a policy is that it can serve to lower the amount of time and number of courses that students need to take in order to earn the PhD, which is attractive from the view point of applicants, and can also help conserve the need to use scarce financial aid dollars. A disadvantage is that ESPA would be granting credit toward the PhD for “master’s level” rather than “doctoral level courses” with a possible practical side effect of reducing the critical mass of students taking certain core courses. In the final analysis, given the particular circumstances of ESPA, it may be that the disadvantages of regularly granting advanced standing to applicants with related masters degrees may outweigh the advantages, but the decision may be worth revisiting nonetheless.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS:

a. BROADEN THE SCHOOL'S MISSION AND STANDING

The Evans School can magnify its mission beyond offering a top-flight MPA program in several ways. The rankings signal the School's national standing. Despite its small scale and regional focus, the School can project more assertively its strategic role within the University. The School is a powerful partner in bridging the proverbial "town and gown" divide in contrast to other academic units at the University. Whether through its Public Service Clinics, its targeted programs to mid-career and executive leaders in the public arena, its expertise in areas relevant to the community and larger region, the School can position itself as the University's exemplar in civic engagement. That identity or brand could have powerful dividends both for the Evans School and for the University as a whole. The fact that the School remains somewhat regional in its competitive scope for the recruitment and placement of students can have salutary dividends in this strategic role. Second, the small size coupled with the multi-disciplinary breadth of the Evans School should impel constructing powerful (albeit selective) alliances with other academic units across campus. The School's capacity at translating academic and often disciplinary knowledge into purposeful, professional expression makes the School an asset for other units where academic programs have become insular and often self-serving. The fact that the culture of the School is respectful of diverse disciplines and adroit at ferreting out their meaning for enhancing community—from the grassroots to the globe—make the Evans School a hospitable environment for transcending academic fiefdoms by forging partnerships. Third, its proximity to the Pacific Rim and the University's international reach are assets to be exploited in the best sense of the word.

Those strategic roles within the University, the region of the Northwest and the vibrant complex of Asia should empower the School to stretch beyond to greater national—indeed global-- distinction. Both Indiana University's School of Public and Environmental Affairs and the University of Georgia's School of Public and International Affairs have parlayed their expertise beyond regional settings to secure the very top rankings among public universities; their missions span markets from the grassroots to the globe. Prospective students in this day and age do search for programs that are, in one sense, grounded in location and, in another sense, ambitious in reach. The Evans School needs combine its assets in a more powerful, imaginative and far-reaching way.

Another aspect of this broadening is the development of the PhD program at the Evans School as currently being planned. The Committee agrees that the School is of sufficient maturity and capability, and this it is an opportune time to begin the PhD degree at Evans School.

b. SPECIFIC ITEMS

The Committee has the following specific recommendations for consideration by the Evans School.

(1) Align faculty resources with the needs of the proposed new PhD program. This can be addressed in at least three ways. First, new faculty could be hired to bolster the teaching and research activities as the PhD program gets up and running. We suspect that at least 3 new positions will be needed. Second, engage in more creative use of “Professors of Practice”—community and business experts in public administration and policy who can carry some of the load in the MPA program. This would make strategic use of non-academic experts in ways that can be vital and constructive. Third, as noted earlier, the School could consider reducing the four MPA programs to three by either dropping one (probably the mid-career MPA) or combining the mid-career and traditional MPA classes in some fashion.

(2) Improve and enhance mentoring of junior faculty to give clearer direction regarding research and publication activities expected for promotion. Provide relief from administrative and School committee assignments in return for increased research and publication output.

(3) Expand the research enterprise to accommodate the future needs of the PhD students. This can involve some shifting of faculty attention from the MPA program to research and some stronger integration of the Research Center activities with the teaching faculty, especially those faculty who will figure prominently in the PhD program. The junior faculty have recently organized a research seminar. This should be expanded and made a central piece of the School’s discourse alongside the intense and productive interactions on curriculum and teaching.

(4) While the School’s efforts in diversity are very strong and commendable, we suggest finding ways to expand this. For example, use of special opportunity hires may increase the diversity of the faculty. Both faculty and students should be encouraged to envision and try out a variety of mechanisms to appeal to diverse applicants for the School’s MPA and PhD programs.