

## Public Policy MPP (NEW Fall 2024)

### Mission Statement

#### Mission Statement (Full Description):

The Master of Public Policy program prepares working professionals to understand, design, and evaluate public policies that address real-world challenges in their communities, states, and the nation. Students gain practical skills in policy analysis, data interpretation, and communication to influence how policies are developed and implemented across the public and nonprofit sectors. This online program offers a blend of synchronous and asynchronous sessions using Canvas and Zoom, so students can connect with classmates while still managing their work and personal commitments. There are two required "immersion" experiences on the SMU campus - one at the beginning of their coursework, and one at the end. Graduates will be ready for careers like policy analyst or policy evaluator, or they can use their new skills to make a bigger impact in their current jobs, whether it's at the local, state, or national level.

Commented [SS1]: Exemplary!!!

#### Does your program offer courses at an off-campus instructional site (not at SMU Dallas campus)?:

No

#### Does your program offer courses through distance education technology (e.g., asynchronous, synchronous, or both)?:

Yes

#### During which academic year were students first enrolled in this program?:

AY2024-2025

#### Progress:

Complete

### Build qualitative and quantitative analytical skills.

#### Step 1A: SLO Number:

1

#### Step 1C: SLO Statement (Full Description):

By the end of the program, students will demonstrate proficiency in both qualitative and quantitative analytical skills necessary for policy analysis, especially as a way to support the decision-making process for policymakers and others.

#### Step 2A: Measure:

Student will demonstrate proficiency in both qualitative and quantitative analytical skills necessary for policy analysis through three projects, where 90% of students will achieve a "B" or higher:

1. First policy analysis paper in their first course, PPA 6301: Foundations of Public Policy.
2. Group evaluation project in their course PPA 6305: Implementation and Evaluation of Public Policy.
3. Capstone project to be completed in their Capstone B course.

Since the program is new, we will not have students in the PPA 6305 course until Summer 2025, and we will not have students in the Capstone course until 2026.

**Step 2B: Type of Measure (check all that apply):**

Capstone project, Written paper/project

**Step 2C: Is Measure direct or indirect?:**

Direct

**Step 3A: Target for Measure:**

90% of students will achieve a "B" or higher on all three projects.

**Step 4A: Was the target met for this Measure?:**

Partially Met

**Step 4B: Results and Findings for this Measure:**

Students demonstrated strong proficiency in qualitative and quantitative analytical skills. Adjustments to the rubric after Fall 2024 significantly improved clarity and helped students succeed in Spring 2025. Moving forward, continued refinement and application of rubrics and periodic training sessions will ensure sustained high performance.

**6301: Policy Analysis Paper**

Semester	Students Meeting Target	Percentage
Fall 2024	9/10	90%
Spring 2025	13/14	92.9%

No data is currently available for the PPA 6305 Evaluation course or the Capstone B course. Data collection will begin with the 6305 course starting Summer 2025 (the semester ends on August 11, so grades aren't in yet). Data collection will begin with the Capstone Be course in the Summer 2026. The initial assessments will be crucial for establishing baseline performance.

**Step 4C: Interpretation of Results:**

Students showed strong proficiency in analytical skills in both Fall and Spring. A strength observed was the clarity and rigor of assignments, while a challenge was ensuring consistent

**Commented [SS2]:** Grades without context do not provide insight into how well students are demonstrating expertise in specified content areas or established criteria. From this set of questions, are the faculty systematically able to determine areas where interventions may need to be made to help students be successful if you notice a pattern of declining understanding of that skill?

Consider creating a signature assignment (general assignment that could be implemented in different courses) that target these criteria:

1. Application of quantitative analytical methods
2. Application of qualitative analytical methods
3. Integration of mixed-methods approaches in policy analysis
4. Communication of analytical findings for policymaking decisions

interpretation of rubric expectations in the first term. Spring performance improved after rubric and instructional adjustments. I attached the original and updated rubrics for the Analysis paper and presentation.

**Documentation of Modifications:** After Fall 2024, faculty revised rubrics and clarified instructions. These changes were prompted by student questions and observed variation in assignment interpretation. The program director and faculty collaborated to ensure greater alignment, and two courses adopted at least some parts of the Bardach Eightfold path approach to policy analysis. The impact of these changes was evident in Spring results and will be monitored in future semesters, particularly in PPA 6305 and Capstone B.

### **Step 5A: Use of Results for Seeking Improvement (Action Plan):**

Based on student performance and questions in the first semester of teaching this course, rubrics were modified and clarified (linked here). Changes made include:

1. **Rubric Category Structure:**
  - o **Original:** Combined *Policy Options Analysis* into one 30% category.
  - o **Current:** Split into two distinct categories—*Policy Options* (20%) and *Policy Analysis* (30%)—for greater clarity and more granular grading.
2. **Weight Distribution Adjusted:**
  - o **Original:** 30% for *Problem Definition*, 30% for *Policy Options Analysis*, 15% for *Recommendations*, 15% for *Writing*.
  - o **Current:** Rebalanced to 25% for *Problem Definition*, 20% for *Policy Options*, 30% for *Policy Analysis*, 15% for *Recommendations*, and 10% for *Professional Writing*.
3. **Improved Rubric Clarity:**
  - o **Current version** tightened the language in performance levels, removing redundant phrases and clarifying what “good” vs. “excellent” looks like.
4. **Professional Writing Reduced in Weight:**
  - o **Original:** 15%
  - o **Current:** 10%—to increase weight on analytical and evaluative components.

### **ACTION PLAN MOVING FOWARD**

- **Responsible Party:** Program Director/Instructor for 6301 & 6305; Instructor for Capstone B
- **Implementation Timeline:**
  - o For 6301: Revised rubric will be fully implemented in all sections starting Fall 2025. Rubric will be introduced at the beginning of the course and reinforced through formative checkpoints.
  - o For 6305 (new course): Data will be collected, assessed and reported on in the next assessment plan.
  - o For Capstone B: Course will be designed and data will be collected and reported on in Assessment Year 2027-2028.
- **Communication Plan:** The updated rubric will be reviewed in class during the first two weeks and posted in Canvas with annotated examples.
- **Reassessment Plan:** The updated rubric’s effectiveness will be reassessed following the completion of Fall 2025 capstone projects. Faculty will review grading consistency,

student outcomes, and student feedback to determine whether further refinement is needed.

**Intended Impact on Student Learning:**

This action is expected to improve students' understanding of assignment expectations, strengthen analytical performance in the capstone, and support more transparent and consistent assessment practices across faculty.

Attached Files

[Current - Policy Analysis Presentation Assignment and Rubric.docx](#)

[Original - Policy Analysis Presentation Assignment and Rubric \(3\).docx](#)

**Step 5B: Type of Action:**

New course developed/proposed

**Step 5C: Dialogue Participants (check all that apply):**

Committee, Faculty

**Step 5D: Evidence of Dialogue:**

The new courses are discussed as follows:

- 6305:
  - This course was officially launched this summer, so results will be discussed at the August 13 curriculum committee meeting.
- The design of Capstone B has not been launched yet, though the designer/instructor was just hired. I'm attaching the curriculum committee notes that approve the hiring.

6301 Rubric Updates will be shared at August 12 curriculum committee meeting.

**Step 5E: Type of other Improvements (check all that apply):**

**Step 5F: Other Improvements (Full Description):**

**Step 6A: Status Update on Action(s) Identified in the Previous Assessment Cycle (Full Description):**

N/A

**Step 6B: Status Update on Previously Identified Action Plan(s):**

Not applicable for this cycle (explain in Step 6A)

**Progress:**

Complete

## **Design, implement, and evaluate public policy.**

### **Step 1A: SLO Number:**

2

### **Step 1C: SLO Statement (Full Description):**

By the end of the program, students will be able to design, implement, and evaluate public policies, demonstrating an understanding of the potential unintended consequences.

### **Step 2A: Measure:**

Student will demonstrate proficiency through two projects, where 90% of students will achieve a "B" or higher:

1. Group evaluation project in their course PPA 6305: Implementation and Evaluation of Public Policy.
2. Capstone project to be completed in their Capstone B course.

Since the program is new, we will not have students in the PPA 6305 course until Summer 2025, and we will not have students in the Capstone course until 2026.

### **Step 2B: Type of Measure (check all that apply):**

Capstone project, Written paper/project

### **Step 2C: Is Measure direct or indirect?:**

Direct

### **Step 3A: Target for Measure:**

90% of students will achieve a "B" or higher

**Commented [SS3]:** Provide a rationale for this target (e.g., is this a faculty-determined benchmark, based on previous AY data, etc.).

### **Step 4A: Was the target met for this Measure?:**

No Students Enrolled

### **Step 4B: Results and Findings for this Measure:**

6305 will be reported on in the 2026-2027 assessment plan and Capstone B will be reported on in the 2027-2028 assessment plan.

### **Step 4C: Interpretation of Results:**

N/A

**Step 5A: Use of Results for Seeking Improvement (Action Plan):**

Implement classes and collect data in 2026-2028.

**Step 5B: Type of Action:**

No action - New/low-enrolled program

**Step 5C: Dialogue Participants (check all that apply):****Step 5D: Evidence of Dialogue:****Step 5E: Type of other Improvements (check all that apply):****Step 5F: Other Improvements (Full Description):****Step 6A: Status Update on Action(s) Identified in the Previous Assessment Cycle (Full Description):****Step 6B: Status Update on Previously Identified Action Plan(s):****Progress:**

Complete

**Communicate policy analysis and recommendations effectively.****Step 1A: SLO Number:**

3

**Step 1C: SLO Statement (Full Description):**

By the end of the program, students will be able to effectively communicate policy analysis and recommendations to relevant stakeholders in both written and oral formats. Students will achieve a minimum score of 80% on at least three key assignments, including policy briefs, presentations, and stakeholder memos, where clarity, persuasiveness, and appropriateness for the target audience are assessed.

**Step 2A: Measure:**

90% of students will achieve a minimum score of 80% on at least three key assignments, including policy briefs, presentations, and stakeholder memos, where clarity, persuasiveness, and appropriateness for the target audience are assessed:

1. First policy analysis paper and presentation in their first course, PPA 6301: Foundations of Public Policy.

2. Group evaluation project in their course PPA 6305: Implementation and Evaluation of Public Policy.
3. Capstone project to be completed in their Capstone B course. Students will come to campus to do a required presentation of their project, where they will be rated on a rubric by public policy professionals and myself.

Since the program is new, we will not have students in the PPA 6305 course until Summer 2025, and we will not have students in the Capstone course until 2026.

**Step 2B: Type of Measure (check all that apply):**

Capstone project, Presentation, Written paper/project

**Step 2C: Is Measure direct or indirect?:**

Direct

**Step 3A: Target for Measure:**

90% of students achieve an 80% or better; particular analysis of communications sections included.

**Commented [SS4]:** Provide a rationale for this target (e.g., is this a faculty-determined benchmark, based on previous AY data, etc.).

**Step 4A: Was the target met for this Measure?:**

Partially Met

**Step 4B: Results and Findings for this Measure:**

Students demonstrated strong proficiency in communicating policy analyses and recommendations. The data below demonstrates their performance over the fall and spring semesters, the first two semesters the course was offered.

**6301: Policy Analysis Presentation**

Semester	Students Meeting Target	Percentage
Fall 2024	9/10	90%
Spring 2025	13/14	92.9%

No data is currently available for the PPA 6305 Evaluation course or the Capstone B course. Data collection will begin with the 6305 course starting Summer 2025 (the semester ends on August 11, so grades aren't in yet). Data collection will begin with the Capstone B course in the Summer 2026. The initial assessments will be crucial for establishing baseline performance.

Attached Files

[Policy Analysis Presentation Assignment and Rubric \(1\) \(2\).docx](#)

**Step 4C: Interpretation of Results:**

Assessment data from the Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 semesters of the MPP 6301 Policy Analysis course indicate strong student performance in written policy communication, with 90% and 92.9% of students, respectively, meeting or exceeding the 80% benchmark. Students report that the presentation was challenging but they are glad they did it.

**Step 5A: Use of Results for Seeking Improvement (Action Plan):**

Assessment results were shared at monthly curriculum committee meetings. One improvement made was how we approach questioning after presentations. In the first semester, I focused instructions to students listening to presentations to ask "supportive" questions. However, I realized that students could handle more challenging questions. I removed that instruction in the second semester, which allowed students to ask questions that were harder to answer by the presenter. This was an excellent way to increase the rigor, and students handled it very well. One additional adjustment I am making starting this summer is to add my own challenging question for each presenter to answer. I think this will further challenge students, but I will also be able to support as needed.

Additionally, we will collect baseline data on the other two courses, which will help us understand if students are meeting this learning objective over time or not.

**Step 5B: Type of Action:**

Additional emphasis or time on content

**Step 5C: Dialogue Participants (check all that apply):**

Committee, Student

**Step 5D: Evidence of Dialogue:**

We discussed these results at curriculum committee meetings, and I talked with students informally after both presentations for feedback.

**Step 5E: Type of other Improvements (check all that apply):**

**Step 5F: Other Improvements (Full Description):**

**Step 6A: Status Update on Action(s) Identified in the Previous Assessment Cycle (Full Description):**

N/A

**Step 6B: Status Update on Previously Identified Action Plan(s):**

Not applicable for this cycle (explain in Step 6A)

**Progress:**

Complete

## **Identify policy solutions.**

### **Step 1A: SLO Number:**

4

### **Step 1C: SLO Statement (Full Description):**

By the end of the program, students will be able to identify viable policy solutions and analyze the political and economic institutions that influence the policy process.

### **Step 2A: Measure:**

90% of students will demonstrate this ability through at least two policy analysis projects and a final capstone project, achieving a score of 80% or higher on rubrics that assess their understanding of institutional influence on policy.

1. Assignment in their PPA 6304: Economics for Public Policy course.
2. Group evaluation project in their course PPA 6305: Implementation and Evaluation of Public Policy.
3. Capstone project to be completed in their Capstone B course. Students will come to campus to do a required presentation of their project, where they will be rated on a rubric by public policy professionals and myself.

Since the program is new, we will not have students in the PPA 6304 course until Spring 2025, the PPA 6305 course until Summer 2025, and we will not have students in the Capstone course until 2026.

### **Step 2B: Type of Measure (check all that apply):**

Capstone project, Written paper/project

### **Step 2C: Is Measure direct or indirect?:**

### **Step 3A: Target for Measure:**

90% of students will demonstrate this ability through at least two policy analysis projects and a final capstone project, achieving a score of 80% or higher on rubrics that assess their understanding of institutional influence on policy.

### **Step 4A: Was the target met for this Measure?:**

Met

### **Step 4B: Results and Findings for this Measure:**

Outstanding understanding of identifying viable policy solutions and analyzing the political and economic institutions that influence the policy process by all students evaluated. The instructional approach will continue with the current economic analysis model due to its effectiveness. However, the Evaluation course launched in Summer 2025 and the Capstone B course in the Summer of 2027, so no data was collected for that part of the goal. The table below represents student grades on the final assignment. The instructions and rubric is linked for this assignment as well.

Semester	Students Meeting Target	Percentage
Spring 2025	9/9	100%

The results for this outcome are very strong, with 100% of students meeting or exceeding the 80% target. This suggests that students are mastering core concepts in public sector economics, including taxation, externalities, public goods, and government spending. The high performance may be attributed to the clarity of the assignments, relevance of real-world examples, and faculty expertise in the subject matter (the faculty member is an award-winning professor in our Department of Economics). Because this is the first offering of the course, there are no prior years to compare results. However, the consistency across all students in a single cohort is notable and promising.

**Step 4C: Interpretation of Results:**

Students showed strong proficiency on this SLO; however, two of the three metrics weren't collected due to this being a new program. A strength observed was the clarity and rigor of assignments, while a challenge was ensuring consistent interpretation of rubric expectations in the first term. Spring performance improved after rubric and instructional adjustments.

**Step 5A: Use of Results for Seeking Improvement (Action Plan):**

**Step 5B: Type of Action:**

No action - New/low-enrolled program

**Step 5C: Dialogue Participants (check all that apply):**

**Step 5D: Evidence of Dialogue:**

**Step 5E: Type of other Improvements (check all that apply):**

**Step 5F: Other Improvements (Full Description):**

**Step 6A: Status Update on Action(s) Identified in the Previous Assessment Cycle (Full Description):**

**Step 6B: Status Update on Previously Identified Action Plan(s):**

Not applicable for this cycle (explain in Step 6A)

**Progress:**

Complete

**Economics**

**Step 1A: SLO Number:**

5

**Step 1C: SLO Statement (Full Description):**

By the end of the program, students will develop a foundational understanding of public sector economics, including concepts like public goods, externalities, taxation, and government spending.

**Step 2A: Measure:**

90% of students will demonstrate this understanding through at least two major assignments in their economics course and finance and budgeting course, scoring at least 80% on rubrics that assess their comprehension and application of economic principles.

1. Assignment in their PPA 6304: Economics for Public Policy course.
2. Assignment in their PPA 6307: Finance and Budgeting for Public Policy course.

Since the program is new, we will not have students in the PPA 6304 course until Spring 2025, the PPA 6307 course until Fall 2025.

**Step 2B: Type of Measure (check all that apply):**

Written paper/project

**Step 2C: Is Measure direct or indirect?:**

Direct

**Step 3A: Target for Measure:**

90% of students will demonstrate this understanding through at least two major assignments in their economics course and finance and budgeting course, scoring at least 80%.

**Commented [SS5]:** Provide a rationale for this target (e.g., is this a faculty-determined benchmark, based on previous AY data, etc.).

**Step 4A: Was the target met for this Measure?:**

Partially Met

**Step 4B: Results and Findings for this Measure:**

Outstanding understanding of public sector economics was demonstrated by all students evaluated. The instructional approach will continue with the current economic analysis model

due to its effectiveness. However, the Finance course will launch in Fall 2025, so no data was collected for that part of the goal. The table below represents student grades on the final assignment. The instructions and rubric is linked for this assignment as well.

Semester	Students Meeting Target	Percentage
Spring 2025	9/9	100%

Attached Files

[Module 15 Assignment.pdf](#)

#### **Step 4C: Interpretation of Results:**

The results for this outcome are very strong, with 100% of students meeting or exceeding the 80% target. This suggests that students are mastering core concepts in public sector economics, including taxation, externalities, public goods, and government spending. The high performance may be attributed to the clarity of the assignments, relevance of real-world examples, and faculty expertise in the subject matter (the faculty member is an award-winning professor in our Department of Economics). Because this is the first offering of the course, there are no prior years to compare results. However, the consistency across all students in a single cohort is notable and promising.

Documentation of Modifications or Previous Changes: As this was the inaugural delivery of the course, instructional design efforts were focused on creating scaffolded assignments and aligning them with course learning outcomes. The faculty member collaborated with the instructional design team to build a clear, outcomes-aligned structure and participated in rubric calibration discussions. These proactive design steps, taken before course launch, likely contributed to the strong results. In future semesters, the program will continue to monitor student performance, gather qualitative feedback, and review rubric performance to determine if further adjustments are needed. This course will be offered in the Fall of 2025 and the Spring of 2026, so we will have good data to analyze during our next assessment round.

#### **Step 5A: Use of Results for Seeking Improvement (Action Plan):**

1. Assessment results will be shared at our August back-to-school faculty meeting.
2. It is still early, so assessment results haven't drive change. However, during the course, the instructor and I worked closely to make sure the course was meeting student needs.
3. One action we took was to adjust the workload of some of the assignments. This course has a very heavy weekly writing load, so after consultation, the instructor decided to reduce a few of these. This allowed to keep course rigor while also supporting full-time working students. The action plan for this course is to collect data in the Fall of 2025 and Spring of 2026. We will respond to the data as the course proceeds and report back during the next assessment cycle.

#### **Step 5B: Type of Action:**

No action - New/low-enrolled program

**Step 5C: Dialogue Participants (check all that apply):**

Administrator,Committee,Faculty,Staff

**Step 5D: Evidence of Dialogue:**

This data will be shared in the following places/time:

- At the next Curriculum Committee meeting: August 12
  - This includes sharing with the Dean and program staff who attend the meeting
- At our Back-to-School August faculty meeting: August 13

**Step 5E: Type of other Improvements (check all that apply):**

Other

**Step 5F: Other Improvements (Full Description):**

As this was the inaugural delivery of the course, the faculty member collaborated with the instructional design team to build a clear, outcomes-aligned structure and participated in rubric calibration discussions. These proactive design steps, taken before course launch, likely contributed to the strong results. In future semesters, the program will continue to monitor student performance, gather qualitative feedback, and review rubric performance to determine if further adjustments are needed. This course will be offered in the Fall of 2025 and the Spring of 2026, so we will have good data to analyze during our next assessment round.

**Step 6A: Status Update on Action(s) Identified in the Previous Assessment Cycle (Full Description):**

This is a new program, so there were no previous action items.

**Step 6B: Status Update on Previously Identified Action Plan(s):**

Not applicable for this cycle (explain in Step 6A)

**Progress:**

Complete

**Ethical Leadership**

**Step 1A: SLO Number:**

6

**Step 1C: SLO Statement (Full Description):**

By the end of the program, students will refine their approach to ethical leadership in policymaking by engaging in case studies, ethical frameworks, and policy evaluation exercises.

**Step 2A: Measure:**

90% of students will demonstrate this through at least three key assignments, including oral interviews in their ethical leadership course, their policy capstone, and a final reflective essay, scoring at least 80% on rubrics assessing their understanding and application of ethical principles in leadership.

1. Oral Interview assignment in their PPA 6306: Ethics and Leadership course
2. Capstone project to be completed in Capstone B
3. Final reflective essay to be completed in Capstone B

Since the program is new, we will not have students in the PPA 6306 course until Summer 2025, the capstone courses until 2026.

**Step 2B: Type of Measure (check all that apply):**

Capstone project, Interview, Presentation, Reflection, Written paper/project

**Step 2C: Is Measure direct or indirect?:**

Direct

**Step 3A: Target for Measure:**

90% of students will achieve 80% or better

**Step 4A: Was the target met for this Measure?:**

No Students Enrolled

**Step 4B: Results and Findings for this Measure:**

1. Oral Interview assignment in their PPA 6306: Ethics and Leadership course - this is occurring right now for the first time, so will be reported on in next year's report.
2. Capstone project to be completed in Capstone B - Capstone B will be offered for the first time in Summer 2026
3. Final reflective essay to be completed in Capstone B

**Step 4C: Interpretation of Results:**

N/A

**Step 5A: Use of Results for Seeking Improvement (Action Plan):**

N/A

**Step 5B: Type of Action:**

No action - New/low-enrolled program

**Step 5C: Dialogue Participants (check all that apply):**

**Step 5D: Evidence of Dialogue:**

N/A

**Step 5E: Type of other Improvements (check all that apply):**

**Step 5F: Other Improvements (Full Description):**

N/A

**Step 6A: Status Update on Action(s) Identified in the Previous Assessment Cycle (Full Description):**

N/A

**Step 6B: Status Update on Previously Identified Action Plan(s):**

Not applicable for this cycle (explain in Step 6A)

**Progress:**

Complete

## Adjunct Faculty Hiring and Support

**Step 1A: PG Number:**

1

**Step 1C: PG Statement (Full Description):**

By the end of the 2024-2025 academic year, the program will hire at least three new faculty members with expertise in public policy analysis and administration. The program will also provide these new faculty members with comprehensive onboarding and professional development opportunities, including attending at least two onboarding workshops. Finally, the program will institute a new performance evaluation system for the lead faculty.

**Step 2A: Measure:**

Success will be measured by faculty hiring, satisfaction, and retention. The lead faculty will complete the new performance evaluation process with at least a "meets expectations".

**Step 2B: Is Measure direct or indirect?:**

**Commented [SS6]:** This is a good goal... but it is missing the goal that hiring new faculty will bring to the program. Consider this:

By the end of the 2024-2025 academic year, the program **will strengthen instructional capacity by hiring at least three new faculty members with expertise in public policy analysis** and administration and providing each with at least two professional onboarding workshops. The program will also implement a revised performance evaluation system for lead faculty.

Direct, Indirect

**Step 3A: Target for Measure:**

Success will be measured by a 90% retention rate of newly hired faculty after the first year and positive feedback from new faculty on support structures, as assessed through interviews and a focus group/group discussion. The lead faculty will complete the new performance evaluation process with at least a "meets expectations".

**Step 4A: Was the target met for this Measure?:**

Met

**Step 4B: Results and Findings for this Measure:**

Results of the measures are as follows:

Measure	Result
90% Retention Rate of newly hired faculty	100% of faculty retained from FY 25 to FY 26; Ten faculty have been hired between August of 2024 to date
Positive feedback	Through faculty interviews, all faculty are happy with the program and supports; we have responded to any feedback we've been given immediately; faculty round table (focus group) being scheduled for Fall 2025
New Performance Evaluation Process	Has been developed and ready to implement in FY26

**Step 4C: Interpretation of Results:**

Ten adjunct faculty have been hired to date, with a 100% retention rate. Faculty feedback indicates high satisfaction with onboarding and teaching experiences. The biggest concern raised was workload in larger classes in the future (we currently have max enrollment of 14, but that may increase up to 25 over time). Faculty appreciated the structured support during course design and preparation.

As the program launched, an onboarding structure was implemented that includes weekly instructional design meetings, a kickoff session with the program director, a "bridge to teaching" session to prep Canvas sites and live sessions, a Quality Matters review, and a monthly faculty newsletter. These practices were new and are being maintained and refined.

The program plans to continue onboarding practices, with the next cohort of instructors receiving the same structure. The program will pilot a process for capturing ongoing faculty feedback after each semester. A new initiative in 2025–2026 will explore optional peer observations or mentoring to help support instructional growth.

**Step 5A: Use of Results for Seeking Improvement (Action Plan):**

The immediate action plan is to implement the performance evaluation plan for faculty in FY 26. This includes:

The program has established a multi-part evaluation process for adjunct faculty designed to ensure instructional quality, support continuous improvement, and respond to student needs. The evaluation process includes:

- **Student Evaluation Review:**  
The lead faculty will review course evaluations completed by students at the end of each teaching semester. This allows for timely identification of patterns, strengths, or concerns in teaching effectiveness.
- **Classroom Observation:**  
Faculty teaching will be observed by the program director or designated lead faculty at least once every 1–2 years. If student feedback indicates issues, or if the instructor is new to the program, observations may be conducted more frequently.
- **Annual Performance Review:**  
Each adjunct will have an annual performance meeting with the lead faculty, which will include discussion of student evaluations, any available observation notes, and overall instructional progress. The meeting also offers instructors an opportunity to reflect on their experience and suggest improvements.
- **Responsive Support:**  
If student complaints or other concerns arise mid-semester, the lead faculty will schedule a check-in and may conduct additional classroom observations. Depending on the situation, additional resources (e.g., instructional design support, peer mentoring) may be offered.

This evaluation system balances oversight with developmental support, helping faculty thrive while maintaining high standards for teaching and student engagement.

Timeline:

- August 12: Announced and reviewed with Faculty
- October 31: Schedule of faculty observations set
- January 31: All Fall course student evaluations reviewed and discussed with adjuncts
- May 31: All Spring course student evaluations reviewed and discussed with adjuncts

**Step 5B: Dialogue Participants (check all that apply):**

Committee, Faculty, Staff

**Step 5C: Evidence of Dialogue:**

This will be discussed at our August 12 curriculum committee meeting and at our August 13 faculty meeting .

**Step 5D: Type of other Improvements (check all that apply):**

**Step 5E: Other Improvements (Full Description):**

**Step 6A: Status Update on Action(s) Identified in the Previous Assessment Cycle (Full Description):**

N/A new program

**Step 6B: Status Update on Previously Identified Action Plan(s):**

Not applicable for this cycle (explain in Step 6A)

**Progress:**

Complete

**Enrollment Growth**

**Step 1A: PG Number:**

2

**Step 1C: PG Statement (Full Description):**

Because this is a new program, many of our activities are focused on growing our enrollment and retaining students. Within two years, the program will increase enrollment, aiming to enroll at least 40 new students annually through targeted marketing, outreach to professionals in related fields, and partnerships with public sector organizations.

**Step 2A: Measure:**

Success will be measured by annual enrollment statistics and specific data on each marketing effort (e.g., how do students hear about the program, what makes them decide to enroll versus not enroll, etc).

**Step 2B: Is Measure direct or indirect?:**

Direct

**Step 3A: Target for Measure:**

By the beginning of Academic Year 2026-2027, we will be enrolling 40 new students per year (e.g., 15 in the Fall, 12 in the Spring, and 10 in the Summer).

**Step 4A: Was the target met for this Measure?:**

Partially Met

**Step 4B: Results and Findings for this Measure:**

Semester	Targeted Enrollment Goal	Final Enrollment Number
Fall 2024	10	10
Spring 2025	12	14
Summer 2025	5	4

The table above shows are enrollment goals versus actual enrollment numbers. Because this was the first year we launched the program it was difficult to anticipate how many students might enroll each semester and in total. We aimed for a minimum of 27 students altogether and assumed the first semester would be a slow start, as we were unable to fully market the program until late spring because we didn't have SACSCOC final approval yet. We also weren't sure how many students we'd get in the summer, so we kept that estimate very conservative. For FY 26, our goal is 31 students at a minimum, but stretching for 40 students to enroll.

After we got full SACSCOC approval, our marketing efforts included:

- SEO optimization and a targeted social media campaign by our OPM partner, All Campus.
- A coordinated social media campaign through our Moody Graduate School of Education handles.
- Articles about the program, preparing for graduate school, and a start of "Student highlight series" where we do a video interview of current students.
- At least one on campus and one virtual recruiting event. On campus this included doing an evening student tour of campus and the Moody Graduate School of Education building. Virtual events included guest speaker webinars.
- Mobilizing our curriculum committee, adjunct faculty, and new industry advisory committee to help with recruitment by giving them a social media "toolkit" and equipping them with the information they need to talk about/champion our program.

#### **Step 4C: Interpretation of Results:**

This year was really about establishing a baseline and understanding how our student market would react. We accurately predicted that the fall enrollment would be smaller than anticipated, as we were unable to fully market the program. We also accurately predicted the smaller summer cohort.

We were able to make the following adjustments:

- Increase our marketing efforts by adding "champions" through our committees and adjuncts, increasing the videos/blogs we send out to prospective students, and hosting online and in-person events.
- Improve our onboarding of students by adjusting our application deadline and developing onboarding resources, like a welcome/advising video.

We are concerned with summer enrollment. While we had conservatively estimated 5 students, we only enrolled 4. Our curriculum is difficult to teach with only 4 students, as it's based on high engagement, breakout groups, peer reviews, etc. With only 4 students, it has been hard to effectively implement these practices.

**Step 5A: Use of Results for Seeking Improvement (Action Plan):**

Assessment results and enrollment trends will be reviewed at the Curriculum Committee meeting on August 12 and discussed at the faculty meeting on August 13. Based on these results, the following actions will be taken:

1. We will continue to diversify and intensify our outreach by expanding our champion network, increasing blog and video output, and offering more frequent and accessible recruitment events.
2. To improve conversion rates, we will evaluate application timelines and offer earlier onboarding supports such as advising videos and course planning guides.
3. To address the low summer enrollment, we will:
  - o Launch a dedicated marketing push in January–March focused on summer start prospects.
  - o Survey prospective students who inquired but did not apply/enroll for Summer 2025.
4. Student feedback from the Summer 2025 cohort will be collected and analyzed in early August.
5. Collect one additional year of data in the Summer 2026 to see if this is an anomaly or a start of a trend.

**Step 5B: Dialogue Participants (check all that apply):**

Committee, Faculty, Staff

**Step 5C: Evidence of Dialogue:**

This will be discussed at the following meetings:

- August 12: Curriculum Committee meeting
- August 13: Faculty meeting

**Step 5D: Type of other Improvements (check all that apply):**

Advertising and marketing campaigns, Enhanced recruitment effort

**Step 5E: Other Improvements (Full Description):****Step 6A: Status Update on Action(s) Identified in the Previous Assessment Cycle (Full Description):****Step 6B: Status Update on Previously Identified Action Plan(s):**

Not applicable for this cycle (explain in Step 6A)

**Progress:**

Complete