

Master of Public Administration Newsletter

Fall 2017, Issue 1



MPA Program News

Director's Update

As we celebrate our 41st year, we look forward to future successes for our students and alumni. To date, we have over 1,000 alumni in local, state, federal, and international positions. We support students through coursework online, in person, and in a hybrid format. For individuals unsure of completing an entire master's degree, we offer a certificate in nonprofit administration, and in Fall 2018, we plan to offer a 12 credit online certificate in public administration. To make graduate coursework more accessible for our distance students we have two "robots" that allow students to virtually attend in-person classes. This year also marks our second year for our MPA mentor program, which pairs students with alumni to provide career advice. We would love to hear from you – serve as a guest speaker or join our mentorship program!

Sara Rinfret, MPA Director



Online MPA Program ranked as the 18th most affordable in the nation for 2017

Affordablecolleges.com has ranked the University of Montana's online MPA program as #18 in the nation for affordability. The UM MPA ranking recognizes the program's excellence in providing students with one-on-one attention from core faculty.

New! Mission Statement

Spring 2017 MPA students, alumni, and faculty voted for a new mission statement: The MPA program is designed to prepare students for administrative careers in public and nonprofit agencies by satisfying the knowledge and skill requirements for both pre-career and mid-career students.

Spread the word! Recruit for the UM MPA program!



Alumni Corner

Deena Mansour is the associate director of the Mike and Maureen Mansfield Center at UM, founder of the Women's Leadership Initiative, and an alumna of UM's MPA program. As an alumna, Mansour participates in the MPA mentor program through which she mentors a current MPA student. Mansour says her MPA degree has been instrumental in the success of her career. She had a wealth of experience with international affairs as a Foreign Service Officer, but pursuing her MPA provided her with a research perspective and the practical tools to complete her work more effectively. Working with the Mansfield Center, Mansour helps promote public service globally by identifying shared interests that Montana has with countries around the world and finding ways that working together can benefit everyone. Mansour's MPA degree has empowered her to create opportunities and think creatively in her career.



Student Spotlight

Jen Zellmer is a student currently enrolled in the MPA program. Last year, Zellmer was selected to compete in the annual NASPAA-Batten Student Simulation Competition, hosted by NASPAA, the accrediting body of MPA programs. The simulation is one day and requires graduate students to work in teams to solve a complex public policy issue. Zellmer and her team won the competition for the western region. Zellmer said, "The goal of the simulation was to take on the role of a public policy maker and try to create good policy, save money, help the greatest number of people, and work together." She valued her team's strategic and efficient decision-making.

University of Montana Big Sky Poll & Training

Fall 2018 the MPA Program is piloting a course – Social Science Research Lab – that includes MPA and Business Analytics students. The goal of the course is to launch a statewide public opinion poll and design applied research trainings for public sector employees. Chelsea Rayfield (MPA student) noted, "Working on trainings and professional development provides hands-on learning." Jason Wiener (Business Analytics), stated, "The class is an opportunity to participate in public opinion polling and to develop assessment tools for trainings." Results from their survey will be released in March 2018 to the public.

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