

As part of the West Virginia University Board of Governor's Rule 2.2 Program Review process, the WVU Provost's Office required that a single Program Review Self-Study Form be completed on behalf of all identified programs in the department or unit. This Program Review Self-Study Form was to be submitted to the Provost's Office by end of day on August 1, 2023. The Provost's Office reviewed the submitted Program Review Self-Study Forms in early August.

Self-Study content is unvetted by the Provost's Office. As such, the WVU Provost's Office cannot attest to the accuracy of any data, analyses, or statements provided within. Also, redactions were made where warranted for the protection of individual identities around sensitive information.

**Q1.1.**  
BOG Program Review Self-Study Form

This is the self-study form that will be completed in support of the summer 2023 academic transformation program portfolio review.

Only one program review self-study is to be submitted per unit; all of the unit's *programs* will be covered by one self-study.

**Q1.2.** Select the appropriate academic unit under review.

College	Eberly College of Arts and Sciences ▼
Department or School	Public Administration ▼

**Q1.3.** List all of the unit's programs.

Example:

BA Biology  
BS Biology  
MS Biology  
PhD Biology

Q1.4. Name and Email of the person completing the self-study

Name	Maria del Guadalupe Davidson
Email Address	lupe.davidson@mail.wvu.edu

Q1.5. How were faculty given the opportunity to contribute to, review and provide feedback on this self-study?

An initial meeting was held July 12, 2023, to discuss the self-study. Before the meeting, a link to a Drive folder containing material relevant to the self-study was sent to faculty and staff. During that meeting, faculty and staff were invited to work collaboratively to address the questions, provide comments, and some faculty were assigned specific questions to address. The Program Review Self-Study (Word doc) was also uploaded to the Drive folder. Faculty were invited to share answers to the questions or add notes. A rough draft was uploaded to the shared Drive July 19, 2023. Faculty were asked to revise the draft and to provide answers to remaining questions. Revisions were due Monday, July 24, 2023, at 2:00PM. A draft was sent to the Dean's Office for review July 24, 2023, and the Dean's Office provided feedback 7/25/23. This feedback was sent to the faculty 7/25/23. A follow up meeting to discuss and review the self-study was held July 26, 2023. During that meeting the following timeline was agreed to: Collaborative Writing in Draft Two 7/25-7/27 at 12PM (EST); Volunteers will receive edited/formatted Draft Three 7/27 at 3PM (EST); Volunteer Editor will email edited Draft to the group 7/30 at 12PM (EST) and Lupe will upload Draft Three to our shared Drive; Final comments/light revisions due from group 7/31 12PM (EST); Final version emailed to group 8/1 at 12PM (EST); Submission to Transformation website by 4:45PM. On 7/28/23 faculty were sent a link to the Draft Three shared drive folder and emailed the following documents: "Draft Three Faculty Review\_7.28.23" (edited); "Program Review Self-Study Draft Two COMPLETE\_7.27.23" (so they could compare with Draft Three); 7.2 Program Data (to be submitted as a pdf); 7.3 Student Information (to be submitted as a pdf). Faculty final edits were submitted 7/31/23.

Q2.1. Explain how the unit and its programs contributes to WVU's [mission](#).

This response is limited to 7500 characters, approximately 2 single spaced pages.

The Public Administration unit serves WVU's land-grant mission in teaching, research, and engagement. Public Administration has existed since 1969 when a strategic decision was made to provide public service workforce development for the state, its communities, and beyond. Given the challenges and opportunities presented in today's civic, social, and economic context, the need for this workforce development continues. The unit's flagship program is its nationally accredited Master of Public Administration (MPA), the gold standard in public service through government and nonprofit organizations. It is the only accredited MPA program in West Virginia. Within the MPA, Areas of Emphasis and associated Graduate Certificates are offered in both Healthcare Administration and Community Development fields of practice. The unit also designed and fostered the Graduate Certificate in Cultural Resource Management before its transfer to the History Department and continues close collaboration with the program. Public Administration also designed and delivers the Master of Legal Studies online program. These allied professions have added breadth and depth to the public service workforce development mission delivered by Public Administration. The first cohort of nine students enrolled in 1969 and graduated in 1970. Over 50 years later, the program is proud of the nearly 2,000 alumni who have made public service their calling [see 7.1 for additional information on current and past employees with degrees in Public Administration]. From 2018-2022, 80% of MPA students came from within the state. Half to two-thirds of graduates stay in the state, working for WVU, state and local government agencies, and WV non-profits. The multidisciplinary nature of public service and the unit's faculty expertise lends collaborative synergy and value-added instructional support to other units and colleges. This includes undergraduate and graduate classroom education in virtually every college on campus and the WVU Extension Service through community education. In addition, current faculty are listed among the graduate faculty in the School of Design and Community Development. Regarding WVU's research and engagement mission, as is detailed in later sections, Public Administration faculty members have published widely in many areas of relevance to public administration, public policy, and legal processes, and regularly bring this expertise into the classroom. Faculty members have gained visibility in various subfields through leadership positions in professional and academic societies and through editorial service to various journals and publishers. In engagement, the faculty have been recognized through public service awards and named chairs for outreach and service-learning activities. They are often asked to provide technical assistance and expertise at the community, state, and national levels. Current budgetary conditions and strategic priorities demand that Public Administration carefully plan its way forward. The mandate is to find cost-efficiencies and to propose opportunities to further serve the university's priorities for student recruitment and success, workforce development, and the land-grant mission. We will consider changes to both form and function in the balance of this self-study report. We have been asked to focus specifically on the Master of Legal Studies (LEGS) and the Master of Public Administration (PUBA), showing how each supports the University in meeting its mission. The Master of Legal Studies is a stand-alone online program and will be analyzed separately. However, during the review period, the Master of Public Administration was five integrated programs: the Master of Public Administration (PUBA), the MSW/MPA Dual Degree (SOWK/PUBA), the JD/MPA Dual Degree (LAW/PUBA), a Graduate Certificate in Health Care Administration (CG01), and a Graduate Certificate in Community Development Policy and Practice (CG42). Dual degree and Graduate Certificate students are all served by PUBA course codes. While they should be analyzed together for the most accurate net results, we have not obtained complete data within the response time offered. The MLS program (LEGS) contributes to WVU's mission of providing a skills-based education that improves the livelihood of students in direct and measurable ways. Specifically, the program advances educational opportunities for professionals who work with the legal system, such as in human resource management and criminal justice. The MLS program: 1) builds greater public understanding of the law and the United States legal system; 2) trains graduates with knowledge and skills to perform their jobs effectively; 3) provides private and public organizations the benefit of experienced and effective employees and servant leaders. Because the program is fully online, students within West Virginia borders and beyond can enroll in the degree program that is flexible and responsive to their needs and lives. Approximately 95% of MLS students are working professionals and choose to pursue the degree to increase their knowledge of the American legal system as it relates to their current job or seek promotion within their current field. The remaining 5% of MLS students are recent college graduates pursuing a master's degree in preparation for their career goal. MLS alumni work in an array of professional positions that involve the U.S. legal system, regulations, and laws, including probation officers, social service administrators, healthcare compliance officers, and similar positions. The MPA program (PUBA) prepares recent college graduates, new and emerging professionals, and seasoned administrators to make a scaled impact in their jobs. The MPA supports more effective administration and management across all sectors of public service. Graduates can be found in a wide variety of public service careers in government, nonprofit organizations, and for-profit public contractors. The program is currently the only nationally accredited MPA degree in the state and serves a distinct role in preparing individuals to contribute to public service in West Virginia and the region. Its accreditation was renewed last year for 7 years (to AY2028-2029), with high praise. The faculty and students produce research and service directly connected to state, national, and international public affairs, including: 1) state and global policy analysis; 2) research for state and federal agencies; 3) campus-community service-learning activities; 4) service in state, national, and international professional organizations. Integrated within the MPA program's course offerings are an Area of Emphasis and Graduate Certificate in Health Care Administration, an Area of Emphasis in Local Governance & Community Development, and a Graduate Certificate in Community Development Policy & Practice. Furthermore, formal dual degrees are offered with Law (JD) and Social Work (MSW), while students have also pursued informal dual degrees with History (MA and GC Cultural Resource Management) and Legal Studies (MLS).

Q3.1.  
Resources, Revenue, and Expenses

The purpose of this section is to ensure the accessibility and adequacy of the unit's infrastructure and resources and its financial viability.

Responses in this section are limited to 7500 characters or approximately 2 single spaced pages.

Q3.2. Has the unit experienced significant issues with any of the following during the past five years?

By "significant," we mean issues that interfere with either the unit's ability to deliver its programs to its students or the students' ability to complete those programs in a timely manner.

	Yes	No
Ability to schedule required classrooms	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Access to adequate technological infrastructure	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Access to adequate technological support	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Access to adequate physical infrastructure (labs, performance spaces, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Q3.3. Describe the issues the program has faced in the area(s) identified above.

*This question was not displayed to the respondent.*

Q3.4. Data have been provided on the unit's last three years of tuition revenue, expenses, and net revenue. Address any negative net revenue or any significant changes (positive or negative) to unit's net position.

Revenue by department is the actual tuition revenue, net of any discounting, paid by students taking courses in course subject codes affiliated with the department.

Expense by department is the actual unrestricted, operating expenditures by department within the functions of instruction and academic support.

Net revenue is the revenue minus the expense.

The unit offers two major degrees, the MLA (LEGS) and the MPA (PUBA). However, PUBA faculty and courses also deliver dual degrees, not all of which seem to be included in the Public Data Table due to secondary position of enrollment (e.g., MSW/MPA and JD/MPA). If the data is reevaluated, we ask that you include the Graduate Certificates in Healthcare Administration CG01 and Community Development Policy & Practice (CG42). Doing so may yield more favorable data in terms of program enrollment, SCH, and net tuition revenue. It would have been helpful if SCH and net tuition revenue were broken down between MLS and MPA. While we have a sense that the loss of \$178,595 in net tuition revenue is mostly attributable to the 48% loss of MLS enrollment (as compared to the 13% loss of MPA enrollment and the failure to include some dual degrees and both Graduate Certificates), we cannot determine this based on the data provided. Similarly, the net tuition revenue reported includes "discounting," which we take to mean tuition waivers and a small number of merit scholarships allocated to the unit by the College. Yet, we were not given the CH equivalence, or the dollar value of the many tuition waivers attributed to the unit. Given the number of PUBA students who are WVU employees (GAs, Extension Service, and administrative staff) having this information would have been helpful. The Public Data Table also includes a 1 FTE increase (from 5 to 6) that was an administrative assignment of an interim Department Chair who did not teach in the program. This figure reduces the student-to-faculty ratio for the unit and increases net expenses. The MLS program fully relies on per-course instructors, but the net expenses information provided is not broken down by MLS and MPA. Therefore, we cannot determine what effect, for example, termination of the MLS program would have on the unit's net expenses from the Public Data Table. In all, we cannot accurately analyze the average annual unit loss of \$613,907 or have a clear understanding of why its average expense increase was \$21,320. Overall, the lack of disaggregated data, the absence of all unit program data, and the inclusion of an extra faculty member make the response in this report challenging. Starting with tuition revenue, the MLS program (LEGS) functions under a "self-support" model with no scholarships or tuition waivers for students, beyond those issued to WVU employees. Therefore, its revenues are closely tied to degree enrollment and SCH. Expenses include per course instructors who are paid a flat rate of \$4,000 to teach each course. However, this flat rate does not reflect the actual cost (\$4,920) with fringe added. PUBA programs function more typically, accepting tuition waivers from many students serving as GAs, administrative staff, and Extension staff throughout WVU, and offering limited merit-based tuition waivers as allocated by the College. The unit does not offer scholarships. We have requested information about the number of tuition waivers granted during the review period to ascertain the value of lost revenue, but do not have this information to date. That said, we would not recommend discontinuation of tuition waivers because the unit has and continues to provide workforce development to so many WVU employees. All other data relevant to tuition revenue is discussed in the following questions related to student headcount and SCH. Instruction and academic support expenses are relevant to FTE data discussed in the following questions. Expenses associated with PUBA instructional faculty vary according to rank and responsibilities. The unit has employed one academic support staff member, one administrative associate, and one half-time administrative GA during the review period.

Q4.1.

Faculty Composition and Productivity

Responses should be concise but also specific and supported by evidence. Responses in this section are limited to 7500 characters or approximately 2 single spaced pages.

Specific data definitions for these metrics are available on the [Academic Transformation](#) webpage.

Q4.2. Data have been provided on the unit's faculty full-time equivalency (FTE) to the median of all majors for fall 18 to fall 22.

Address any differences in the unit's student to FTE ratio and the institution's student-to-faculty ratio of 18-to-1 per IPEDS reporting for academic year 2021-2022.

The MLS program has no dedicated faculty. 100% of LEGS courses are taught by external per-course instructors or as an overload by WVU faculty and staff with other appointments. To be clear, no PUBA faculty have been awarded course releases to teach LEGS courses or taught them as part of their workload. During the review period, the integrated PUBA programs have been served by five dedicated tenure track faculty. NASPAA accreditation standards require a minimum of five FTE faculty who “will exercise substantial determining influence for the governance and implementation of the program” (NASPAA Accreditation Standard 2). There is an error in the Public Data Table, FTE from 2020-2023 because although the BOG recommended such a hire and initial action was taken toward a search, the unit did not hire new faculty in 2022. The increase from 5 to 6 FTE captures the addition of a non-teaching interim Chair whose faculty line was moved into the Public Administration budget during AY 2022-2023. Responding to this point in an email dated July 7, 2023, Dr. Tracy Morris, Associate Provost for Academic Personnel, stated this faculty member’s “service in the interim role will not have effect on program recommendations—they will not be penalized on that count.” All five of the unit’s faculty are tenured at either the Associate or Full rank. All five serve as instructors and academic advisors to students in the integrated PUBA programs. One holds an adjunct appointment to WVU Extension, and one serves on the graduate faculty in the Davis College. All five faculty contribute directly to the WVU’s R1 research and land-grant engagement missions through sponsored research, high quality publications, and public engagement. As can be seen in their Digital Measures portfolios, the unit is highly productive and punches far above its weight. From 2018-2022 the unit faculty have accomplished the following: peer-reviewed articles (27), co-authored books (3), edited books (7), book chapters (24), public facing articles (3), invited lectures (25), conference presentations (81), organized conferences and colloquia (45). The faculty have also been recognized and celebrated for their various contributions. The following is a list of awards and honors received from 2018-2022: • Emerald Publishers. Emerald Literati Awards. Outstanding Author Contribution • Emerald Press Outstanding Reviewer International Journal of Public Leadership • WVU Office of the Provost Academic Leadership Fellow • 2019-2020 Big XII Academic Fellowship to University of Kansas (COVID cancellation) • 2020-2021 Big XII Faculty Fellowship to Iowa State University (COVID cancellation) • ENACT Faculty Fellowship. International Center for Ethics, Justice, and Public Life • Mary W. Wells Memorial Diversity Award, National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Science. 1st Place National Winner • Florence Hall Award, National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Science. Minnesota Affiliate. • Innovation in Programming Award, National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Science. 3rd Place • Invited Judge for the Finals for the Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition • WVU Engaged Scholars Inaugural Cohort 2023 (two faculty members) • Tsinghua-ILTIA Fellow 2018, sponsored by Tsinghua University, China • 2018 WVU Scholarship Award for 2017 Research (for two departmental faculty members) The MLS program enrollment data shows a median of 46 students Fall 2018-2021 and 24 in Fall 2022, for an overall average of 35. We do not have an FTE of per-course instructors in the program during these time periods and cannot report the student-to-faculty ratio. In any case, we question whether these students should be included in the unit’s student-to-faculty ratio calculations because PUBA faculty are not assigned teaching responsibilities in the MLS program. In the MPA program, as explained in Q4.1, there has been no change in the PUBA instructional faculty during the review period; the correct faculty size is 5. MPA program enrollments from the Public Data Table show a loss of 5% from the Fall 2018-2021 median of 40 to the Fall 2022 total of 35. At an overall average of about 38 students per year and a faculty size of 5, the MPA student-to-faculty ratio is 8-1. However, these figures do not account for the unit’s Graduate Certificate programs served by the exact same courses (CG01 and CG42). During the review period (Fall 2018 to Fall 2022), there were 4 students in CG01 and 12 students in CG42. There were also 11 double majors unaccounted for in 2022 because the MPA is listed second (MLS/MPA = 1; MSW/MPA and JD/MPA = 10). Double majors account for 26.22% of all MPA students. Regardless of which degree is listed first, both units contribute equally to a student’s advising and instruction (77% or 30 of 39 PUBA CH), but the student is only counted in the primary major. Counting Graduate Certificate and secondary dual degree students changes the median program enrollment from N = 38 to N = 65. This positively impacts the student-to-faculty ratio, correcting it from 8-1 to 13-1. While the institution’s reported student-to-faculty ratio is 18-1, this includes all programmatic levels. Without an average for master’s degrees only, we cannot comment on how the unit compares.

Q4.3. This question is optional and required only if a unit's doctoral programs are under review.

Data have been provided on the unit's tenure-track / tenured FTE to doctoral student headcount ratio across all of the unit's doctoral programs.

Address any differences in the unit's doctoral student to tenure-track and tenured faculty FTE ratio to the institutional expectation of 2-to-1.

Q4.4. Data have been provided that show the changes to the unit's total number of faculty over the review period. Data have also been provided that show the total student headcount enrolled in all of the unit's programs over the same period of time as well as a three-year trend in student credit hour (SCH) production.

Explain the relationship between the change in the number of faculty in the unit and the change in the units total headcount enrollment and SCH production trends.



Faculty Headcount: We cannot provide accurate analysis of FTE in the MLS program (LEGS) because no unit faculty are assigned teaching responsibilities in the program. For the MPA program, as explained in Q4.1, there has been no change in the unit's instructional faculty size during the review period; the correct faculty size is 5. However, due to the small faculty size, sabbaticals and course releases have a noticeable impact on SCH because fewer courses can be offered, including both multiple sections of required courses and elective courses. During the review period, sabbaticals and course releases for administrative service to the College figured prominently. From AY2019-2020 to AY2021-2022, PUBA programs were unable to offer 12 courses (each carrying 3 credit hours) due to approved course releases. These instructional capacity losses negatively impact the unit's SCH. To ensure courses necessary to program completion were offered, during the review period, some courses were taught by per-course instructors, including 4 that were taught by faculty appointed elsewhere at no cost to the unit to support the Community Development courses that also serve PhD students in Human and Community Development (Davis College). SCH Production: The Public Data Table shows an average unit total SCH of 1,803, with an increase between AY2019-2020 and AY2020-2021 of 203 SCH and a decrease of 365 SCH from AY2020-2023 to AY2021-2022. This variability is negligible and does not show a clear trend up or down. However, without disaggregation of LEGS and PUBA SCH, useful analysis is not possible. The full complement of the unit's programs is explained in Q4.2. It should also be noted that beyond these programs' students, PUBA courses also regularly serve students from other programs across WVU. For example, in the PUBA 670 Health Systems class in Fall 2022, eight of ten students were from health science programs. The new budget formula will enable counting these students in future SCH production. That said, the recent decrease in SCH can be attributed to a higher than usual graduation rate and a national decline in higher education enrollments. Graduation Rates: During the review period, which includes a global pandemic, many enrolled students were able to increase the number of courses taken each semester, leading to a higher than usual graduation rate. The unit graduated a typical 33 students in 2019-2020 (17 in MLA and 16 in MPA) but experienced larger than normal graduating classes in 2020-2021 (58 graduates; 27 in MLA and 31 in MPA) and 2021-2022 (52 graduates; 27 in MLA and 25 in MPA). While it is rewarding to see graduates completing the program, these two large graduating classes negatively impacted overall enrollment. During this same timeframe, the University overall experienced larger than normal graduating classes, which was cited several times by various WVU administrators as contributing to the decline in the University's SCH [see Appendix 7.2 for PUBA degrees awarded 2019-2022]. Enrollment: Over the review period (Fall 2018 to Fall 2022), the total unit enrollment based on primary degree enrollment only (not "all of the unit's programs") averaged about 50 students. The unit saw a total decline of 27 students: 22 in the MLS and 5 in the MPA. As revised in Q4.2, However, double majors account for 26.22% of enrolled students in the unit, for whom 30 (77%) of 39 MPA credit hours must be delivered by the unit. The Public Data Table only counts those students who list the MPA as the primary major (e.g., MPA/MSW and MPA/JD) but neglects to count those who list the MPA secondarily (e.g., MSW/MPA and JD/MPA). There are 11 such double majors in 2022 alone (MLA/MPA = 1; MSW/MPA and JD/MPA = 10) unaccounted for in the Public Data Table. For Fall 2023, no admissions were allowed in the MLS program. The MPA program admitted 15 incoming students, and at the time of this report 9 have enrolled. One (1) new CG01 student was enrolled and two (2) new CG42 students were enrolled. The total possible unit enrollment of 18 for 2023-24 will be well below average, continuing the negative trend in SCH. MPA Enrollment Trends: The PUBA downturn reflects a national decline in MPA enrollment. NASPAA's most recent data indicates that enrollment is stagnant at best, falling 5% from 20,982 students in 2017 to 19,964 students in 2020 (Maples, 2020:18). And while the number of institutions offering MPA and cognate degrees increased by 26, from 477 in 2010 to 603 in 2016, the average number of students per institution increased only marginally (4%) from 75-78. National Enrollment Trends: The decline in student numbers nationally has been attributed to a competitive labor market. As has been reported, 2021 and 2022 saw a return to "normal" in the US labor market with an increase in demand for laborers in all sectors. Unfortunately, professional degrees like Public Administration may have more exposure to the ebb and flow of the market. Competitive labor markets where workers have multiple options correspond with a decrease in college enrollment overall. It is well understood in higher education administration that graduate programs are especially sensitive to labor market conditions. In times of high employment, demand for graduate education may be depressed. Conversely, poor labor markets often see an influx of students into graduate programs. Current economic conditions favor job seekers, and this may impact overall graduate student enrollment. In a robust labor market, there is less incentive for those working or "in service" to seek additional academic credentials for advancement and less incentive for recent baccalaureates who are "pre-service" to continue with graduate education to gain competitive advantage. WVU's Public Administration program is not an outlier, the numbers track with professional programs across the country. Therefore, responses related to expansion through academic transformation are appropriate.

**Q4.5.** Data have been provided that shows the unit's research expenditures per the Higher Education Research and Development Survey (HERD).

Does this data capture all of the unit's research expenditures? If not, explain the difference here and provide evidence of additional research expenditures below.

The Public Data Table does not capture the unit's research expenditures because the data only capture funds coded as "research." However, Public Administration's grant funding has supported instruction or projects (\$444K of the \$461K in expenses over that 5-year period). Grants for instruction and service were not captured in the data [in 7.2 see: PUBA Research Expenditure, Public Administration Expenditures by Type and FY]. Although these expenditures are coded for instruction, some of the research expenditures resulted in academic conference presentations and publications reported in Q4.1. Under support from the Military Families Learning Network and ONEOP grant, during the 2018–2022-time frame one co-authored conference presentation was made at the National Association for Extension Program and Staff Development Professionals, one single-authored conference presentation was made at the Annual Meetings of the American Society for Public Administration, and one co-authored article was published in the Journal of Extension. Evidence has been uploaded in Q4.6 that supports the unit's research expenditures.

Q4.6. Upload evidence of research expenditures here.

[Public Administration Expenditures.xlsx](#)

16.8KB

application/vnd.openxmlformats-officedocument.spreadsheetml.sheet

Q5.1.  
Student Enrollment and Graduation History

Responses in this section are limited to 7500 characters (approximately 1.5 single spaced pages). Responses should be concise but also specific and supported by evidence.

Specific data definitions for these metrics are available on the [Academic Transformation](#) webpage.

Q5.2. Data have been provided on all of the unit's program's student enrollment trends.

That data includes:

- 4-year median fall enrollment (fall 18 through fall 21);
- Fall 2022 change from 4-year median (in headcount and in percentage).

Units should address any programs with enrollment below the median for the program level or which has experienced a negative change in enrollment.

The MLS program has relied heavily on support from WVU Online in recruiting students. For the past several years, we have paid WVU Online a \$7,500.00 annual fee to assist with graduate recruitment, but these efforts have not resulted in an increase in student enrollment. In fact, the MLS program has experienced a negative change in enrollment of 48% in 2022. In response, the unit already made the decision in May 2023 to suspend admissions in 2023-2024 and only offer courses corresponding to a “teach-out” plan until the current review is completed. Our recommendations include either termination or relocation of the program to another unit capable of providing dedicated faculty for program delivery. In comparison, the MPA program has experienced a negative change of only 5% in the review period. In years past, strong cohorts of incoming students were up to 30 in the fall and 15 in the spring. The unit maintained a faculty size capable of delivering every required course every semester for up to 20 students, but this was a very inefficient use of FTEs, especially as incoming student numbers fell to a more typical 20 in the fall and 10 in the spring; teaching required courses to less than 6 students was common. Therefore, the decision was made in 2018 to transition to a fall-only admissions as the revised MPA program plan of study was rolled out. This change will be fully accomplished in AY2023-2024. Even with a smaller faculty size (down from 7 in 2016), these changes were meant to maximize FTE use and to create space for more specializations through Area of Emphasis and Graduate Certificate programs. For example, Community Development is a promising growth area, as are nonprofit management, public service leadership, public finance, public communications, public engagement, and many others. Similarly, expansion into interdisciplinary professional degrees were being considered that would enable “stacking” of the Graduate Certificate in Community Development Policy & Practice with others like Geographic Information Systems. In fact, plans for these types of program expansion were underway through the Provost’s Curriculum Innovation Challenge before it was suspended. In the other direction, with the development of the Master of Public Health elsewhere in WVU, and the retirement of the primary PUBA faculty member, the Area of Emphasis and Graduate Certificate in Healthcare Administration was found to be duplicative. Therefore, the decision was made in May 2023 to terminate these programs as of 2023-2024 and enter a teach-out plan for remaining students. In all, the unit’s aim is to expand into varied areas of public service workforce development that can leverage and build on the core found in the MPA program and the electives offered in AOE’s. Toward that end, the unit has also made admissions changes, such as no longer requiring GREs or other standardized tests. But to build out these professional programs successfully, the unit needs much more support in areas of marketing and promotion than what can be provided by a small portion of a .5 FTE staff member. In the past, the focus has been on recruiting undergraduate students from WVU and other West Virginia colleges and universities (e.g., Concord College, Bethany College, Fairmont State University) through personal faculty relationships. However, such outreach has lapsed in recent years and is not sustainable as a faculty responsibility. Furthermore, these undergraduates may not be the most viable recruitment population. MPA programs generally target non-traditional students—in-service practitioners who seek advancement on career ladders that require graduate degrees. Since closing the Charleston program well over a decade ago, outreach to these potential students was only re-engaged in the soft launch of the new Graduate Certificate—in the year before the pandemic hit. Therefore, recruitment efforts were only successful within the ranks of WVU Extension (which does not positively impact tuition revenue). The unit overall needs to recruit in-service public service practitioners who live and work in West Virginia and the region. Doing so would support WVU’s land-grant mission by providing educational opportunities (e.g., continuing education credit) to West Virginia residents who otherwise lack access (e.g., geographical, financial) to higher education. This will likely require online delivery of courses with minimal requirements to convene in person.

Q5.3. Data have been provided on the unit's three-year trend in student credit hour (SCH) production.

Units should address any programs with a negative trend in SCH production.

As noted in Q4.4, the unit overall has seen a reduction in SCH during the review period. Based on the breakdown of program enrollment losses, most of this is likely attributable to the MLS program. There are many ways to remedy the negative SCH production that prioritize expanded degree and course offerings and associated student recruitment rather than reductions in force of faculty and academic support staff. Pathways forward are offered that we believe stand to achieve long-term and sustainable cost efficiencies as well as helping to build the overall capacity of the Rockefeller School, the College, and the University across the academic mission areas of teaching, research, and engagement. We believe the options are feasible for consideration by the Provost and Dean in setting priorities going forward. Option One Relocate the integrated PUBA programs into a different academic unit. Potential Savings for FY25 \$18,365 reduction in administrative stipend (note: for FY24 the interim director is not receiving an administrative stipend). Justification: While such a move is underway through the Rockefeller School of Policy and Politics, administrative efficiencies can be achieved through reconfigurations of unit structures as identified through ongoing Academic Transformation. Such changes in form are nothing new to the unit. Public Administration has proven to be both adaptive and responsive to changing institutional needs over time. National accreditation standards allow for MPA programs to be housed in a variety of academic units; indeed, this is a customary practice. Option Two Eliminate the Master of Legal Studies or Move it to the College of Law. Anticipated Savings and/or Increased Revenue for FY25 \$92,769 in per course instructor costs Justification: Public Administration has suspended admission into LEGS in AY2023-2024 and could terminate the program entirely and begin a teach-out immediately. Alternatively, the program could be moved to the WVU College of Law where it might thrive better. PUBA faculty with legal training could, if needed, offer courses to support the MLS offered by the College of Law as part of their contractual load or on a per course instruction basis. Without the MLS program, academic support staff could increase recruitment efforts to grow the integrated PUBA programs. In any case, removing MLS from the unit will result in substantial instructional cost savings to the College. Option Three Offer PUBA programs through virtual, synchronous instruction. Anticipated Savings and/or Increased Revenue for FY25 While we cannot offer a precise dollar amount, the College would save on things like custodial and maintenance support, heating and cooling for offices, phones, printing, and electricity. These things may add up to thousands of dollars over time. Justification: Nationally, many MPA programs are offered online (both synchronous and asynchronous) and have been accepted into NASPAA accreditation. Virtual programs are preferred by many traditional pre-service graduate students who cannot travel to campus and are the only feasible option for most in-service practitioners (non-traditional students). The Graduate Certificate in Community Development Policy & Practice is already delivered this way to better reach in-service practitioners seeking career advancement through graduate education. Based on testing of hybrid in-person and online delivery and national studies of synchronous versus asynchronous learning, virtual synchronous instruction is preferred. Some programs augment the virtual classroom experience by convening in person once or twice each semester. There is a willingness in the program to support synchronous program delivery in both face-to-face and online formats [see 7.2: MPA Student Plan of Study Fall Admission Only, Proposed Annual Faculty Assignments 2023-2024 Forward, 2023-2024 Academic Year]. Option Four Move program admissions to once per year. Anticipated Savings and/or Increased Revenue for FY25 This efficiency may lead to increased enrollment and SCH production. Justification: Because Spring enrollments are always low and require courses to be offered multiple times each year, student-to-faculty ratios have suffered. Therefore, starting in AY2023-2024, admissions will only be in the Fall. This will increase the availability of faculty to deliver other courses. Based on the current faculty size, the unit can deliver sufficient required and elective courses to support the PUBA programs along with new graduate programs or enable contribution to undergraduate programs [see Q7.2 Program Data]. Option Five Align PUBA faculty workload with the College's workload guidelines for master's degrees units. Anticipated Savings and/or Increased Revenue for FY25 With an FTE of 5, the unit can offer up to 25 courses during the academic year, including PUBA courses or courses for other units where they have expertise. Justification: Historically, the PUBA teaching load has been 2-2 based on the level of graduate advising responsibilities and community engagement typical in the unit. The increase to a 3-2 load would follow practices found across the College, will have a positive effect on SCH and tuition revenue, and will still allow for individualized teaching workload adjustments based on research, service, and teaching equivalency factors. Option Six Expand shared degrees with other institutions, domestic and/or abroad. Anticipated Savings and/or Increased Revenue for FY25 Adding programs can increase enrollment, SCH, and tuition revenue. Justification: MPA faculty have already started to establish and explore opportunities for collaborative degrees with other universities and collaboratives. For example, the Great Plains Interactive Distance Education Alliance (IDEA) (<https://www.gpidea.org/program/community-development>) offers online graduate degrees in Community Development; while admission and degrees are earned through member institutions, online courses are taught by faculty across the member institutions. International collaborations could increase WVU's global visibility and impact. Option Seven Offer micro-credentialing for professionals. Anticipated Savings and/or Increased Revenue for FY25 This is a revenue generating opportunity. The cost for instruction varies. Justification: Continuing education unit (CEU) credits can be attached to existing courses or offered as stand-alone training. A similar approach has been offered by the School of Social Work for many years. Furthermore, PUBA faculty have offered such training in the past through the Community Development Council's Community Development Institute. Option Eight Offer the proposed undergraduate degree in Public Service and Leadership in collaboration with Leadership Studies. Anticipated Savings and/or Increased Revenue for FY25 This degree may attract incoming first-year students, transfer, and existing undergraduate students interested in public service. It may also enable 3+2 or 4+1 dual degrees. Justification: Expansion into undergraduate education will minimize the unit's exposure to labor market trends. As indicated by its title, the proposed major aligns perfectly with the unit's values and mission to prepare students for careers in public service. PUBA faculty have expertise in combining community engagement learning experiences with a core curriculum rooted in the study of leadership, policy, program management, and social change.

Q6.1.  
Assessment of Learning and Program Improvement

The Provost's Office will review the self-studies from the most recent Board of Governor's five-year program reviews for this section.

Units may provide updated information below if they so choose.

Q6.2. Provide the unit's plans or ideas to make significant changes to its operations, structure, offerings, or personnel in order to reduce its costs or improve its efficiency.

Provide any significant changes to the department's program curricula, its assessment of learning practices, or any other improvements that have been made since the department's programs completed their most recent Board of Governor's five-year review.

By way of introduction, the BOG five-year review process evaluated the WVU Master of Public Administration (MPA) program's performance across the mission areas of teaching, research, and engagement in context of other WVU graduate programs. The last full BOG review for the MPA program was for AY2018-2019. According to the WVU Office of Provost's 2018-2019 BOG Review Summaries [bog-graduate-program-review-report-ay-2018-19\_062419.pdf (wvu.edu)], the BOG affirmed the strength, relevancy, and sustainability of the MPA program. The report noted that the program was aligned with its stated academic mission, focusing purposefully but not exclusively on those soon to enter public service. The narrative noted how the program was especially well-positioned to serve WVU's land grant mission through applied research, experiential learning, and state and community engagement efforts. The BOG report also affirmed that the program's identified student learning outcomes and assessment processes conformed with WVU's broader expectations for measurable outcomes around such areas as communication, critical thinking skills, and adaptive skills for future professional and career development. The MPA program also benefits from external accreditation peer reviews by the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA) every seven years. Program review standards cover: (1) Managing the Program Strategically, (2) Matching Governance with the Mission, (3) Faculty Performance, (4) Serving Students, (5) Student Learning, (6) Resource Adequacy, and (7) Communications. Student Learning is assessed according to five universal competencies: (1) to lead and manage in the public interest, (2) to participate in, and contribute to, the policy process; (3) to analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make evidence-informed decisions in a complex and dynamic environment, (4) to articulate, apply, and advance a public service perspective, and (5) to communicate and interact productively and in culturally responsive ways with a diverse and changing workforce and society at large. This rigorous accreditation process validates the program in the eyes of the larger academic and professional community. The most recent review was completed in 2022, when the program was fully reaccredited for the standard seven-year cycle. Recent Changes: Within the MLS program, acknowledgement of changing workforce conditions and declining enrollment led to program changes aimed at facilitating student recruitment, persistence, and completion: · Reduction in required credit hours from 36 to 30 credit hours. · Coordination of dual degree options, especially with the MPA; and · Suspending the program while offering courses necessary to existing students in Fall 2023. Within the MPA program, in advance preparation for re-accreditation self-study in 2020-2021 and review in 2021-2022, the Curriculum Committee embarked upon a two-year curriculum review and strategic change endeavor in 2018-2019 that focused on student learning outcomes (SLO) in comparison to NASPAA's revised universal competencies (formally adopted in October 2019). The logic model created included the desired competencies as program learning outcomes, linked to required course learning outcomes and available evidence to be used in assessment. We committed to fully fleshing out and implementing an evaluation plan for four of the five universal competencies (although only three were required by NASPAA). Using a "reverse engineering" process, we identified student learning outcomes (SLOs) we believe would produce universal competency. For each SLO, we then identified learning experiences that would produce the desired outcome. This process emphasized that the Curriculum Committee would determine what should be taught as an accredited professional degree program, while individual faculty members would determine how it is taught (i.e., choice of readings, resources, and learning experiences) to maintain academic freedom. Learning experiences were then grouped together in logical sets and mapped onto the existing curriculum, including both required and elective courses. This process revealed that adjustments were needed to eliminate overlaps and fill gaps in the required courses. We also determined that to remain competitive with regional MPA programs, we needed to reduce the total number of required credit hours. Subsequent curriculum changes included course redesigns, changes to the required plan of study, reduced credit hours and contact hours for the required internship (for a new degree total of 39 rather than 42 credit hours), and adjustments to course names and catalog descriptions to better fit contemporary practice and the identified SLOs. Major changes to the curriculum were then submitted and approved, including syllabi matching a standardized template. These changes also enabled elective expansions to serve both the MPA program, its Area of Emphasis in Local Governance and Community Development, and the Graduate Certificate in Community Development Policy & Practice. While we also retained the Area of Emphasis and Graduate Certificate in Healthcare Administration, we expanded our partnership with the School of Public Health for course delivery. Finally, we established a student learning outcome assessment procedure and rubrics for unacceptable, acceptable, and exceptional student performance. During the re-accreditation review process, we committed to embarking on an internal annual review process for continuous improvement starting in 2022-2023 but have not yet implemented that plan. While the 2018-2019 BOG report recommended the addition of a new tenure track faculty hire due to strains on the unit's capacity to deliver existing programs, in the face of this fiscal impossibility, the unit instead made changes to increase FTE efficiencies while expanding course offerings to increase student persistence and to ensure timely program completion. Based on these ongoing change efforts, Public Administration is well-positioned to work with the College and with the Provost's Office in charting a sustainable path forward that preserves academic programming that contributes to the overall land-grant mission of the university and its place among flagship universities across the country. Proposed Changes: In Q5.3, the unit laid out many options for consideration. While the University's upper administration will make the final decision, the unit proposes the following efficiencies for FY25 and beyond: (1) eliminate or relocate the Master of Legal Studies (LEGS) (anticipated savings \$92,769, (2) merge PUBA with another academic unit/division/school (anticipated savings \$18,365), and (3) increase PUBA faculty teaching loads to 3-2 (up to 25 course sections per year) to accommodate expanded program offerings or contributions to other WVU degree programs. The positive net budget impact will be at least \$111,134. This total does not account for the efficiencies (increased SCH and tuition revenue) gained by increased faculty teaching loads.

Q6.3. The program may provide additional evidence of program improvement here.

Q7.1. The unit may provide any additional context or information about the unit's programs here.

The West Virginia University Public Administration program has regularly been highly ranked in U.S. News and World Reports assessments of graduate programs. Through its public administration program, WVU has often been rated within or near the top 100 public affairs programs in recent years. In the 2023-2024 round, in the Public Affairs category, our program was ranked 108th in the country, along with such R1 Peers as the University of Texas at Arlington, University of South Carolina, as well as such notable institutions as the University of Vermont, and William & Mary College (see [https://www.usnews.com/best-graduate-schools/top-public-affairs-schools/public-affairs-rankings?name=West%20Virginia%20University&\\_sort=schoolName-asc](https://www.usnews.com/best-graduate-schools/top-public-affairs-schools/public-affairs-rankings?name=West%20Virginia%20University&_sort=schoolName-asc)). If the “nuclear option” of terminating the PUBA programs entirely is chosen, we respectfully request a teach-out period in accordance with established programs of study. Some students are enrolled on a part-time basis and may require a teach-out period of more than two years. Furthermore, we request the reappointment of current faculty and staff, who come from a variety of educational backgrounds. Their respective expertise, research, teaching, and skillsets could support several WVU units, including Political Science, Social Work, Sustainability Studies, School of Design and Community Development, College of Law, WVU Extension Service, and WVU Advance. Summary: We appreciate this opportunity to provide information about Public Administration, the unit's programs, and the dedicated faculty and staff committed to its success and longevity. The report has attempted to provide context and needed nuances unavailable in the Public Data Table. The PUBA programs' enrollment for the review period has remained relatively steady. Public Administration continues to be a unit of choice for students seeking dual degrees and for current WVU staff seeking to gain critical expertise. We understand the University's budget situation and are committed to doing our part to find solutions by: 1. Eliminating or relocating the Master of Legal Studies (LEGS). 2. Merging PUBA with another academic unit/division/school. 3. Increasing PUBA faculty teaching loads to 3-2 to accommodate expanded program offerings. We believe that these solutions amount to a positive net budget impact of at least \$111,134, create teaching efficiencies, and increase SCH and tuition revenue.

Q7.2. You may use this section to provide any additional evidence referenced in the program review.

[7.1 Final Upload Current and Past WVU Employees with Degrees from Public Administration 8.1.23.pdf](#)  
76.2KB  
application/pdf

Q7.3. You may use this section to provide any additional evidence referenced in the program review.

[7.2 Final Upload Program Data.pdf](#)  
172.9KB  
application/pdf

Q7.4. You may use this section to provide any additional evidence referenced in the program review.

Q8.1.

Thank you for completing your self-study for the West Virginia University Board of Governors program review. You may now submit the survey and your self-study will be passed on to the Provost's Office for review.

#### Location Data

Location: [REDACTED]

Source: GeoIP Estimation

