

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Alan Brent Wood  
Principal Lecturer and MPA Program Head  
Northern Arizona University

CC: Karen Pugliesi  
Interim Executive Vice President & Provost  
Northern Arizona University

FROM: Domic Bearfield, Chair  
Commission on Peer Review and Accreditation  
Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration

DATE: July 27, 2022

On behalf of the Commission on Peer Review and Accreditation (COPRA), I am pleased to inform you that the Commission found your Master of Public Administration program to be in substantial conformity with the NASPAA Standards. Your program is accredited through August 31, 2029 and will be included on the Annual Roster of Accredited Programs.

Please accept the Commission's congratulations on the accreditation of your program. By pursuing and achieving accreditation through a rigorous peer review, your program has demonstrated a substantial commitment to quality public service education. You are part of the global community of over 200 accredited graduate programs in public service.

Your program is in substantial conformance with the NASPAA Standards. Based on its review, the Commission would like to offer considerations for improvement, outlined in the attachment, to support the continued growth of the program.

Please note that as a requirement of accreditation, the Commission will review annual accreditation maintenance reports to determine ongoing conformity with NASPAA Standards, which will become a permanent part of your folder for your next accreditation review. We look forward to receiving your 2021-2022 annual accreditation maintenance report by **November 1, 2022**.

If you have any questions about this decision or NASPAA's accreditation process, I would be happy to answer any questions you have about this decision via email at [dbearfield@gwu.edu](mailto:dbearfield@gwu.edu). Questions about this year's annual report should be directed to [copra@naspaa.org](mailto:copra@naspaa.org).

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Domonic Bearfield". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial 'D'.

Domonic Bearfield, Chair  
Commission on Peer Review and Accreditation

**Commission on Peer Review and Accreditation  
Considerations for Improvement**

**Master of Public Administration  
Northern Arizona University  
July 27, 2022**

While the Commission offers these recommendations in support of the program's development, there are no expectations for specific reporting on the following:

- **Use Strategic Planning in Support of Other Standards:** The Program Final Response indicated that the program would begin work on a strategic plan for the MPA program in the Fall of 2022. The Commission recommends that the program follow through on development and use of a strategic plan. The process can assist the program in deciding how, where, and why it will expand and how these decisions will impact resource needs. The strategic plan could address the increased need for resources related to the faculty and student population. The program may wish to align its strategic plan with the College-level "Action Plan" and incorporate the DEI plan, strategies for student recruitment, and a set of implementable steps to achieve the program's strategic goals.

---

Over time, the Commission expects that programs will continue to develop and implement their approach to strategic program management, including student learning assessment, and that this maturation will be evident in the program's annual accreditation maintenance reports. As the public service field continues to advance and evolve, COPRA seeks to support programs as they strategically pursue their missions, graduate leaders in public service, and achieve excellence in education.

The Commission also wishes to reemphasize its commitment to the transparency and accountability central to Standard 7.1 – Communications. Accredited programs are expected to consistently, accurately, and publicly provide their stakeholders with relevant information about the program and its student learning outcomes, to include graduation rates and employment placement. Programs found out of conformance at the annual report review each fall will be expected to resolve any nonconformities immediately upon notification, at the risk of COPRA alerting the university provost and pulling the program into an early reaccreditation review.