



The School of Public Affairs and Administration

STRATEGIC PLAN

*The School of Choice for Emerging Leaders and Top
Scholars of Public Affairs and Administration*

APPROVED: November 12, 2013 Faculty Meeting

Background

The School of Public Affairs and Administration (SPAA) of Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, Newark Campus, prepares students for careers in public service and administration, as well as in academic research and teaching. Its educational mission is driven by the promotion of competency-based knowledge, the celebration of diversity and the advancement of the highest principles of ethics in public service. The School features innovative and comprehensive programs leading to an undergraduate BA degree in public service and administration, a Masters in Public Administration (MPA), an Executive MPA, a Ph.D, and various professional and graduate certificates.

Over 1000 students, 25 percent of whom are international students representing more than 30 countries, are enrolled in SPAA's various educational programs. SPAA's graduates have successfully secured chief executive positions in the public and nonprofit sectors, as well as tenured positions at dozens of colleges and universities around the world.

SPAA's faculty, which numbers over 25, has gained international recognition in such fields as: public and nonprofit management and administration, public performance and reporting, budgeting and finance, economic development, health care policy and administration and urban affairs. The school's faculty has gained recognition as presidents of the American Society of Public Administration (ASPA), NASPAA, and the Public Management Research Association (PMRA) and has authored more than forty books, served as members of the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) and won numerous awards for outstanding work in their field of study.

Strategic Planning Process

SPAA's strategic planning process commenced in January 2013 and was facilitated by the School's Center for Applied Appreciative Inquiry with the assistance of a SPAA capstone consulting group of nine MPA students. The process was designed to maximize collaboration and strengths-based dialogue among SPAA's key internal and external stakeholders using the Appreciative Inquiry SOAR framework. SOAR refers to an environmental scanning methodology used to highlight and magnify an organizational system's strengths, opportunities, aspirations and results/resources.

Throughout the process, SPAA engaged upwards of 100 internal and external stakeholders in the development of the strategic plan.

Appreciative Inquiry and SOAR

Appreciative Inquiry (Ai) is a structured and disciplined method of asking questions designed to engage a system-wide dialogue about an organization's core strengths and assets and link them to collectively identified strategic possibilities. The SOAR framework uses Ai constructed questions to engage a large cross-section of an

organization's internal and external stakeholders in identifying its core strengths when operating at its very best. It seeks to pinpoint key opportunities and trends on the short and long-term horizon, collectively expressing the highest hopes and aspirations for the future of the organization, and determining the key outcomes the organization most desires for its client's and the resources needed to support their attainment.

Strategic Planning Process Milestones

- January 2013: The SPAA Core Planning Group was convened to guide the development of strategic plan.
- February 2013: A two-day forum was convened to engage SPAA's internal and external stakeholders in identifying the School's strengths, opportunities, aspirations and results/resources.
- March 2013: Additional face-to-face SOAR interviews were conducted with those key stakeholders who could not participate in the two-day forum in February.
- SOAR data collected from the two-day forum and the face-to-face stakeholder interviews was entered into a Qualtric Database management system by the capstone consulting group.
- A second Core Planning Group meeting was convened to review the SOAR data and to identify key strategic directions for framing a Strategic Planning Summit in April 2013.
- April 2013: A one-day Strategic Planning Summit was conducted with SPAA's key internal and external stakeholders to develop strategic goals for each of the identified strategic directions.
- Following the Summit, the Core Planning Group was convened again to review the results from the Summit and to frame and refine SPAA's 5-year strategic directions and goals.
- May - June 2013: Using a Qualtric Survey tool, SPAA's faculty was surveyed for their input on key action steps for each of the strategic goals.
- July - August 2013: Based on the results of the faculty survey, key action steps and a framework of performance indicators were established.
- September 2013: Faculty was surveyed again to provide key input and guidance in the development of specific performance

indicators for each of the strategic goals.

October 2013: To be determined

SOAR Highlights

The results of the SOAR forums and face-to-face interviews highlight the pride people feel about SPAA's 7th place ranking as one of the top graduate schools of public administration according to the US News and World Reports and the collective desire to improve upon this standing. Those interviewed as part of the process are aware that such recognition requires hard work and the broadening and magnifying of the School's core strengths and assets.

Strengths

SPAA's core strengths were identified as follows:

1. The high quality and diversity of its faculty.
2. The diversity of its students
3. The School's student-centered mission.
4. A rigorous curriculum
5. The scope and reach of its community-based relationships
6. The location for the School within the metropolitan region.
7. A collegial, collaborative school environment.
8. The School's ability to influence public policy and impact the field of public administration.
9. The expanding base of SPAA alumni serving as public administration practitioners.
10. The School's breadth of programming.

Opportunities

SPAA's key stakeholders believe that SPAA is uniquely positioned to leverage and further broaden its core strengths to take advantage of such key strategic opportunities as:

1. The naming of the School as a key platform in the expansion of its resources.
2. The recruitment of high quality faculty and a diverse student population.
3. The expansion of postgraduate opportunities for students through career development.
4. The broadening of the School's community relationships.
5. The entrance to the burgeoning field of online education.
6. The integration of upgraded technological resources in the classroom, as well as its use in the management and administration of the School.
7. The development of new, innovative partnerships with community-based organizations,

UMDNJ and NJIT.

8. Taking advantage of the School's metropolitan location as a magnet for student recruitment and enrollment.
9. Further advancing the global reach of the School for student recruitment and enrollment.
10. The importance of finding an appropriate balance between public administration and education that is grounded in theory and practice.

Aspirations

Elevating the national ranking of the School through the engagement of high quality faculty, a rigorous competency-based curriculum, rich and leading edge academic research and its publication, broadened community partnerships and the continued recruitment and enrollment of a diverse student population are the key aspirations of SPAA's stakeholders. It is envisioned that SPAA will be the school of choice for students who wish to graduate with a strong educational foundation in public administration theory and practice. Students will have gained practical experience through relevant internship experiences. In addition, the implementation of online degrees and programs in public administration and the use of enhanced technology to support teaching and learning, as well as administration were expressed as aspirational goals for the School.

Results/Resources

To be recognized as one of the top five graduate Schools in the nation, it is important that the School leverage its strengths, take advantage of opportunities, achieve its aspirational goals and be attentive to key metrics of success.

SPAA's Strategic Directions

From the SOAR interviewing process, the Core Planning Team identified the six key strategic directions for the School over the next five years. The following collaboratively developed strategic directions were the focus of the planning summit held in April 2013:

I. Strategic Direction: Transformational Student Experience

Strategic Vision: SPAA is recognized as a student centered institution of higher education that transforms incoming students into leading academic researchers and practitioners. Students leave SPAA with the skills to be highly successful in their career of choice.

II. Leading Edge Academic Differentiation and Research

Strategic vision: SPAA is renowned for teaching and research, which are on the leading edge of the public administration field.

III. High Quality, Internationally Recognized Faculty in Teaching and Research

Strategic Vision: SPAA's faculty is highly recognized for excellence in teaching and

research. Its faculty is prolific in advancing research through books, articles and presentations that are on the leading edge of the public affairs and administration academic discipline. Around the world, SPAA's faculty is known to be diverse, innovative, engaged, resourceful, and technologically savvy.

IV. Collaborative Partnerships

Strategic Vision: SPAA is renowned for the scope and breadth of its engagement of partners, which supports its mission. The school serves as an invaluable resource for local, state, national and international public sector and nonprofit organizations in addressing the public service issues and challenges they face.

V. Sustainable Resources to Support SPAA's Mission

Strategic Vision: Sustainable resources that support new and innovative programs and research, faculty, students, facilities and technology fuel SPAA's success. SPAA's endowment resources support faculty positions, as well as the school's PhD., MPA, EMPA and BA students with financial assistance. SPAA's capacity for attracting endowment funds fosters and sustains positive and continuous transformative value in applying state-of-the-art technology in the classroom environment and supporting high quality teaching, learning and research. SPAA has a diversified portfolio of financial resources from tuitions, grants, contracts, and endowments.

VI. SPAA – The School of Choice for Public Administration Academic Research and Public and Nonprofit Practitioners.

Strategic Vision: SPAA is recognized as a top school for public administration research and practitioner education nationally and around the world.

While SPAA's internal and external stakeholders collaboratively developed and designed key strategic initiatives to bring these six strategic directions to fruition, the Core Planning Group convened after the Summit to develop an implementation plan for each of the strategic initiatives and to review and to affirm and refine the School's mission, values and vision statements. The faculty developed action steps and indicators of success through direct survey methods.

SPAA – The School of Choice for Emerging Leaders and Top Scholars of Public Affairs and Administration

Mission Statement

Through a culture of innovation and based upon the values of diversity, competency, knowledge, service and ethical practice, we pursue an evidence-based approach to the effective, equitable, and accountable implementation of public policy. Distinguished academic scholars complemented by adjunct faculty rich in relevant government and nonprofit experience deliver capacity-based curriculum. We are dedicated to student success in applying knowledge to effective ethical public service leadership.

Core Values

SPAA's core values are: diversity, competency, knowledge, service and ethics.

Strategic Directions and Initiatives

I. Strategic Direction: Transformational Student Experience

Strategic Vision: SPAA is recognized as a student centered institution of higher education that transforms incoming students into leading academic researchers and practitioners. Students leave SPAA with the skills to be highly successful in their career of choice.

Strategic Goals:

1. SPAA will provide every student with Career Oriented Opportunities in public and nonprofit sector organizations at the local, state, national and international levels.

Action Step A: Evaluate national best practices of graduate programs offering Career Oriented Opportunities for students of public administration.

Action Step B: Design and implement a formal internship program, which affords students work experience in the public and nonprofit sectors.

Action Step C: Design and implement a student career-networking program incorporating peer mentors and SPAA alumni.

Indicators of Success:

- a. The # of students having career oriented internships prior to graduation.
- b. The % of students having career oriented internships prior to graduation.

2. Faculty will afford students opportunities to become engaged in academic research

Action Step A: Develop formal undergraduate and graduate (MPA and Ph.D.) research opportunities.

Action Step B: Seek resources to support faculty research projects with student involvement.

Indicators of Success:

- a. The # and % of students engaged with full-time faculty in research in an academic year.
- b. The # and % of faculty having a student engaged in research.

3. SPAA will provide all students opportunities for global experiences in the field of public administration

Action Step A: Develop partnerships with international universities and research institutes to offer coursework and joint degrees outside of the United States.

Action Step B: Develop short-term global experiences for students.

Indicators of Success:

- b. The # of students who have participated in a study abroad or exchange experience.
- c. The % of students who have participated in a study abroad or exchange experience.

II. Leading Edge Academic Differentiation and Research

Strategic vision: SPAA is renowned for teaching and research, which are on the leading edge of the public administration field.

Strategic Goals:

4. SPAA will publish path-breaking research in: performance measurement and improvement for the public and nonprofit sectors; health policy and administration; nonprofit management; technological applications in the public and nonprofit sectors; budgeting and finance; and leadership and diversity.

Action Step A: Underscore research as a top priority.

Action Step B: Align doctoral and graduate assistantships with the research priorities of the School.

Indicators of Success:

- a. The # of peer reviewed and indexed articles published in an academic year inclusive of students and faculty.
- b. The # of text books published.
- c. The # of papers or presentations made at a national conference by faculty and students.

5. SPAA will develop and adopt a comprehensive competency-based and capacity-building curriculum.

Action Step A: Engage in continuous improvements to the School's curriculum, which are linked to the achievement of core student learning outcomes.

Action Step B: Develop a system of assessments designed to measure student learning relative to the core student learning outcomes.

Indicators of Success:

- a. Core competency-based student learning outcomes are linked and tracked to each core and elective course.

6. SPAA will deliver public administration knowledge via online and other technological platforms.

Action Step A: Engage the Rutgers University Office of Continuous Education to launch an online MPA program.

Action Step B: Develop metrics for evaluating the School's delivery of online courses.

Action Step C: Explore online options for delivering online dual and joint degrees.

Indicators of Success:

- a. The # of online certificate and degree programs offered.

III. High Quality, Internationally Recognized Faculty in Teaching and Research

Strategic Vision: SPAA's faculty is highly recognized for excellence in teaching and research. Its faculty is prolific in advancing research through books, articles and presentations that are on the leading edge of the public affairs and administration academic discipline. Around the world, SPAA's faculty is known to be diverse, innovative, engaged, resourceful, and technologically savvy.

Strategic Goals:

7. SPAA will attract the top Ph.D. students, nationally and internationally on a competitive basis.

Action Step 1: Seek to develop additional financial resources to support highly qualified doctoral students.

Action Step 2: Continue to recruit minorities and women to public administration education.

Indicators of Success:

- a. The # of Ph.D. applications.
- b. The # of admitted Ph.D. applicants.
- c. The # of applicants admitted and attending.

8. All faculty will be engaged in professional networks and/or associations.

Action Step 1: Encourage all faculty to proactively participate in professional networks and associations.

Action Step 2: Encourage all faculty to become members of the American Society of Public Administration and at least one other professional association in the field.

Indicators of Success:

- a. The # of faculty who are members of networks and or associations.
- b. The # of networks and associations faculty are members of.

9. Faculty will conduct and publish research that is on the leading edge in the field of public administration and nonprofit management.

Action Step A: SPAA will allocate resources to faculty on an annual basis to facilitate ongoing research and publication.

Action Step B: Faculty will seek to have their research published in peer reviewed and indexed journals.

Indicators of Success:

a. The amount of resources provided to faculty annually for ongoing research and publication.

d. The # of published articles in peer reviewed and indexed journals.

IV. Collaborative Partnerships

Strategic Vision: SPAA is renowned for the scope and breadth of its engagement of partners, which supports its mission. The school serves as an invaluable resource for local, state, national and international public sector and nonprofit organizations in addressing the public service issues and challenges they face.

Strategic Goals:

10. SPAA will expand and broaden its partnerships with public sector and nonprofit organizations at the local, state, national and international levels to enhance their capacity to address public policy and management challenges.

Action Step A: Build a database of public and nonprofit agencies at the local, state, national and international levels.

Action Step B: Continue to develop MOU's to provide assistance to public and nonprofit agencies at all levels.

Action Step C: Encourage all faculty and administrative staff of the School to sit on the boards for public and nonprofit agencies on a pro bono basis.

Action Step D: Expand the number of Capstone projects linked to community-based organizations.

Action Step E: SPAA will directly offer its services to community-based organizations.

Indicators of Success:

a. The # of non-duplicative public and or nonprofit partnerships.

- b. The # of faculty and staff engaged in a public and or nonprofit partnership arrangement.
11. SPAA will foster and develop interdisciplinary partnerships within the Rutgers community (Newark, the Newark Health Sciences Campus, Camden and New Brunswick)

Action Step A: Continue to explore dual degrees and programs across all units of the Rutgers community.

Action Step B: Encourage the cross listing of courses to enhance the student experience at Rutgers.

Indicators of Success:

- a. The # of MOU's with other Rutgers degree and or non-degree programs.
- b. The # of cross-listed courses.

12. SPAA will engage students and alumni in governance activities that affect the school.

Action Step A: Invite students and alumni to serve on advisory committees sponsored by the School.

Action Step B: Invite students and alumni to assist the in organizing School events.

Action Step C: Continue to develop the Public Administration Graduate Association and Pi Alpha Alpha as effective vehicles for student participation in meaningful School activities.

Indicators of Success:

- a. PAGA is fully operationalized within SPAA's governance and student activities infrastructure.
- b. Pi Alpha Alpha fully operationalized within SPAA's governance and student activities infrastructure.

V. Sustainable Resources to Support SPAA's Mission

Strategic Vision: Sustainable resources that support new and innovative programs and research, faculty, students, facilities and technology fuel SPAA's success. SPAA's

endowment resources support faculty positions, as well as the school's PhD., MPA, EMPA and BA students with financial assistance. SPAA's capacity for attracting endowment funds fosters and sustains positive and continuous transformative value in applying state-of-the-art technology in the classroom environment and supporting high quality teaching, learning and research. SPAA has a diversified portfolio of financial resources from tuitions, grants, contracts, and endowments.

Strategic Initiative Goals:

13. SPAA will implement a Fund Development Initiative to support the vision and goals of the school.

Action Step A: Convene a Fund Development project group comprising representatives of the alumni office, Chancellor's Office, RU Foundation, faculty, staff and administration to develop a collaborative approach to this initiative.

Action Step B: Hire an Associate Dean for fundraising and who will be responsible for the identification and cultivation of donors, as well as soliciting and stewardship.

Action Step D: A Dean's advisory committee will be formed for the purpose of fundraising support.

Action Step E: SPAA will develop a "Naming the School" fund development initiative to support its long-term aspirational goals.

Action Step F: Work with the Rutgers Office of Continuous Education and the Office of Technical Commercialization to develop new funding streams for the School.

Action Step G: Work with public, nonprofit and private sectors to develop funding from income producing cooperative programs.

Action Step H: SPAA will develop and execute articulation MOU agreements with community colleges and other four-year colleges.

Indicators of Success:

a. The amount of increased donations to SPAA (Total Net Income).

b. Increased # of volunteer donors to SPAA.

14. SPAA will develop and execute articulation MOU agreements with community colleges and other four-year colleges.

Action Step A: Identify New Jersey based high schools, community colleges and 4-year colleges having symmetry with SPAA's mission and academic programs.

Action Step B: Engage in strategic discussions with the identified organizations.

Action Step C: Execute articulation agreements with the identified entities.

Indicators of Success:

- a. The # of MOU's executed.
- b. The # of High School MOU's; Community College MOU's and 4-year college MOU's.

15. SPAA will develop pedagogical resources to support the goals of the school.

Action Step A: SPAA will maintain a cases and simulations portal for public administration education for use by all faculty in their courses.

Action Step B: All full-time and part-time faculty will continue to participate in service professional development for enlivening the student experience

Indicators of Success:

- a. The amount of resources made available to faculty for enhancing the delivery courses.
- b. Frequency of faculty accessing resources for enhancing the delivery of courses.

16. SPAA will create a dashboard of performance indicators to measure progress in meeting its goals and to support ongoing continuous improvement and innovation.

Action Step A: A software data collection system will be established for capturing KPI's in four core areas: school, faculty, student and classes.

Action Step B: Use the software support system for decision-making.

Indicators of Success:

- a. Create and track monthly, quarterly and annual performance indicators.

17. SPAA will implement a communications program that features high visibility web sites and other marketing tools.

Action Step A: SPAA will publish a monthly newsletter

Action Step B: SPAA will produce an Annual Report.

Action Step C: SPAA will continuously review its web site content and accessibility.

Action Step D: SPAA will add core elements to its marketing strategy based on best practices.

Indicators of Success:

a. The # of newsletters published.

b. The # of website visits.

c. The level of user satisfaction with SPAA's website and other media as measured by a survey.

18. SPAA will continue to invest in its physical plant resource to make the school an inviting and welcoming space for students, faculty and staff.

Action Step A: All SPAA classrooms will feature SMART technology.

Action Step B: SPAA's gathering space will be upgraded to encourage student collaboration.

Action Step C: SPAA will implement a student relations management system.

Indicators of Success:

a. The amount of \$\$ invested in facility and technology upgrades.

b. Faculty and student satisfaction with the usability and accessibility of SPAA's facility and technology as measured by a survey.

c. Successful implementation of a student relations management system.

VI. SPAA – The School of Choice for Public Administration Academic Research and Public and Nonprofit Practitioners.

Strategic Vision: SPAA is recognized as a top school for public administration research and practitioner education nationally and around the world.

Strategic Initiative Goals:

19. SPAA will continue to improve its ranking as one of the top schools of public administration academic research and practitioner education in America and is the school of choice for international students.

Action Step A: SPAA will communicate monthly with academics, other schools of public administration, and other key stakeholders in the field.

Action Step B: SPAA will regularly advertise in major public administration venues.

Indicators of Success:

a. SPAA will achieve a top 5 national ranking.

b. Increased # of volunteer donors to SPAA.

20. SPAA will continue to attract a racially and ethnically diversified and representative student body.

Action Step A: SPAA will expand the number of international BA students.

Action Step B: SPAA will grow the number of international Ph.D. students.

Action Step C: SPAA will expand the number of international MPA students.

Indicators of Success:

a. The # and % of student population identified as international.

b. The # and % of student population identified nationally, ethnically, racially and by gender.