



MPA Newsletter

Winter 2017



Message from the Director

In recent months much has been said nationally and regionally about the role of public institutions in the United States. As I have listened to the debates about size and scope of government action I have been reminded about the importance of what we do here in the MPA program at WKU.

The majority of our graduates get jobs in the public sector. Regardless of whether they work at the federal, state or local level, our alumni are involved in the production and delivery of public goods and services. As they do so, it is our hope that they have learned that responsible administration is much more and often different than efficient administration.

Without question, efficiency is an important goal for public institutions. Given the opportunity, most public employees can point to ways they can improve administrative processes, save money, “cut the red tape.”

What is often lost in the discussion of inefficiencies of public action, however, is the fact that efficiency is

not and cannot be an end unto itself. As Dwight Waldo reminds us, it is impossible to simply be efficient, one must be efficient at something.

By and large, the reason we are able to debate the level of efficiency within our public institutions is precisely because these institutions, for the most part, are already effective in their efforts to fulfill their goals and organizational missions.

As public administrators, our primary charge is to serve the public interest. Accordingly, a key component of the mission for our MPA program is to prepare students to be “productive leaders and managers in public service.” It is our hope that we are both effective and efficient at accomplishing this mission so that our alumni will be both effective and efficient at accomplishing theirs.



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MPA Student News



Pictured, from left to right: *Front Row* — Dr. Victoria Gordon, Hannah Benward, Andrea Jenkins, Joanna Bailey, Mohammed Alshamsi, Kennedy Prather, Ashleigh Barker, Dr. Dan Boden; *Back Row* — Dr. Jeff Budziak, Dr. Scott Lasley, Kamla Jones, Charlie Gillock, Muneer Alkhyeli, Dr. Tim Rich, Audrey Collins, Nehemiah Mkanta, Nicole Todd

Orientation for New and Returning Students

On Saturday, August 27th the MPA program held its annual orientation for new and returning students. The meeting was held in the MPA Student Room (345 Grise Hall). In addition to imparting valuable information, the event provides a wonderful opportunity for students and faculty to meet and socialize with one another. The annual orientation is one of the few times throughout the year that students from the Fort Knox, Glasgow, Owensboro and Bowling Green campuses converge on the same physical location.

During the meeting, Drs. Boden and Gordon spoke to students about program norms and faculty expectations, as well as our program's goals and mission. Returning students were able to offer advice to new students about course work and preparations for the comprehensive exam. Charlie Gillock, a new student, stated "Being in a new environment can be a little overwhelming, not in the MPA program! I felt right at home as I was introduced to all of my peers at the new member orientation."

Following the information sessions, faculty and students had the chance to continue their conversations over lunch together.



Pictured, left to right: Ashleigh Barker, Dr. Victoria Gordon, Gaines Brown

On September 30th, two MPA students, Ashleigh Barker and Gaines Brown, were recognized as WKU Distinguished Minority Fellows. Ashleigh is a second year MPA

student from Nashville, TN and Gaines is a first year MPA student from Bowling Green, KY. The Distinguished Minority Fellowship program at WKU is a competitive program designed to assist individuals of diverse backgrounds in achieving their educational goals.

The formal event was held at the Downing Student Union and provided an opportunity for Fellows from across campus to meet and socialize with one another as well as with WKU faculty and staff. Diversity is a fundamental value of the MPA program and we are pleased to have had the opportunity to honor Ashleigh and Gaines for

The MPA program thanks Dr. Victoria Gordon for her service as the director of the MPA program at WKU. Dr. Gordon was appointed director of the program following Dr. James Chappell's retirement from WKU. She served as the director of the WKU MPA program from July 2013 until August 2016. During this time period the program experienced many exciting events including the addition of new faculty members, the celebration of the program's 40th Anniversary, and reaccreditation by the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs and Administration (NASPAA).

Dr. Gordon continues to play an important role in student advising, classroom instruction, and faculty governance of the MPA program. Dr. Gordon's office has relocated to Grise Hall #306. Thank you, Dr. Gordon for your continued service to the MPA program.



NASPAA News



As noted in the Summer 2016 newsletter, the WKU MPA program has been reaccredited for the next seven years. With reaccreditation comes the expectation from NASPAA that over the next seven years we will continually assess our program and adjust our activities as needed to ensure

we provide our students with relevant, high quality learning experiences that equip them to serve their communities. We can't do this alone, and therefore appreciate the efforts of our MPA Advisory Committee, alumni, faculty, and students who provide guidance and feedback that help us meet NASPAA's expectations for accredited programs. Your suggestions and support are always welcome.

Once again, the WKU MPA program will participate in NASPAA's Student Simulation Competition on February 25, 2017. This year, graduate students from NASPAA schools will analyze a problem related to food security, based on the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal #2. There are eight host sites worldwide, and our students will compete at the regional site in Indianapolis, Indiana. More information on the competition is available at: studentcompetition.naspaa.org/

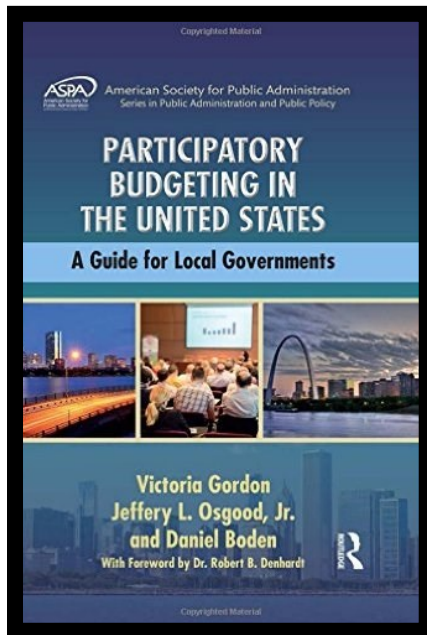


NASPAA has numerous resources available through their website: www.naspaa.org. In this issue, we'd like to highlight PublicServiceCareers.org. The website, which is promoted as "your source for professional jobs in the new public sector," is jointly sponsored by NASPAA, ASPA, and APPAM. Information on employment and salary trends and internships are a click away using the "Career Resources" tab. Through the "Find A Job" tab, you can not only view jobs and internships, you can set up personal job alerts, post your resume, and view international exchange opportunities. Registration is not required, and the services are free to job seekers, so check out what PublicServiceCareers.org has to offer.

Faculty Notes

Dr. Victoria Gordon and Dr. Daniel Boden

collaborated with WKU MPA program alum, Dr. Jeffrey Osgood (who is currently a member of the faculty at Westchester University in Pennsylvania), on a new book entitled *Participatory Budgeting in the United States: A Guide for Local Governments*. Published by Routledge in October 2016, the project investigates how five localities around the United States have used Participatory Budgeting as a means to increase citizens' engagement in governance issues. Participatory budgeting has been a successful tool for local governments throughout the world and in recent years has become more prevalent in the United States.



The book is the second collaborative project for Drs. Gordon, Osgood, and Boden. Their journal article, also related to participatory budgeting, was published in 2015.

APSA in the City of Brotherly Love

During Labor Day weekend, Shannon Vaughan joined political scientists from around the world to present her research at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Dr. Vaughan and her co-author, Dr. Shelly Arsneault were invited to present their research as part of one of the conference theme panels – Advancing Philanthropic Scholarship: The Implications of Transformation.

Dr. Arsneault is currently a Professor at California State University, Fullerton, but many of you may remember her from her time as Director of the WKU MPA program. Their paper, *The Public Benefit of Benefit Corporations* explores the impact of the increased blurring of the lines between the public, nonprofit, and for-profit sectors on the provision of public goods and services. The paper is currently under review for a special symposium issue of the journal *PS: Political Science and Politics*.



International student, Muneer Alkhyeli had the distinction of carrying his nation’s flag during the Fall 2016 Commencement ceremony held at E.A. Diddle Arena. The United Arab Emirates’ student was proud of the opportunity to represent his country during the graduation ceremony.

In an email to the Political Science Faculty, Muneer expressed his thanks to both faculty and fellow students for their support throughout his time in the program. As he reflected on his time in the MPA program Muneer said, “WKU will always be home” and he “look[ed] forward to making the institution proud wherever [he went].” The MPA program is proud of Muneer and proud of the program’s international reach.

Summer and Fall 2016 Graduates

SUMMER 2016

Ibrahim A. Alhussayen

Fall 2016

Muneer K. Alkhyeli

Jacob T. Brennenstuhl

Jasmine L. Morris

Joanna B. Bailey

Kamla A. Jones

Kennedy P. Prather



The MPA Program would like to hear from you. Please email Dr. Boden and tell him your news– both personal and professional.

Photos courtesy of Gary Gordon and Daniel Boden.



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