

## IUPUI GAC Reviewer Form

### Documents Reviewed:

- SPEA CVs Urban Sustainability.doc, with Appendix A
- MPA Sustainability GAC.doc

### Summary of Proposal:

The proposal seeks to establish a new concentration in Urban Sustainability within the existing Master of Public Affairs (MPA) offered by the School of Public and Environmental Affairs at IUPUI. The goal of the concentration is to provide graduates with advanced skills and conceptual tools to assume leadership and managerial positions in the growing and broad arrays of sustainability practices and policies, increasingly embraced by non-profit, state, and government organizations and agencies nationwide. The concentration (consisting of 6 courses overall, 18 credit hrs) builds off from the existing MPA (48 credit hrs total) and integrates courses from existing programs or create new ones.

#### 1. Are the goals clear and achievable?

The proposal articulates well the societal needs for the type of profession targeted by the proposed concentration. There is enough evidence that supports the claim that graduates will find a position in the growing numbers of sustainability offices around the country – and abroad. The proposal is well written, clear and focused. The plan for establishing the concentration (6 courses) seems well achievable within the existing resources available at the School.

#### 2. Is the program academically sound?

The proposed program is academically sound, but some important aspects need to be clarified.

- Page 2 and page 6: it would be appropriate to provide some examples (besides the *one* provided) of existing schools and institutions offering similar and potentially competing programs, with links to their websites.
- Page 3 (and Appendix A). How are the concentration courses connected to the existing MPA courses? This aspect is not clear. A simple table that shows a study plan connecting these two elements will clarify this issue. In the Appendix it is not clear which courses one must take to complete the MPA program *with* the concentration.
- Which of the concentration courses are *newly* introduced (designed from scratch) and which are borrowed from existing program(s)? It

seems that only 2 courses are new (Urban Sustainability and Energy, Policy and Sustainability).

- Would it be possible for a student enrolled in the first year of MPA to switch and jump on to the concentration? What would be the mechanism(s) in place?
- Wouldn't core communication and communication management skills (written and oral) be an essential and integral part of the prospected professional figures? How are these skills taken into consideration in the concentration (if appropriate)?

**3. Are faculty resources available to offer this certificate without undercutting other key missions of the unit?**

To evaluate this point, it would be recommendable that the proposal clearly spell out **which** faculty will teach **which** courses in the proposed concentration. A simple table or clear study plan will suffice.

As the internship/pratica (0-6 hrs) seems an important piece to the completion of the concentration, it would appropriate to clarify the mechanisms in place or to be established to guide students to successfully find a suitable internship position (e.g. advisors, internship mentors, career offices, career advisors, etc.). How will the students be mentored during the internship? Will there be follow-up activities? How will the internship experience be leveraged/treasured within the program after it has been completed?

**4. Is there overlap, either real or potential, with any other unit that could harm the program or be exploited to help the program?**

All courses offered within the proposed concentration seem well focused on the expertise and core disciplines covered by the School of Public and Environmental Affairs; so, no overlaps or conflicts are foreseen.

**5. My recommendation, comments/concerns regarding this proposal...**

Here are some specific recommendations to further clarify the promising strengths of the proposal:

- Page 2 (and page 6). A list/table of examples of job titles for the prospected graduated would be helpful to have a more precise idea of what the concentration will prepare the graduates to do in the world of urban sustainability. These job titles could be taken easily from current job banks searching for sustainability experts specialized in the urban/regional contexts.

- Page 2: A definition of sustainability and urban sustainability would help clarify the unique focus of the concentration.
- Given the nature of the clientele and the foreseen demand, will some of the courses be offered with an additional online section? If not, why? If yes, how will resources be made available?