February 24, 2016

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: Mun Y. Choi, Provost

RE: Master of Public Policy in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Trustees approve the Master of Public Policy in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

BACKGROUND:

The Department of Public Policy proposes to establish a Master of Public Policy (MPP) degree that will emphasize rigorous analytic methods for assessing alternative policies and evaluating program effectiveness. The MPP degree will provide students with the skills necessary to develop, implement, and evaluate public policies that aim to improve societal outcomes. The MPP student internships are consistent with the University Academic Plan’s emphasis on becoming engaged in social and community problem-solving.

The MPP is designed to provide students with the skills and competencies necessary to analyze policies and evaluate results. The existing Master of Public Administration (MPA) program currently serves students seeking policy analytic careers as one of its specialties. The MPP degree will focus specifically on the needs of these students.

The MPP is designed to fill a curricular gap at UConn and has several important features:

• The MPP will advance aspects of the University’s Academic Plan.
• The MPP provides several opportunities for community engagement including a required internship.
• The MPP will use mainly existing resources and will seamlessly share focus areas and some classes with the existing MPA program.
• The MPA program is already placing students in MPP-like positions, such as with the State Office of Fiscal Analysis, State Office of Legislative Program Review and Investigations, Mathematica (consulting firm), and as policy analyst with organization like the Connecticut Community Providers Association. The MPP will allow us to focus our placement efforts for students interested in policy analytic careers.
• Graduates of the MPP will be prepared to fill important societal needs of developing and implementing sound policy and evaluating whether policies work.

The Proposed MPP curriculum will require 43 credits and include core courses, a focus area, internship, and a final experience.
Item: Master of Public Policy

CIP-Code: 44.0501 (Public Policy Analysis, General)

**Background & Description**

The Department of Public Policy proposes to establish a Master of Public Policy (MPP) degree that will emphasize rigorous analytic methods for assessing alternative policies and evaluating program effectiveness. The MPP degree will provide students with the skills necessary to develop, implement, and evaluate public policies that aim to improve societal outcomes. The MPP student internships are consistent with the University Academic Plan’s emphasis on becoming engaged in social and community problem-solving. The MPP degree will fall squarely in the University’s Academic Plan’s “Commitment to the Future” section, which includes the following (p. 18):

- Reversing poverty and disparities for our citizens;
- Addressing abuses and improving human rights;
- A commitment to engagement and a mission that focuses efforts on the betterment of humanity;
- Visionary leadership at all levels.

The MPP is designed to provide students with the skills and competencies necessary to analyze policies and evaluate results. The existing Master of Public Administration (MPA) program currently serves students seeking policy analytic careers as one of its specialties. The MPP degree will focus specifically on the needs of these students.

The decision to pursue establishing a MPP degree resulted from an extensive assessment and strategic planning effort by the existing MPA program. The MPA program has been accredited by the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA) since 1983. Every seven years the program goes through a re-accreditation process which includes an intensive self-assessment process. We began this self-assessment in Spring 2015 and completed it in November 2015. This assessment included a strategic planning process where we gathered input from stakeholders including focus groups with alumni and existing employers, meetings with MPA students, interviews of prospective employers, and input from representatives of the MPA alumni council. The strategic planning process culminated in a retreat facilitated by an outside moderator (who is a well-respected MPA Head and member of the accreditation body).

The strategic planning process made very clear that the current MPA program is now serving three related but somewhat distinct groups of students. One set of students are early service or pre-service and interested in careers in management, such as becoming managers in nonprofits, local governments, or state governments. The second group of students have significant career experience (10–20 years) and enrolled mostly part-time in the MPA program to enhance their skills and have additional credentials. The third group of students are interested in policy development, implementation, and program evaluation with a focus on the analytic, design, and statistical methods necessary to be successful. They seek careers in analytic jobs with governments, nonprofits, or consulting firms. The MPA program has always served these groups
of students, but in recent years the MPA program has grown and the student interests have become increasingly divergent.

A MPP degree would primarily serve the third group of students, as described above. This will allow us to provide a curriculum targeted directly to their needs. The MPP will also allow the existing MPA to re-focus its efforts to better serve the first two groups. The MPP will also allow us to better target and recruit students into both the MPP and the MPA.

**Reasons for the Proposed Program**

The MPP is designed to fill a curricular gap at UConn and has several important features:

- The MPP will advance aspects of the University’s Academic Plan.
- The MPP provides several opportunities for community engagement including a required internship.
- The MPP will use mainly existing resources and will seamlessly share focus areas and some classes with the existing MPA program.
- The MPA program is already placing students in MPP-like positions, such as with the State Office of Fiscal Analysis, State Office of Legislative Program Review and Investigations, Mathematica (consulting firm), and as policy analyst with organization like the Connecticut Community Providers Association. The MPP will allow us to focus our placement efforts for students interested in policy analytic careers.
- Graduates of the MPP will be prepared to fill important societal needs of developing and implementing sound policy and evaluating whether policies work.

**Curriculum & Program Outline**

The Proposed MPP curriculum will require 43 credits and include core courses, a focus area, internship, and a final experience. We developed the curriculum by identifying core skills and competencies based on our assessment findings in Spring and Fall 2015 and designated the competencies by whether they are important for MPP, MPA, or both degrees (these competencies are described in detail under learning outcomes). We traced the core competencies we developed to specific core courses and revised the competencies as appropriate for the MPP degree. We developed learning outcomes for the other components of the curriculum (focus areas, internship, and final experience). In particular, the focus areas build on the Department of Public Policy’s areas of strength. We then gathered feedback on the proposed curriculum from the MPA alumni council and existing MPA students (many would be candidates for the MPP degree). The curriculum was reviewed and approved by a vote of the MPA faculty.

The curriculum is as follows:

**Core courses (27 credits)**

*Policy and organizational environments*

PP 5340 Introduction to Public Policy (to be renamed Introduction to Public Policy and Management)
PP 5361 Theory and Management of Public Organizations

Economic and policy analysis
PP 5375 Economic Analysis for Public Administration (to be renamed Economic Analysis for Public Policy and Management)
PP 5342 Policy Analysis
PP 53XX Applied Policy Topics (new course to be created)

Methods of analysis
PP 5376 Applied Quantitative Methods
PP 5331 Quantitative Methods for Public Policy
PP 5370 Applied Research Design
PP 5314 Causal Program Evaluation

Focus areas (9 credits), students choose from the following:

Nonprofit management
PP 5323 Leading and Governing Nonprofit Organizations
PP 5324 Grant Writing and Fund Development for Nonprofit Organizations
PP 5319 Program Development and Evaluation
PP 5328 Business Functions of Nonprofit Organizations

Public finance and budgeting
PP 5373 Budgeting in Public Service Organizations
PP 5318 Financial Management for Public Organizations
PP 5317 Capital Financing and Budgeting
PP 5321 State and Local Fiscal Problems
PP 5326 Public Investment Analysis
PP 5327 Analysis for Management Decision-Making

Social policy
PP 5344 Social Policy
PP 5397 Special Topics: Race and Policy
PP 5397 Special Topics: Housing Policy
EDLR 6322/PP 5397 Special Topics: Economics of Education and School Finance

Public administration
Courses selected from those offered as part of the MPA program

Student driven focus
Students decide on focus area in cooperation with their advisor

Internship (6 credits)

Final Experience (1 credit)
PP 5372 Introduction to Public Administrations Skills (to be renamed Portfolio Capstone)  
Students develop a portfolio of their work developed over the course of the program

Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes for the new MPP program are derived from the program’s mission, below:

Our mission is to provide public service leaders with the analytic, contextual, communication, and ethical skills necessary to lead, manage, and conduct policy analysis and evaluation. Our program emphasizes rigorous analytic methods for assessing alternative policies and evaluating program effectiveness in an increasingly complex and constrained policy environment. Our graduates have the outlook and training necessary to address important public problems in order to make our society better.

Learning outcomes are separated by curriculum component—the core courses, focus areas, internship, and portfolio have separate but related learning outcomes. We will discuss each in turn.

Core courses

We define the learning outcomes for core courses in terms of the skills and competencies we expect the students to master. We have six major competency areas, below:

Competency 1: To lead and manage in public governance.

An understanding of organizational structures, processes and behaviors. Familiarity with interorganizational collaboration. Understanding of leadership styles and techniques. Ability to manage financial and human resources of an organization.

Competency 2: To participate in and contribute to the public policy process.

Understanding the policy making process; its goals and actors. Familiarity with major policy domains. The ability conduct and evaluate policy research and communicate research results. Facility framing policy problems and applying economic analysis. The ability to recognize and respond to the ethical dimensions of public problems.

Competency 3: To analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions.

The ability to make the best possible decisions in policy and management settings. This includes the ability to select and use methodologies appropriate to support research objectives. Knowledge of how to design and employ a variety of data-collection and analysis techniques. Ability to analyze, describe and communicate the results of data analysis.

Competency 4: To articulate and apply a public service perspective.
Understanding the unique responsibilities and dilemmas of public service professionals. Ability to apply ethical and public service values to policy and management decisions. Capacity to contribute to, and advance, the profession writ large.

Competency 5: To communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry.

Understand the concepts, skills, and procedures for managing and leading a diverse workforce and creating an inclusive workplace climate human resources. Capacity to interact with a variety of individuals as a leader, through supervision, negotiation and mediation. Ability to act ethically in a diverse workplace. Appreciation of citizen roles in decision making.

Competency 6: To operate effectively in a professional workplace.

Understand the conduct and behavior that is consistent with professional comportment. The ability to present oneself effectively, including communicating effectively orally and in writing. Understand group dynamics and how to manage conflict. Ability to work effectively with individuals, groups, and as part of a team. Aware of relevant professional norms, and how to operationalize them in the workplace.

We developed specific competencies that will lead to students mastering the above six major competencies, below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific skill or competency</th>
<th>Competency covered</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Understanding of organizational environments</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Understanding of effectiveness and performance</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Knowledge of strategic planning</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Understanding organizational structure and design</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>5 Ability to identify emerging conditions, problems and needs of organizations</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Ability to apply theories and methods for understanding behavior of people in organizations</td>
<td>1,5,6</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Understanding budget cycles</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>8 Understanding of cost concepts including marginal cost, average costs and total costs</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 Ability to apply project management techniques</td>
<td>1, 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 Ability to apply research designs for organizational inquiry</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Understanding of the policy process</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Ability to apply an ethical perspective to analysis</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>An understanding of policy development along major policy domains (e.g. health care, education, social, etc.)</td>
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<td>Ability to apply supply and demand concepts including the implications of shifts in supply and demand, supply and income elasticities.</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>An understanding of the nature of markets</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Ability to apply economic tools to policy and management problems</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>An understanding of the logic of social research, systematic thinking</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>An understanding of the concepts of evaluation research -- research designs (experiments, quasi-experiments, non-experiments, case studies)</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>An ability to develop research questions</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>An understanding of validity and reliability of measures</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>An understanding of different data gathering such as surveys, interviews, focus groups, etc.</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>An understanding of the economic reasons for government (e.g. Market failure—externalities, monopolies, public goods, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>An understanding of efficiency and equity</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>An understanding of the time value of money</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>Understanding of basics of cost-benefit analysis</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>Understanding of the tools for analysis of revenue systems</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>Ability to effectively present data</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>Ability to write professional memoranda</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>Ability to make a professional presentation</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>Ability to apply inferential statistics</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>An understanding of statistical significance</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>An understanding of basic probability distributions</td>
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<td>33</td>
<td>Understanding of different sampling techniques</td>
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<td>No.</td>
<td>Objective</td>
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<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>An understanding of fiscal, economic, social, and environmental sustainability</td>
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<td>35</td>
<td>An understanding of accountability and responsiveness in a democracy</td>
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<td>36</td>
<td>An understanding of the importance of transparent processes</td>
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<td>37</td>
<td>An understanding of the importance of fairness and respect for human rights</td>
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<td>38</td>
<td>Ability to thrive in a diverse workplace</td>
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<td>39</td>
<td>Understanding of the professions of public administration and policy</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>Ability to communicate in an organizational context</td>
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<td>41</td>
<td>Understanding workplace norms</td>
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<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Ability to work successfully in teams</td>
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<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Basic understanding of regression</td>
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<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Understanding of more advanced regression such as regression assumptions, nonlinear regression, fixed effect regression, regression with binary dependent variables; and instrumental variable regression</td>
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<td>45</td>
<td>Ability to conduct sophisticated cost-benefit analysis</td>
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<td>46</td>
<td>Understanding public choice</td>
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<td>47</td>
<td>Ability to employ advanced causal analysis and designs, such as panel data analysis, difference-in-differences, instrumental variables, regression discontinuity designs</td>
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<td>48</td>
<td>Ability to understand organizational power and politics</td>
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<td>49</td>
<td>Ability to produce a project for an outside client</td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>Understanding of other statistical techniques, such as factor analysis, multinomial and ordered probit/logit, propensity score matching</td>
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<td>51</td>
<td>Professional writing other than memoranda, such as professional emails, executive summaries, etc.</td>
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<td>52</td>
<td>Understanding of an increasingly globalized context</td>
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<td>53</td>
<td>Application of logic models</td>
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<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Ability to lead and manage a diverse workforce</td>
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</table>
Focus areas

- Provide students with the opportunity to become more expert in a particular policy/management domain.
- Provide the students with the chance to market areas of career strength.

Specific skills and competencies will vary by focus area.

Internship

- Provide students with the opportunity to apply the theory and knowledge learned in the classroom to “real world” work experiences.
- Sharpen skills needed for virtually all careers, such as interpersonal skills.
- Provide students with the opportunity to build and refine skills specific to their career goals, such as fund development for nonprofit organizations.
- Provide students the chance to try out occupations that they might be considering for future careers.
- Provide students with a mentorship experience where they learn about professional workplace norms.

Specific skills and competencies for the internship:
- Understanding of workplace norms;
- Ability to work successfully in teams;
- Ability to communicate in an organizational context;
- Ability to make professional presentations;
- Ability to write in a professional setting;
- Ability to thrive in a diverse workplace;
- Understanding the professions of public administration and policy;
- Ability to apply an ethical perspective;
- Ability to apply professional skills such as running a meeting, interpersonal relationships, effective and appropriate use of emails, etc.;
- Ability to understand organizational politics.

Final experience (portfolio development)

- Provide an integrative experience for students;
- Help students and the programs reflect upon their attainment student learning competencies;
- Provide students with an on-going process for refining their professional goals;
- Provide a portfolio of work to show prospective employers.

Specific skills and competencies for the final experience:

- Ability to see the overall picture and not just its components;
- Ability to be reflective about professional growth and areas of need for future growth.
Enrollment & Graduation Projections

There are currently students in the MPA pipeline that would prefer the MPP. We expect that we will enroll 10-15 students the first year the MPP is approved (hopefully AY 2016-17). In AY 2016-17 we will market the new MPP in Connecticut and nationwide and we expect the enrollment to grow to 25 to 30 as a steady state each year thereafter.

Financial Resources

The instruction and administration of the MPP program will be largely absorbed by the existing resources of the Department of Public Policy. The MPP will share some classes with the MPA program and some existing faculty teaching will be repurposed to accommodate the MPP. We will need to hire additional adjunct faculty as a consequence of the MPP but will absorb these costs as part of the existing Department budget by using some of the funds generated by the Department’s entrepreneurial activities. The MPP can be sustained indefinitely by these resources but we hope that the success of the program will justify an additional position.

Facilities/Equipment/Library/Special Resources

There are no anticipated need for additional facilities/equipment/library/or special resources. The MPP will be mainly taught at the Hartford Campus with some classes also offered at Storrs.

Program Administration

The MPP will share program administration with the MPA program. Initially the program start-up will be managed by Professors Eric Brunner and Bill Simonsen. After program implementation the MPA director will also manage the MPP program along with Department of Public Policy administrative staff. This includes marketing, course scheduling, alumni and other external relations, policy development, and day-to-day operation of the MPP program.

Faculty

The Department of Public Policy (DPP) faculty who will be involved with the MPP include:

Eric Brunner, Associate Professor, DPP
Deneen Hatmaker, Associate Professor, DPP
Joshua Hyman, Assistant Professor, DPP and Neag School of Education
Erin Melton, Assistant Professor, DPP
Kerri Raissian, Assistant Professor, DPP
Mark Robbins, Professor, DPP
Bill Simonsen, Professor, DPP
Doug Spencer, Associate Professor, DPP and School of Law
Similar Programs in Connecticut or Region

The only Public Policy program in Connecticut is the Master of Arts in Public Policy offered by Trinity College. In the region, programs in Public Policy are offered at:

Harvard University
Northeastern University
University of Massachusetts at Amherst
University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth
Brandeis University
Tufts University
SUNY at Stony Brook (MA in Public Policy)
New England College (MA in Public Policy and online only)
University of New Hampshire