

**CAREER ASSESSMENT PROJECT
GUIDELINES 2014-2015**

THE CAP

**MPA PROGRAM
DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT & SOCIOLOGY
GEORGIA COLLEGE & STATE UNIVERSITY**

MPA PROGRAM

Georgia College & State University

PUAD 6689: CAREER ASSESSMENT PROJECT 2014-2015

CAP OVERVIEW

The Career Assessment Project (CAP) is completed by in-service MPA students during their last semester of course work. The CAP is an alternative to the internship, taken by pre-service students, and to the thesis option, which is available to all students. *To register for PUAD 6689, the student must have formally applied for graduation.*

The CAP provides students the opportunity to examine their experiences in the MPA program and to demonstrate their command of the material generally thought to comprise graduate-level public administration. It also gives students an opportunity to provide valuable feedback to the MPA faculty. Students will write a paper analyzing their experiences and will present/defend that paper to MPA faculty.

Three-Step Process

There are essentially three steps to completing the requirements for the CAP:

STEP 1. REGISTER FOR PUAD 6689.

Students will not receive credit for the CAP and will not be eligible to graduate unless they register for PUAD 6689 and receive a grade of “S” (satisfactory).

The next part of a successful CAP is *to schedule your presentation with the MPA coordinator*. It is your responsibility to attend the scheduled CAP presentation. **This presentation must take place before the exit interview.**

STEP 2. DO THE CAP PRESENTATION

The MPA coordinator will announce a specific date for the CAP presentation. Students should keep the presentation to about 15 minutes and *should use Power Point slides*. Please practice it ahead of time. (CAP students will need to register only for the PUAD 6689, not for the other course in which they make their CAP presentation.)

Your presentation should contain pertinent and interesting information, such as why you chose the program, how the program has impacted you as a public administrator, and any helpful information that you would have wanted to know as you were starting the program. You should feel free to offer criticisms of the program in a professional manner. Try to avoid making your presentation a litany of your class choices, semester by semester. Please keep in mind that it is not necessary that you complete your paper before making your presentation; in fact, you may find that preparing your presentation will help in preparing your written work.

STEP 3. SUBMIT YOUR CAP PAPER

The paper is the tangible product of the Career Assessment Project analyzing the student's goals upon entering and leaving the MPA program and evaluating the MPA program in light of those goals. At a minimum, the paper should include the following:

- 1) A statement of the student's goals at the beginning of the program.
- 2) How and why those goals have or have not changed during the program, and how the program has affected any such change.
- 3) An assessment of what the student has gained from the program.
- 4) An assessment of the program in terms of the student's needs and expectations.
- 5) An overall evaluation of the program.
- 6) An evaluation of the courses in the program.
- 7) An assessment of the experience with the other class to which the CAP student was linked.
- 8) Recommendations for changes, additions, or deletions.
- 9) Other constructive comments deemed appropriate.
- 10) An updated copy of the student's resume.

The CAP paper is to be submitted *no later than two weeks before the last day of classes for the semester*. The MPA coordinator will announce specific due dates at the beginning of each semester.

Two copies of the paper should be submitted, typed in accordance with the standard rules for papers at Georgia College & State University. To encourage candor, the paper will be graded on a pass/fail basis; the grade will not affect the student's grade point average. If the first submission of the CAP paper is not deemed satisfactory, the paper will be returned to the student for additional work. If the resubmitted paper is also deemed unsatisfactory, then the student will receive a failing grade and will not graduate with the MPA degree. The quality of the CAP student's involvement with the other course will also be a factor in final grade determination.

Experience has shown that an effective and helpful CAP paper is usually **12-20 pages** long. Our concern is with the quality of the paper rather than the quantity of pages. We expect that a great deal of constructive thought and analysis will go into this project. A good project will be of benefit to the student, to the MPA faculty, and to the MPA program as a whole. CAP's are used by the faculty as a method of evaluating and revising the MPA program. The projects afford to graduating students the very real opportunity to affect the overall content and quality of the MPA program, as well as the chance to put their experiences into a context that will be useful for their own purposes.

Please remember to enclose a copy of your resumé with your paper.

Submit two copies of your paper and resume to the MPA Coordinator in HARD COPY ONLY, no later than two weeks before the end of the semester. Specific due dates will be announced at the beginning of each semester.