MPASA
"Making Connections"

Masters of Public Administration Student Association:
Strategic Plan 2010-2015

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Executive Summary

In just two years, The Masters in Public Administration Student Association (MPASA) has begun to develop into an established, recognized and increasingly vibrant part of the student body at the University of Central Florida. Through a variety of creative and diverse forums, MPASA continues to educate and connect students to career guidance, job opportunities, Public Administration faculty, professional organizations and societies, and agencies relevant to the field. In order to ensure the success and sustainability of the organization, a strategic plan has been developed by the organization in order to codify and designate future steps to manage their growth as the organization continues to develop.

There are numerous mandates (informal and formal) which are placed upon the organization as it is governed by the laws and regulations as devised by the University of Central Florida, the Office of Student Involvement (OSI), Student Government Association (SGA), and the Department of Public Administration (PAD). MPASA has controlled for these rules and regulations by devising an executive structure that is responsive and knowledgeable to the conditions with which they operate.

There are numerous primary stakeholders within the MPASA organization: Executive Board, Student Membership, MPA students, all are primary to the day to day development of the strength of the organization. There are also secondary stakeholders that play a considerable role in this success: UCF, OSI, SGA, PAD, Public Administration Alumni Chapter, and numerous professional organizations. This plan will strengthen the role of all involved stakeholders.

The mission of the MPASA organization is verbalized within the founding charter of the organization: "*"To mobilize students of the Masters of Public Administration degree for the purposes of networking, socializing, inviting relevant speakers to visit, as well as arranging visits of different government entities at the federal, state, and local levels. MPASA builds lasting professional connections to prepare member for life after their professional degrees" (MPASA, 2008, p.3).* The strategic plan for MPASA is based upon this foundation, and will maintain an approach which guides the organization towards fulfilling this mission.

This plan also addresses the political, economic, social, and technological trends that could impact the organization. MPASA is highly dependent upon its relationships with institutions, both internal and external, for its success. The plan notes this, and is designed to keep the organization focused upon maintaining a strong reputation and to enhance existing relationships, developing its network, as well as increasing its influence throughout the community.

The MPASA strategic plan looks at the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats present. These indicators not only help to clarify MPASA's objectives and it also provides an insight into the realm with which the organization operates. A TOWS analysis was also undertaken in order to verbalize the organizations capacity to address the proper means through which to use their strengths to maximize opportunities, and to minimize strengths, weaknesses, and avoid threats in their operating environment.

The MPASA plan addresses the strategic issues, as identified by executive leadership and membership, which must be addressed as they directly relate to the survival of the organization: membership, executive structure, outreach, capacity, and leadership development. From this issue identification process, a plan of action has been identified. The strategies are simple, yet, if implemented correctly, should have a demonstrable effect upon the success of the organization.

- Increased outreach to student body and community through marketing and recruitment

- Increased recruitment efforts at MPA, MNM, Graduate Certificates, and PhD levels

- Develop stronger ties to staff and faculty of MPA/ Public Affairs

- Development of stronger internal leadership structure

To this end, the MPASA organization will undertake an evaluation process with a focus on incremental achievement. This model of ongoing evaluation allows for the organization to maintain its focus throughout the implementation of the strategic plan. The Executive Structure will undertake 30, 60, and 90 day reviews of progress made towards goal achievement.

Introduction

In 2008, the Department of Public Administration commemorated 25 years of service to the Central Florida community (UCF, Department of Public Administration, 2010). The department now has over 2,000 alumni working in leadership positions in the public sector at all levels of government in Central Florida and beyond. Currently the department offers two masters programs, the NASPAA accredited Masters of Public Administration and Masters of Nonprofit Management offered online with over 270 active graduate students.

The Masters of Public Administration Student Association (MPASA) was founded in the summer of 2008 by a group of MPA students who noticed a void of graduate programming, encouragement of public service, as well as student professional and social networking for students in the MPA program. With the firm support of the Department of Public Administration, MPASA was created in order to fill that void by promoting the virtue of public service, fostering closer ties between students and public sector agencies and facilitating discourse among students and administrators concerning the future and direction of UCF's Department of Public Administration graduate programs.

The MPASA has begun to develop into an established, recognized student organization at the University of Central Florida. Although MPASA is still in their infancy years, they hope that the organization will continue to connect students to career options, job opportunities, PA faculty, and PA organizations and agencies alike for years to come. In order to ensure the success and sustainability of the organization, a strategic plan for the organization's next five years will be helpful and identifying where the organization currently is, where they would like to be in five years (or their vision), and how they can achieve that vision.

Informal/Formal Mandates

Informal and formal mandates help to structure the organization, stating what the organization must do, can do, and cannot do. These mandates can dramatically change the dynamic of the organization as well as clarify the organization's mission at hand. The MPASA President and OSI are responsible for cross-checking the organizational mandates by collaborating with each other and MPASA Officers. The MPASA is required by OSI to fill out a "SAFE Form" for every event held, ensuring that the MPASA is staying in align with OSI and University mandates. The MPASA President should keep track of their Officers' academic performance and responsibilities.

Formal Mandates

The MPASA is primarily mandated by the University's Office of Student Involvement (OSI). OSI oversees the registration and management of UCF's student organizations as well as the Student Government Association (SGA). OSI sets its policies in accordance with UCF's *Golden Rule.* "The *Golden Rule*, published annually by the Office of Student Conduct, describes university standards for students regarding their conduct in the university community and their rights and responsibilities" (UCF, Golden Rule, 2010.). The UCF *Golden Rule* is made up of policies, procedures, regulations, rules, and ordinances from ten different UCF departments; the Office of Student Involvement and the Office of Graduate Studies are included in these ten departments. The rule helps define the students' rights and responsibilities as a UCF community member (UCF Golden Rule Student Handbook, 2009). The Rule establishes ethical and behavioral standards for student life.

OSI's portion of the *Golden Rule* states, "The organizational conduct regulations shall apply to all student organizations of the University, including those at its regional campuses and/or at off campus instructional sites, and shall be deemed a part of the terms and conditions of student organization registration" (UCF Golden Rule Student Handbook, 2009, 5.011, 5.012, and 5.013). The student organization portion of the *Golden Rule* and how it applies to the MPASA are as follows:

OSI Requirements

- To be considered for registration, a student organization must submit in writing to the Office of Student Involvement a list of UCF student officers and members, their UCF PID numbers, the signature of all officers and the faculty/staff advisor(s), and the organization's constitution. Proposed student organizations must have a minimum of twelve UCF student members.

- At the beginning of each semester, and following organization elections, all registered student organizations must file an update report with the Office of Student Involvement. The report must include a current listing of the organization's membership and officers, the signature of at least two current officers and the faculty/staff advisor(s), and the organization's contact information. Organizations shall annually attend a mandatory orientation.

- Student organizations receiving funds must comply with Student Government and Office of Finance and Accounting Guidelines.

- Membership in any student organization is limited to any student who is currently paying activity and service fees and is enrolled with the University of Central Florida. Organizational membership requirements must also be satisfied.

- All organizations shall have a UCF faculty or staff advisor in order to be considered for active registration. Additionally, a faculty or staff advisor is required in order to receive Student Government Association funding.

OSI Student Leader Requirements

- During fall and spring semesters, a student leader must be continually enrolled as an activity and service fee-paying half-time student (currently defined as at least six (6) credit hours as an undergraduate degree-seeking student or a post-baccalaureate student, or at least five (5) credit hours in a graduate degree-seeking program or at least three (3) credit hours if registered for dissertation or thesis hours).

- A student leader must have a minimum institutional grade point average for their current academic career (i.e., undergraduate or graduate). This is a grade point average of 2.5 for Undergraduate Students and 3.0 for Post-Baccalaureate or Graduate Students, for all hours earned

- A student leader must be in good academic and disciplinary standing, defined as not being on academic or disciplinary probation. A student leader must be free of financial or disciplinary holds on University records.

Informal Mandates

In addition to the Golden Rule, the organization's constitution acts as another set of more informal mandates for the MPASA; these mandates are no less binding than the formal mandates.

Organizational Requirements

- Section 3 (Governing Authority) of the MPASA Constitution states, "All activities and functions of the organization must be legal under University, local, state, and federal laws. The most recent version of *The Golden Rule* will supersede all requirements set forth during the creation and revision of this constitution" (MPASA 2008).

Student Leader Requirements

Although the MPASA constitution often refers back to the Golden Rule for most of its policies, there are several organizational mandates that must be met as well including officer requirements and eligibility:

- Section 1 (Eligibility) states minimum enrollment requirements decided by the department and university (credit hours, GPA, academic and disciplinary standing, financial and disciplinary holds).
- Officers who do not meet these requirements shall resign or will be terminated on a 2/3 affirmative vote of active student members.
- All officers must also be enrolled in the Masters of Public Administration Program (MPASA 2008).

Simply, MPASA's informal mandates are "embodied in the norms or in the expectations of key stakeholders…" (Bryson, 2008).

Stakeholder Analysis

By immersing themselves in the organization's relationships, networks, and politics, the MPASA can better understand and identify organizational strategic issues. "Attention to stakeholder concerns is crucial: the key to success in public and nonprofit organizations (and communities) is the satisfaction of key stakeholders" (Bryson, 35, 2008). After speaking with the MPASA President and Faculty Advisor, several organizational stakeholders were identified:

Primary Stakeholders

Executive Board

- The MPASA President and its officers make the majority of the organizational decisions. This Board will directly affect the success of the organization. If the organization fails, it will be directly linked to the current Board.

MPASA Members

- As the MPASA members are the driving force behind the organization, they are a very important stakeholder. The MPASA's purpose is to provide the members it serves with all kinds of PA-related opportunities.

MPA Students

- Although not due-paying members, all MPA students are eligible to participate in most MPASA events. The MPASA's potential/future members also lay in this group of people.

Stakeholder	Relationship	Expectations
MPASA Executive Board	•The MPASA President and its officers make the majority of the organizational decisions. This Board will directly affect the success of the organization. If the organization fails, it will be directly linked to the current Board.	•The governing Board should actively participate and recruit throughout their term in office •The Board should plan for present and future
MPASA Members	•As the MPASA members are the driving force behind the organization, they are a very important stakeholder. The MPASA's purpose is to provide the members it serves with all kinds of PA-related opportunities.	•Increased organizational participation and desirability •Expected to keep providing speaker events, trips, and socials tailored to members' needs and wishes
MPA Students	•Although not due-paying members, all MPA students are eligible to participate in most MPASA events. The MPASA's potential/future members also lay in this group of people.	•Increased organizational exposure •Increased organizational benefits

UCF

- The University of Central Florida is the presiding body over all activities that occur on campus.

OSI

- OSI oversees the registration and management of UCF's student organizations.

PAD

- The Department of Public Administration expects a certain level of responsibility and conduct from the MPASA. The MPASA is directly linked and represented through the PA Department.

Professional Organizations (public and nonprofit)

- Professional organizations that MPASA may be involved with also have a stake here. Whether it's obtaining memberships or speakers from these professional organizations, MPASA must represent themselves with professionalism and class.

PA Alumni Chapter

- The PA Alumni Chapter will most likely carry UCF MPA graduates who may have been involved with the MPASA during their UCF career.

Central Florida Community

- MPASA offers volunteer opportunities for agencies and organizations in the Central Florida region. Through volunteering, MPASA has the ability to positively or negatively influence these organizations and the people/community it serves.

Stakeholder	Relationship	Expectations
UCF	•The University of Central Florida is the presiding body over all activities that occur on campus.	•continue to fund SGA •continue to keep enrollment at a steady, if not increasing, level
OSI	•OSI oversees the registration and management of UCF student organizations.	•create more opportunities for student organizations
PAD	•The Department of Public Administration expects a certain level of responsibility and conduct from the MPASA. The MPASA is directly linked and represented through the PA Department.	•Continued and increased support through faculty and staff
Professional Organizations	•Professional organizations that MPASA may be involved with also have a stake here. Whether it's obtaining memberships or speakers from these professional organizations, MPASA must represent themselves with professionalism and class.	•Continued and Increased collaboration with organizational events •Increased internship/volunteer opportunities •Implement a formalized mentoring process
PA Alumni Chapter	•The PA Alumni Chapter will most likely carry UCF MPA graduates who may have been involved with the MPASA during their UCF career.	•Initiate relationship through event invitations
Central Florida Community	•MPASA offers volunteer opportunities for agencies and organizations in the Central Florida region. Through volunteering, MPASA has the ability to positively or negatively influence these organizations and the people/community it serves.	•Increase desired partnerships to enhance benefits for both organizations •Increase organizational volunteering to focus on public service

Mission

"To mobilize students of the Masters of Public Administration degree for the purposes of networking, socializing, inviting relevant speakers to visit, as well as arranging visits of different government entities at the federal, state, and local levels. MPASA builds lasting professional connections to prepare member for life after their professional degrees" (MPASA, 2008, p.3).

The Masters of Public Administration Student Association Mission Statement is generated from the Department of Public Administration at the University of Central Florida's Mission Statement. An integral part of the Department of Public Administration's Mission strives to "provide the highest quality graduate and undergraduate education for current and prospective public service officials" (Department of Public Administration). MPASA embraces the goals and mission of the Department of Public Administration.

The MPASA supports the Department's endeavor by providing Masters of Public Administration students with opportunities to combine their education with professional opportunities for students. MPASA's founders understood the importance of fostering networking relationships between students and public service professionals. The student organization was created to provide ease the transition from academia to the workplace.

In our research, the group found that although the organization supports the Department's mission, the Department's mission does not support the existence of MPASA. It was suggested by Dr. Bryer, the MPASA Faculty Advisor, for the Department revise the mission in order to better incorporate MPASA. MPASA is a missing link that is vital to the Department, Program, and the student body.

The Masters of Public Administration Student Association does not only work to build networking relationships with government entities, the organizations also is involved with the Department of Public Administration. MPASA serves as the voice of Public Administration Graduate students. The organization represents the needs of students and has a strong relationship with staff and administration. The organization has also aligned its mission with the Department's by focusing on all levels of government; local, state, and federal. Goal number 5 discusses the importance of working with similar organizations. MPASA has strong working relationships with the Organization of Public Administration (the Bachelors of Public Administration student association), the Department of Public Administration, and other pertinent organizations. However, there is more room for the incorporation of MPASA's mission into the Department's mission. The Department's mission states,

"The Department of Public Administration seeks to provide the highest quality graduate and undergraduate education for current and prospective public service officials in public and nonprofit organizations. The department strives to achieve local, state and national prominence through contemporary curriculum, innovative instruction, scholarly and applied research, and community service. Programs and services are designed to develop and enhance management skills essential to public and nonprofit organizations oriented towards an evolving metropolitan environment" (UCF, Department of Public Administration, 2010).

Mission

University of Central Florida

The University of Central Florida is a public multi-campus, metropolitan research university that stands for opportunity. The university anchors the Central Florida city-state in meeting its economic, cultural, intellectual, environmental and societal needs by providing high-quality, broad-based education and experienced-based learning; pioneering scholarship and impact-full research; **enriched student development and leadership growth**; and highly relevant continuing education and public service initiatives that address pressing local, state, national, and international issues in support of the global community.

Department of Public Administration

The Department of Public Administration seeks to provide the highest quality graduate and undergraduate education for current and prospective public service officials in public and nonprofit organizations. The department strives to achieve local, state and national prominence through contemporary curriculum, innovative instruction, scholarly and applied research, and community service. Programs and services are designed to develop and enhance management skills essential to public and nonprofit organizations oriented towards an evolving metropolitan environment.

UCF Office of Student Involvement

The mission of the Office of Student Involvement (OSI) is **to provide quality programs, services, and leadership opportunities that enrich students' academic endeavors**. Students and staff collaborate to explore various paths that encourage personal growth, promote civic responsibility, embrace differences, and connect students to the campus and the community. In OSI, the journey is the destination.

MPASA

To mobilize students of the Masters of Public Administration degree for the purposes of networking, socializing, inviting relevant speakers to visit, as well as arranging visits of different government entities at the federal, state, and local levels.

<div align="center">**Trends and Events**</div>

MPASA is an organization that relies greatly on the relationships that it builds with outside factors. Many macro-economic factors impact the success of the organization.

Political Trends

MPASA serves as a representative for the Department of Public Administration and for students of the Masters of Public Administration Program.

- MPASA is a student organization that serves as a representative for the Masters of Public Administration students at the University of Central Florida.
    - Applying for funding with the Student Government Association is a very political process, as all student organizations are applying for funding that is limited. Executive Board members must attend Student Government Association (SGA) meetings in order to provide explanation and true need for the funding. Based on the presentations from the student organizations, SGA will grant or deny funding to the organizations.
    - The organization also lobbies for student rights and involvements within the Department of Public Administration.
    - MPASA Executive Board and members are present at Department events including the 'Public Administration Retreat'. It is imperative that representatives are professional at all times, especially when interacting with faculty and staff.

Economic Trends

MPASA secures funding for trips, projects, and events.

- As mentioned above in the political factors, MPASA strives to secure funding through the Student Government Association.
    - Funding for annual trips, events, and projects are all through SGA funding.
    - Securing SGA funding is imperative or the organization would not be able to sponsor:
    - The 'Annual Tallahassee Trip' where Master of Public Administration and Undergraduate Public Administration students visit Tallahassee for the week where they tour the Capitol, meet with Florida Senators and State Representatives, participate in a mock debate, and meet with many other essential Florida government officials.
    - Guest speaker events for local, state, and federal government professionals which provide guidance and networking opportunities.
    - The 'Annual Career Showcase' where multiple programs from the College of Health and Public Affairs collaborate to showcase professional organizations and potential employees for students.

Social Trends

Networking Opportunities with students and professional organizations

- The organization makes it possible for Masters of Public Administration students to network with other M.P.A Students.
    - This presents opportunities to build working relationships in the classroom as well as future professional relationships.
- The organization provides opportunities for students to network with other professional organizations through the participation in the Annual Career Showcase and guest speaking events.
- MPASA appeals to students or all ages, races, and walks of life who wish to advance themselves within the public administration career field.
    - The organizations not only caters to traditional students who are looking to begin their career in public administration but also to nontraditional students who are looking to make a career change or who are already currently working the public administration.
- Due to the growth of distance learning (online classes), the student organizations provides students with the opportunity to socialize with their fellow classmates face to face.

Technological Trends

Promote the organization through the use of available technology services.

- MPASA is able to actively promote meetings and events through:
    - Facebook; a social networking site.
    - Maintaining an action website
    - Utilizing email as main source of communication
    - Sending out a monthly digital newsletter via email, website, and through Facebook
    - the use of conference calls by the Executive Board in order to hold meetings
- The expansion of the distance learning portion of the program allows modes of technology to keep students involved.

PEST Analysis

A PEST analysis was completed in order to identify the political, economical, social, and technological aspects that affect the stability of the organization.

Political	Economical
Organization serves as a representative for the MPA Students Applies for Student Government Association funding Lobbies for Rights and Student Involvement	Secures funding for annual trips, projects, and events
Social	**Technological**
Networking opportunities with fellow students Networking opportunities with professional organizations Appeals to students of all ages, races, and walks of life Growth of distance learning helps to keep student connected	Utilized technology services to communicate with members

<u>**SWOT Analysis**</u>

It is imperative to clearly identify the organizations internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats. These indicators help to clarify the organization's objectives and as a way to accomplish established objectives. A survey was administered in Spring 2010 and the SWOT was taken from the responses as well as those identified during the strategic planning process.

Internal Factors – Strengths and Weaknesses

  <u>Strengths</u>

- MPASA has strong professional affiliations with organizations and agencies due to networking events.
- The membership is very diverse in age, gender, ethnicity, and educational background (different degree tracks).
- The organization strived to maintain a strong level of interaction with M.P.A faculty by participating in meetings and annual events like the 'Public Administration Retreat'.
- The organization acts as a conduit for professional development opportunities by promoting professional meetings for the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) and the Florida City and County Management Association (FCCMA). This proved students with the opportunity to be involved in yet another facet of public administration.
- There is much opportunity for peer relationship development. Events allow students to become more familiar with one another. This helps builds relationship in the classroom as well as in the future when working together in a professional setting.
- Monthly events provide ways for students to increase civic engagement opportunities through functions such as Relay for Life, and fundraisers for the Haiti Relief (Disney's Give a Day, Get a Day).
- Executive Board membership provides leadership training which will offer experience for future leadership opportunities.
- Membership to the organization builds social capital amongst the Public Administration Program allowing students to create new social networks.

Weaknesses

- Currently there is a lack of student participation. Students have indicated that they feel they do not have enough time to participate in events. Many students work during the day and on the weekends and attend school in the evening. This poses scheduling conflicts when planning events.
- Due the length of the program, it is difficult to get a strong membership. Traditional four year undergraduate programs allow for students to work their way gradually into a leadership position, where as a two year graduate program makes this difficult.
- The organization is having difficulty engaging members in activities. This makes it hard to plan events in fear that they will not be effective due to lack of participation.
- The organization has reached out to other student organizations in hopes of collaborating to increase event turnout. This has yet to be successful as other student organizations do not seem willing to collaborate.
- The leadership structure is ineffective and should be restructured with position that fit the immediate needs of the members. The duties may require reorganization.
- There is a lack of faculty engagement when promoting organization events. Faculty rarely shows up to the events and is slow to offer incentives to their students for attending events.
- Although the organization tries to promote the events in multiple ways, the volume of student attendance is still fairly low.

External Factors – Opportunities and Threats

Opportunities

- MPASA has the opportunity to build stronger relationships with the Department. The organization should work to organize quarterly meetings to update faculty and staff with upcoming events.
- Through continuous networking, the organization has the opportunity to offer future job opportunities to its members.
- Since new students enroll into the Masters of Public Administration Program each semester, MPASA has the opportunity to constantly recruit new membership. MPASA leadership could coordinate with staff to incorporate a flyer advertising the organization in new student orientation/enrollment folders.
- Members can review annual events to see if there are events that should be replaces or added to increase student interest.
- Work with faculty and staff more closely to incorporate them in more organization events.

- The organization has the opportunity to collaborate with professional organizations. Executive should review the list to see if there are any additional organization that we should initiate contact with.
- MPASA is able to increase the presence in campus wide events in order to catch the attention of potential students in the M.P.A Program.

Threats

- Lack of funding opportunities presents future threats to the organization. With cuts to the State budget, Student Government Association funding might decrease. This will strongly affect the MPASA budget as well since SGA is a main funding source for major events.
- Currently, more students participate in the Organization for Public Administration (OPA) which is the undergraduate student organization for the public administration department. Many students will not participate in MPASA events since they already participate in OPA events.
- Growth of the Masters in Non Profit Management could potentially hurt recruitment. If an organization for this degree program is created, many of the potential members will not join the organization.
- The absence of faculty presence can really hurt student involvement in the organization. If the organization lacks support from the organization, students will not feel that involvement is needed or significant.
- The increase in distance learning (more online course offering) could result in more out of area students who will be too far away to attend events. This could also cause local students to stay away from campus in turn creating a lack in participation of meetings and events.

SWOT Chart

	Strengths	Opportunities
Internal Factors	Strong professional affiliations	Build stronger relationships with Department
	Diversity of membership	Organization offers future job opportunities
	Strong level of interaction with M.P.A faculty	Potential new memberships with each semester
	Conduit for professional development opportunities	Review our annual efforts to gauge progress
	Peer relationship development	Increase opportunitiess for faculty and administration inclusion
	Increases civic engagement opportunities	Collaboration with professional organizations
	Provides leadership training	Increase presence in campus wide events
	Builds social capital	
	Weaknesses	**Threats**
	Lack of student participation	Lack of funding opportunities for events
	2 yr program = high turnover rate	Currently more students participate in undergraduate organization (OPA)
	Membership engagement in activities is limited	Growth of MNM program could hurt recruitment
	Lack of collaborations among student groups and	Faculty/ student apathy
	Leadership structure is ineffective	Growth of online course offerings
	Lack of faculty engagement in promoting organization and supporting events	
	Ineffective marketing of organization and events	

Column header top: **External Factors** (spanning the two right columns)

TOWS Analysis

The TOWS analysis is an additional tool that was utilized to form strategies in a variety of ways:

1. Form strategies that use strengths to maximize opportunities
2. Form strategies that use strengths to minimize threats
3. Form strategies that minimize weaknesses by taking advantage of opportunities
4. Form strategies that minimize weaknesses and avoid threats.

MPASA created strategies to battle the internal weaknesses and external threats while combining the positive internal strengths and external opportunities.

Using strengths to maximize opportunities

1. Send a membership invitation letter to all newly admitted MPA students, encouraging them to be members of MPASA.

- This strategy would help network students upon entrance to the program. Many students were not aware of the organization which is one issue in the past that has hindered the development of the organization.

2. Secure faculty members interested in mentoring new MPASA members.

- Collaboration amongst faculty and staff is key, as it is important for new members to witness this dynamic. Additional time spend with faculty will provide many networking opportunities.

3. Establish network database by the beginning of Fall 2010.

- The establishment of a network database will make contact information readily available. This list will also be available to the organizations as current members depart and new members join.

4. Emulate best practices so that members have a rich experience within MPASA and in the outside environment.

- Incorporating best practices will encourage members to combine their academic knowledge with their future practitioner experiences. This is an important balance.

Using strengths to minimize threats

1. Establish volunteer positions to network within MPASA.

- Creating volunteer positions would allow students/ practitioners to help guide students with interviewing skills, resume writing, tutoring, and other important programs to assist MPA Students.

2. Solicit MPA Program to advertise MPASA as its social and professional arm so that students are informed of MPASA's existence.

   - The Public Administration Department has been helpful to promote events for the organization. Continued endorsement from the Department would further advertise the organization to incoming students.

3. Reach out to local businesses and agencies for sponsorships and donations.

   - Decreased State funding has hindered the amount of events that the Student Government Association can sponsor. With the help of the community, MPASA would be able to hold more events for students.

Using strategies to minimize weaknesses by taking advantage of opportunities

1. Solicit PhD students in the Public Administration Track to support and to help lead MPASA.

   - The PhD is expanding, yet the organization does not have any PhD members. Incorporating PhD members into the organization will increase membership and hopefully the participation in events while added another facet to the organization.

2. Second year students mentor first year mentees.

   - Adding a mentoring program would help strengthen the leadership structure. This is currently a problem. As executive board members graduate, it is difficult to fill the roles. The mentoring program would train interested members so that the transition will be smooth.

3. Request professional services from Computer Science department to design the web site and update information on daily basis so that newly and existing students are currently informed.

   - Due to the size of the organization, often times it is difficult to constantly update our web site. Developing an agreement with the Computer Science department would help with the work load of the organization as well as offer projects for interns in the computer science department.

Using strategies to minimize weaknesses and avoid threats

1. Create events and activities tailored to all tastes, incorporate more MSN guest speakers, etc.

   - In order to encourage other majors to join the organization, MPASA should incorporate an array of different events to showcase different career showcases for members. This would help encourage more MNM majors to join, decreasing the need for a MNM student association.

2. Reach out to MNM Professors to ask for their support.

   - With the help of MNM Professors, more MNM majors will be aware of the organization and the benefits of membership.

TOWS Chart

	External Opportunities (O)	External Threats (T)
	1. Opportunities to network with professional organizations 2. Opportunities to collaborate with other student organizations 3. Faculty and staff become familiar with students and their work ethic 4. Volunteer and Intern opportunties through networking	1. Expansion of the MNM Program 2. Development of MNM student organization 3. Decreased state education funding
Internal Strengths (S)	**Strengths/Opportunities (SO)**	**Strengths/Threats (ST)**
1. Networking with members builds relationships with classmates 2. Institutional Knowledge- Students familiar with school 3. Departmental Expertise - vast knowledge/practitioner	1. Send a membership invitation letter to all newly admitted MPA students, encouraging them to be members of MPASA 2. Secure faculty members interested in mentoring new MPASA members 3. Establish network database by the beginning of Fall 2010 4. Emulate best practices so that members have a rich experience within MPASA and in the outside environment	1. Establish volunteer positions to network within MPASA 2. Solicit MPA Program to advertise MPASA as its social and professional arm so that students are informed of MPASA's existence 3. Reach out to local businesses and agencies for sponsorships and donations
Internal Weaknesses (W)	**Weaknesses/Opportunities (WO)**	**Weaknesses/Threats (WT)**
1. Lacks of participation hinders the success of events 2. Organization is less productive due to size 3. Leadership structure is ineffective/ needs restructuring 4. Growth of Program, now offers a PhD Track. Will bring in more experienced students	1. Second year students mentor first year mentees 2. Request professional services from Computer Science department to design the web site and update information on daily basis so that newly and existing students are currently informed	1. Create events and activities tailored to all tastes, incorporate more MSN guest speakers, etc. 2. Reach out to MNM Professors to ask for their support

Critical or Strategic Issues

Critical or Strategic Issues are those affecting MPASA mandates, mission and values, product or service level and mix, students, users, cost, financing, structure, processes management. The SWOT analysis identifies theses issues and the TOWS matrix prioritizes them accordingly to MPASA priority list.

This section explores MPASA' external and internal environments in order to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges it faces. The objective of this section is to provide the foundation for identifying strategic issues and developing effective strategies to create MPASA value.

A. How can MPASA increase its membership as the Department of Public Administration (DPA) increases the number of admissions to Masters Programs?

   The mission of MPASA is to mobilize students of the Masters of Public Administration degree for the purposes of networking, socializing, inviting relevant speakers to visit, as well as arranging visits of different government entities at the federal, state and local levels. The vision of MPASA is to facilitate the implementation of its mission as requisite to mobilize students. If the mobilizing process is not carried out and improved, the mission and the vision of MPASA will not be achieved. Hence, it is important to engage new students at admission so that they can be productive members since the first day on campus.

B. How can MPASA increase student and member's participation in all events and activities?

   The vision of MPASA is to engage all Masters Program students in activities highlighting their mobilization in the organization. To that end MPASA must,

   - Mobilize MPA Students so that they may have a voice in Department Affairs
   - Take MPA students to multiple state, local, and federal agencies so that they may see first-hand how local governments work and motivate themselves
   - Provide social opportunities for MPA students according to mandates
   - Embrace and enrich the educational experience for MPA candidates at the University of Central Florida.
   - Encourage second year students to channel incoming students into MPASA

   In the absence of the above guideline the vision of MPASA may be compromised and participation may plummet rather than increase.

C. How can MPASA increase its organizational capacity?

   The MPASA is committed to the UCF mission as a metropolitan research university with an expanding focus and to the DPA mission. If the UCF and DPA missions are not advanced, the future of MPASA, DPA and the university are jeopardized. To this end, MPASA must

   - Arrange professional networking opportunities for future MPASA members
   - Bring field-relevant networking opportunities for MPASA's future professionals

- Partner with other like-minded organizations to provide even further opportunities to members
- Diversify MPASA membership
- Engage faculty and community leaders so that a stronger network can be formulated to supplement MPASA organizational capacity
- Collaborate with similar organization and benchmark their capacities

These principles must be addressed and carried out. MPASA faces drastic political, economic, social and perhaps technical consequences if they are not addressed.

D. How can MPASA create a leadership that is effective and enduring?

Leadership is paramount in all public, nonprofit, and private organizations. The University of Central Florida, the PAD, and the community they serve require and deserve strong leaders. That kind of leadership may well start with MPASA leaders. Consequently, MPASA as a starting point must:

- Carefully choose its leaders from among the best available candidates, preferably those with leadership experience and a demonstrated commitment to MPASA and the UCF community.

- Attract aspiring leaders and officers from among the graduate students to enhance their future job experiences.

- Collaborate with professional organizations, other student organizations to enhance MPASA effectiveness and timeline.

- Mentor prospective candidates and current officers for leadership positions as a way to develop experience and leadership skills.

MPASA must have an effective and enduring leadership in order to survive. The guideline above highlights what it takes to have an effective and enduring leadership. Failure to acquire experienced and motivated leaders may lead to the demise of the organization.

Prioritization List

The four critical issues mentioned above must be addressed immediately for the well-being of MPASA. A list of subsequent alternatives to deal with these issues is also addressed. It is important that MPASA addresses and implements the steps in order to survive its internal weaknesses and external threats. Managing its strengths and opportunities with strong leadership is paramount to its survival.

- Increase membership
- Increase member participation
- Increase organizational capacity

Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Performance Indicators

A strategy is a pattern of purposes, policies, programs, actions, decisions and/or resources allocations that define what an organization such as MPASA is, what it does, and why it does it. The goals explain what MPASA needs to achieve in order to address the critical or strategic issues. In the same vein, the objective is to state and measure each strategic issue and goal in definitive terms and to provide a framework for evaluating MPASA progress towards achieving the goals. The indicators are for the overall achievement of the objective.

1. Explanatory Section

In developing the strategic plan for MPASA, it is necessary to further discuss the major issues it faces. These issues were identified during the SWOT analysis. This section highlights goals, objectives, and indicators for each issue as illustrated below.

Issue 1: How can MPASA increase its membership as the Department of Public Administration (DPA) increases the number of admissions to the Masters Programs?

Goal 1: Increase size/strength of membership by 50% during the Fall 2010 Semester

Objective 1: Extend membership to PhD students in Public Administration Track, MNM, and Graduate certificates

Strategy 1: Secure invitation for all students in the department.

Measurement Indicator 1: Survey Fall 2010 members to see what major/track they are on.

Objective 2: Find new ways to advertise the organization.

Strategy 2: Survey members and PAD students in Summer 2010 to track effectiveness of marketing and outreach.

Measurement Indicator 2: Resurvey MPA students and MPASA members Spring 2011 to see if more students are aware of the MPASA.

Objective 3: Redesign and update MPASA website to provide information and academic resources to existing and incoming PA-related students.

Strategy 3: MPASA Officers and members will provide clear and concise information regarding services, available resources, fees paid, schedules, calendar of events, and contact information.

Measurement Indicator 3: MPASA website views exceeding 10 views per day.

Objective 4: Solicit MPA program to advertise MPASA as its social and professional arm so that students are informed of MPASA's existence.

Strategy 4: Partner up with PA Department to implement ways of advertisement to secure MPASA's place within the department.

Measurement Indicator 4: MPASA having a place in the PA Curriculum/brochure that is sent out to current and potential students for recruitment purposes.

Issue 2: How can MPASA increase student and member's participation in all events and activities?

Goal 1: Double student and member participation to all events and activities starting in the beginning of fall, 2010.

Objective 1: Expand social networking to as many newly admitted students as possible, as well as to existing students.

Strategy 1: Create diverse range of events and activities tailored to interests, as measured by most recent survey responses.

Measurement Indicator 1: Compare RSVP and attendance rates with past MPASA events, noting change in rates.

Goal 2: Expand events and opportunities offered to all incoming and existing PA-related students

Objective 2: Secure revenues for new events and activities.

Strategy 2: Hold fundraisers and increase number of members.

Measurement Indicator 2: Develop MAPSA's budget by Fall 2010 to reflect new programming and expected expenses.

Goal 3: Extend membership to PhD students in Public Administration Track, Master of Nonprofit Management and Graduate certificate students.

Objective 1: Create a forum to engage students with practitioners within the public sector.

Strategy 1: Partner with a variety of Public Sector officials and promote forums throughout UCF community.

Measurement Indicator 1: Implementation of monthly forums.

Issue 3: How can MPASA increase its organizational capacity?

Goal 1: Further develop network of professionals and faculty to assist in mentoring MPASA's membership.

Objective 1: Create mentoring opportunities.

Strategy 1: Solicit Public Administration faculty to mentor a prospective MPASA leadership beginning Fall 2010.

Measurement Indicator 1: Perform review of number of active mentoring opportunities at each monthly officer meeting

Strategy 2: Solicit PhD students in Public Administration Track to support and to help lead MPASA.

Measurement Indicator 2: Have at least 5 PhD students in the Public Administration track engaged in the MPASA beginning Spring 2010.

Goal 2: Benchmarking well established MPASA throughout Florida and the United States.

Objective 1: Create a leadership knowledge basis from the best practices.

Strategy 1: Emulate best practices so that members have a rich experience within MPASA and in the outside environment.

Measurement Indicator 1: Have in place by fall 2010 at least 3 sets of MPASA practices to benchmark.

Strategy 2: Research, establish and maintain an effective network database with all best student associations worldwide.

Measurement Indicator 2: Increase MPASA's Facebook membership by inviting at least 5 other PA programs from various Universities.

Goal 3: Establish a second year/first year leadership networking program to transfer leadership experiences.

Objective 1: Second year students mentor first year mentees.

Strategy 1: MPASA motivates and facilitates its member to mentor incoming students for future professional framework.

Measurement Indicator 1: At least 3 second year members must have a mentee by the beginning of Fall 2010.

Goal 4: Create a leadership that is effective and unwavering.

Objective 1: Build unlimited scope that innovatively meets and demands of an effective and enduring leadership

Strategy 1: Re-emphasize the demand for public servants with leadership qualities.

Measurement Indicator 1: Establish a succession plan for organizational leadership based upon the attrition of retiring MPASA leadership by the Fall 2010.

Implementation Plan

The MPASA implementation plan is used as a tool to identify the goals of the organization and map out the objectives, strategies, resources, and responsibilities that are to be accomplished by the given target date in an effort ensure the overall success of the strategic plan.

❖ Issue 1: How can MPASA increase its membership as the Department of Public Administration (DPA) increases the number of admissions to Master Programs?

❖ Issue 2: How can MPASA increase student and member's participation in all events and activities?

❖ Issue 3: How can MPASA increase its organizational capacity?

Issue 1: How can MPASA increase its membership as the DPA increases the number of admissions to Masters Programs.

Goal 1: Increase size/strength of membership by 50% during the Fall 2010 Semester.

Objectives	Strategies	Resources	Target Date	Responsible Party
1. Extend membership to PhD students in Public Administration Track, MNM, and Graduate certificates	1. Secure invitation for all students in the department.	Send mail and email invitations through UCF program coordinators.	Fall 2010	Executive Board
2. Find new ways to advertise the organization	2. Survey members and students in Summer 2010 to learn where students hear about events	Use results to maximize advertising outlets.	Fall 2010	Executive Board
3. Redesign and update organization website to provide information and academic resources to existing and incoming PA-related students.	3. MPASA support staff and members to provide clear and concise information of services rendered, resources available, fees paid, schedules and calendar of events, and contact information.	Actively use and update MPASA's website at Weebly.com.	Fall 2010	Executive Board
4. Solicit MPA program to advertise MPASA as its social and professional arm so that students are informed of MPASA's existence.	4. Partner up with PA Department to implement ways of advertisement to secure MPASA's place within the department.	Coordinate with Jacque Waleski in the PA Office.	Fall 2010	Executive Board

Issue 2: How can MPASA increase student and member's participation in all events and activites?				
⯀ Goal 1: Double student and member participation to all events and activities starting in the beginning of fall, 2010.				
Objectives	Strategies	Resources	Target Date	Responsible Party
1. Expand social networking to as many newly admitted students as possible, as well as to existing students.	1. Create diverse range of events and activities tailored to interests, as measured by most recent survey responses	Schedule events at different times so that students with various schedules can attend.	Fall 2010	Executive Board

Issue 2: How can MPASA increase student and member's participation in all events and activites?				
⯀ Goal 2: Expand events and opportunities offered to all incoming and existing PA-related students.				
Objectives	Strategies	Resources	Target Date	Responsible Party
1. Secure revenues for new events and activities.	1. Hold fundraisers and increase number of members.	Use OSI's resources for fundraising opportunities; also use these fundraisers as opportunities to recruit.	Fall 2010	Executive Board

Issue 2: How can MPASA increase student and member's participation in all events and activites?				
⯀ Goal 3: Extend membership to PhD students in Public Administration Track, Master of Non-Profit Management and Graduate certificate students.				
Objectives	Strategies	Resources	Target Date	Responsible Party
1. Create a forum to engage students in the public sector.	1. Partner with a variety of Public Sector officials and promote forum throughout UCF community	Partner with Public Sector officials to implement monthly forum.	Fall 2010	Executive Board

Issue 3: How can MPASA increase its organizational capacity?				
Goal 1: To access professionals and faculty with expertise to assist in mentoring MPASA's membership.				
Objectives	Strategies	Resources	Target Date	Responsible Party
Create mentoring opportunities	1. Solicit each faculty member in the department to mentor a prospective MPASA leader beginning fall 2010.	Use faculty/staff directory on ucf website and send formal email.	Fall 2010	MPASA Community Liason Officer
	2. Solicit PhD students in Public Administration Track to support and to help lead MPASA.	Advertise mentoring opportunities in PhD Center.	Fall 2010	MPASA Community Liason Officer

Issue 3: How can MPASA increase its organizational capacity?				
Goal 2: Benchmarking well established MPASA throughout Florida and the United States .				
Objectives	Strategies	Resources	Target Date	Responsible Party
1. Create a leadership knowledge basis from the best practices.	1. Emulate best practices so that members have a rich experience within MPASA and in the outside environment.	Look to professors to ask what they think 'best practices' are.	Fall 2010	MPASA President
	2. Research, establish and maintain an effective network database with all best student associations worldwide.	Utilize Facebook and other online networking tools.	Fall 2010	MPASA Community Liason Officer

Issue 3: How can MPASA increase its organizational capacity?				
Goal 3: Establish a second year/first year leadership networking program to transfer leadership experiences.				
Objectives	Strategies	Resources	Target Date	Responsible Party
1. Second year students mentor first year mentees.	1. MPASA motivates and facilitates its members to mentor incoming students for future professional framework.	Implement monthly Officer/member networking opportunities.	Fall 2010	MPASA Vice President

Issue 3: How can MPASA increase its organizational capacity?				
Goal 4: Create a leadership that is effective and unwavering.				
Objectives	Strategies	Resources	Target Date	Responsible Party
1. Build unlimited scope that innovatively meets and demands of an effective and enduring leadership.	1. Re-emphasize the demand for public servants with leadership qualities.	Bring in established public leaders to speak with members about the importance of leadership.	Fall 2010	MPASA Community Liason Officer

Organizational Vision and Future

       MPASA is a national organization with multiple chapters un Universities across the country that provide educational, networking, and career development opportunities to programs of MPA/ MNM/ PhD and other graduate-level programs within the Public Administration realm. The five year plan for the MPASA envisions growth in membership, influence, and stature within the university systems and their communities across the country through effective outreach and networking.

Evaluation

Evaluation is a technique of augmenting the commitment to obtaining organizational goals through the analysis of the process and success of its goals and objectives for accountability. MPASA utilizes both formative and summative. Formative evaluations continually evaluate the process and provide feedback to improve the process based on experience. Summative evaluations measure the rate of overall success based on the achieving stated outcomes. The success of the implementation plan requires both types of evaluations.

Formative Evaluations

MPASA will meet monthly on the second Monday of the month during the strategic planning period (2010 – 2015). During these meetings, Board members will evaluate progress toward the organizational goals outlined in the implementation plan. Recommendations for changes and improvements to the plan derived from these formative evaluations are summarized in a monthly report, and an annual report will be compiled from these monthly updates.

Summative Evaluations

The MPASA quarterly meeting will commence in September 2010. Annual reports will be developed from the monthly reports and reviewed by the Executive Board at the meeting held in May of each year, beginning in 2010. This review will lead to the updating of the strategic plan to insure the success of the organization.

➢ Monthly Reports - Review of organizational strategic goals. Summarize current positive and negative outcomes.
➢ Annual Reports – Summary of monthly reports, including financial statements, annual business report, and documentation of certification for training and/or resources.

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