MEMORANDUM

TO: Steve Fetter
    Dean, School of Public Policy

FROM: Phyllis Perez
    Associate Provost for Academic Planning and Programs

SUBJECT: Proposal to modify the Executive Track of the Master of Public Management (PCC log no. 06052)

In its meeting today, the Senate Committee on Programs, Curricula and Courses approved your proposal to modify the curriculum of the Executive Track of the Master of Public Management. A copy of the approved proposal is enclosed.

The changes are effective Fall 2007. The College should ensure that the change is fully described in the Graduate Catalog and in all relevant descriptive materials, and that all advisors are informed.

CWR/

Enclosure

cc: Richard Ellis, Chair, Senate PCC Committee
    Sarah Bauser, Office of Student Financial Aid
    Mary Giles, University Senate
    Barbara Hope, Data Administration
    Anne Turkos, Archives
    Linda Yokoi, Office of the Registrar
    Gay Gullickson, Graduate School
    William Powers, School of Public Policy
    Kenneth Apte, School of Public Policy
THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK
PROGRAM/CURRICULUM PROPOSAL

DIRECTIONS:
• Provide one form with original approval signatures in lines 1 - 4 for each proposed action. Keep this form to one page in length.
• Early consultation with the Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Planning & Programs is strongly recommended if there are questions or concerns, particularly with new programs.
• Please submit the signed form to Claudia Reiser, Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Planning and Programs, 1119 Main Administration Building, Campus.
• Please email the rest of the proposal as an MSWord attachment to pce_submissions@umd.edu.

DATE SUBMITTED 2/16/07

PCC LOG NO. 06052

COLLEGE/SCHOOL  School of Public Policy

DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM  School of Public Policy

PROPOSED ACTION (A separate form for each) ADD     DELETE    CHANGE: X

DESCRIPTION (Provide a succinct account of the proposed action. Details should be provided in an attachment. Provide old and new sample programs for curriculum changes.)

While still requiring applicants to the executive MPM program to have proven management experience or potential, allow students with as few as 5 years of experience to be admitted.

Revise the executive MPM curriculum to make it more management-intensive and require only four foundational courses.

JUSTIFICATION/REASONS/RESOURCES (Briefly explain the reason for the proposed action. Identify the source of new resources that may be required. Details should be provided in an attachment.)

See attached.

APPROVAL SIGNATURES - Please print name, sign, and date
1. Department Committee Chair  CHRISTOPHER FOREMAN  2/16/07
2. Department Chair
3. College/School PCC Chair  CHRISTOPHER FOREMAN  2/16/07
4. Dean
5. Dean of the Graduate School (if required)
6. Chair, Senate PCC
7. Chair of Senate
8. Vice President for Academic Affairs & Provost  PHYLLIS ALPERS  5/4/07

VPAAP 3-05
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND COLLEGE PARK  
School of Public Policy

Proposal to Revise the  
EXECUTIVE MASTER’S TRACK OF THE  
MASTER OF PUBLIC MANAGEMENT (MPM) PROGRAM

Submitted February 2007

I. OVERVIEW

One of the School of Public Policy (School) master degrees is the Master of Public Management (MPM). The MPP has two tracks. The 36 credit “mid-career” MPM track shares the same policy-oriented mission and curriculum as the School’s 48 credit Master of Public Policy (MPP) program for “early-career” students, except it requires that entering students have at least five years of policy-related professional experience and, in return, requires 12 fewer credits of electives. In Spring 2003 the University approved the creation of a 30 credit “Executive Master’s” track within the MPM degree program. The new track was created to provide a more management-intensive version of the MPM degree for students with 10 or more years of experience. Accordingly, admission to the new track was to emphasize management potential more than the applicant’s prior academic record.

The School believes that these two tracks within the single MPM degree program provide a useful mix of offerings to meet the needs of most mid-career students seeking a professional public policy/management education. But the Executive Master’s track currently suffers from two obstacles:

1. The 10 year experience requirement for the Executive Master’s track, the most restrictive we know of by far, has proved far too limiting. First, many outstanding applicants who are already in management positions of significant responsibility and need a rigorous management-focused education have been excluded from the Executive Master’s management-oriented curriculum because they possess fewer than 10 years of experience. Second, it has proved impossible to recruit enough students who meet both the 10-year requirement and the School’s academic standards to be able to efficiently offer courses for them. Third, government agencies and private organizations seeking to fund a cohort of their rising managers have been discouraged by our inability to include their younger management stars.

2. The initial curriculum for the Executive-Master’s track has proved to be far too confining. It was designed with the needs of a particular cohort in mind and fully specifies all ten courses. New potential cohorts of students though have found large parts of it unrelated to their needs. While all rising managers need some
foundational courses, they often have specific needs that differ among cohorts. For example, financial managers need more financial management courses, while technology managers need to better understand how to make intelligent use of technology to further public purposes.

We thus propose that the Executive Track of the MPM program be reconfigured to:

1. Allow students with as few as 5 years of experience to be admitted, while still requiring applicants to have proven management experience or potential.

2. Revise the Executive Master’s curriculum to require only four foundational courses, making the remaining six electives.

II. STUDENT DEMAND

Although the School is enjoying strong demand for its early-career policy master’s program (the Master of Public Policy program) and its PhD program, the proposed revisions are designed to better align the School’s mid-career policy and executive management tracks with the needs of mid-career students. The proposed changes will reduce the excessively high experience requirement and the overly-prescribed curriculum barriers that keep many highly-qualified students from obtaining the management-oriented education their positions of responsibility require. These changes will result in more government agencies and other organizations being able to fund cohorts of their most promising management-track employees to pursue a management-oriented master’s degree. This will, in turn, enable the School to better fulfill its mission of improving the management of government agencies and other public purpose organizations.

III. DEMAND FOR GRADUATES

Unlike master’s programs that primarily attract students who are early in their careers, the mid-career policy and executive management tracks generally need not be concerned with placing its students in suitable jobs. In general, these students are already high-level professionals who are rapidly ascending their career ladders. Moreover, the presence of the federal government and international organizations in the Washington, D.C., area, and the innumerable nonprofit and private organizations that interact with them, provide an inexhaustible demand for graduates with a sophisticated management education. Contributing to the demand at this time for well-educated public management graduates is the extended period of unprecedented levels of retirement among managers in the federal government we are just entering.
IV. Institutional Strengths

Although only 25 years old, the School of Public Policy is recognized as one of the premier programs in public policy, management and international affairs in the region and in the nation. *U.S. News* ranked the School 8th in environmental policy and management and in the top 20 in public policy analysis, social policy, and public finance and budgeting.

The School’s reputation is largely due its outstanding faculty of scholar-practitioners. Many faculty members are considered among the top scholars in their field, and have received national and international awards that recognize the highest levels of academic achievement. At the same time, many faculty members have themselves served as policy leaders at the highest levels of government. As a result, courses in the School are a rich blend of theory grounded in practical realities—the perfect recipe for a professional school. Policy leaders and managers in particular welcome as instructors scholars who have been in the trenches and thus can easily relate the fruits of scholarly research in a way that practical managers find eminently useful.

V. Disciplinary Trends

Executive master in public management programs are proliferating in the Washington, D.C., area and across the nation, as busy professionals look for accessible programs that will equip them to lead effectively in an increasingly complex world. Following offerings by American University, Georgetown University’s Public Policy Institute recently began offering an Executive Master in Policy Management “to equip top-level policy leaders with essential executive skills…A capstone degree for professionals with significant practical experience, the MPM hones and integrates their talents to enhance effectiveness in the policy arena.” We aim to become the program of choice for future public managers, just as we have among policy programs for early-career students in the area.

We know of no peer whose admission criteria are nearly as restrictive as those of our current Executive Master track. Georgetown doesn’t have a fixed experience requirement, saying only that “Most participants will have gained five or more years of experience in public policy and management at a substantial level. American University expects “several years” of experience.

Top policy schools also do not over-specify their executive master’s curriculums. For example, both Harvard’s Kennedy School and the program currently ranked #1 by *U.S. News*, the Maxwell School of Syracuse University, require three courses and then permit the remaining seven courses to be electives.
VI. SYNERGY WITH EXISTING PROGRAMS

The revisions envisioned by this proposal would adjust the School’s existing master’s tracks but not fundamentally alter their relationship to each other or to other programs in the School or the University. The two tracks have been and will remain highly complementary to one another, drawing on a single faculty and having some courses in common. The synergy between the two tracks, and between them and the School’s other academic offerings, permits substantial flexibility as demand for different kinds of programs fluctuate.

VII. SIZE OF THE PROGRAM

The changes to the minimum experience requirement and curriculum of the Executive Master’s track could, if the School and campus so chose, lead to a substantial increase in the number of students entering that program, consistent with the School’s approved strategic plan. The track is currently offered only as a self-support “entrepreneurial” program. If managed well, it should bring in sufficient resources to increase the faculty and staff commensurately. Indeed, due to the synergies noted above among the School’s various graduate offerings, a commensurate increase in the faculty and staff devoted to the Executive Master’s program will have spill-over benefits for these other programs, primarily in the form of a wider and deeper faculty pool. Ultimately, though, the decision about whether to increase the School’s overall student body is independent of the revisions proposed herein. If nothing else, the revisions will enable the School to attract a stronger applicant pool across its programs and thereby continue to improve the quality of its overall student body.

VIII. CURRICULUM

We propose that the Executive Master’s track curriculum change from 10 prescribed courses to 4 semi-prescribed (highly restricted choice) core courses and 6 management/policy electives selected to meet the needs of a particular cohort. The requirements that would continue as core to every offering of the Executive Master’s would be:

1 Since the executive master’s program is generally offered to cohorts of students who travel through the program together, “electives” in that case refers to courses selected by the cohort sponsors for the entire cohort from a set of courses the School makes available to the cohort. In some cases, such as where a student has already taken courses similar to one or more of the electives, a student will be invited to take a suitable substitute course from the School’s general offerings.

2 The first course listed is an existing course designed for students with widely varying levels of experience. The second course listed is an envisioned “parallel” course that would begin with a syllabus approximating that of the first course but which would be allowed to evolve over time to better meet the needs of experienced managers as we better learn how to address those needs. These “second courses” would be submitted for the usual PCC approval process when they were ready and as they evolved.
• PUAF 711 – Management Strategies and Leadership OR PUAF 680 – Management and Strategic Planning
• PUAF 692 – Leadership Principles and Practices OR PUAF 681 – Seminar in Leadership & Innovation
• PUAF 650 – Moral Dimensions of Public Policy OR PUAF 684 – Moral Dimensions of Leadership
• PUAF 670 – Finance OR PUAF 686 – Finance & Budgeting

The courses that would no longer be required but that would be included as “electives” would be:

• PUAF 682 – Quantitative Analysis for Leaders
• PUAF 683 – Political Institutions & Strategies
• PUAF 685 – Managerial Economics
• PUAF 687 – Managing Differences
• PUAF 688 – Information Policy and Technology Management
• PUAF 790 – Project Course

Other electives now available to the students would include other “generic” electives that would be available for most cohorts, as well as topical courses aimed to address the specific management needs of an agency, including:

• PUAF 610 – Quantitative Aspects of Public Policy
• PUAF 620 – Political Analysis and Leadership
• PUAF 640 – Microeconomic and Policy Analysis
• PUAF 698Z – Introduction to the Regulatory Process
• PUAF 699C – Results and Performance Accountability
• PUAF 699E – Financial Systems and Control
• PUAF 699F – Cost Estimating
• PUAF 699L – Leading and Motivating People
• PUAF 699M – Acquisitions in National Security
• PUAF 699N – Public Policy and Private Enterprise in National Security
• PUAF 712 – Analysis of Fiscal Analysis
• PUAF 716 – State and Local Budgeting
• PUAF 717 – Federal Budgeting
• PUAF 753 – Advanced Negotiations

The Executive Master’s track of the MPM degree would continue to require six fewer credits than the mid-career policy track (30 versus 36 credits). This reflects our belief that public management is a somewhat more focused object of study than is public policy, which requires expertise in a larger number of disciplines and techniques.

Students enrolled in the Executive Master’s track prior to the effective date of these curriculum changes would not be disadvantaged because there would be no additional requirements being imposed, only greater freedom.
IX. ADMISSION CRITERIA

Admittance into the Executive Master’s track would be limited to students with the equivalent of 5 years or more of policy/management-related professional experience, with the demonstrated promise of becoming a high-level public executive in the near future. Students would be required to have a Bachelor’s degree from an accredited university. The level of a student’s policy and management experience would be weighed in conjunction with their prior academic performance, with a strong academic performance resulting in a somewhat reduced need to demonstrate prior high-level leadership, and vice versa. Our expectation is that, on average, the students admitted into the Executive Master’s track will possess lower undergraduate grade point averages than the more policy-oriented 36 credit track. On the other hand, they will on average possess much more managerial and leadership experience and hold higher promise of significant near-term leadership responsibilities than will students in the policy-oriented track.

X. FACULTY AND ORGANIZATION

The Executive Master’s track will continue to be under the direct leadership of the Dean, the Executive Dean, and a member of the School’s Management, Finance and Leadership faculty. The faculty will continue to be drawn from the School’s overall pool of permanent and adjunct faculty and will continue to be administered by the same staff as have been administering it.

XI. OFF CAMPUS PROGRAMS AND DISTANCE EDUCATIONS

While initially designed to meet off-campus needs, the Executive Master’s track can operate effectively either on campus or off campus, depending on the needs of the cohorts recruited into the program and the availability of faculty and adequate support services (e.g., libraries) at the preferred site.

As is true of all our graduate courses, courses in Executive Master’s track will continue to be enhanced using the Internet and other distance learning techniques, but for the time being the courses will rely on traditional classroom instruction and discussions.
XII. COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY

The School has historically been able to attract a more diverse student body at the mid-career level than at the early-career level, probably because the mid-career population is drawn primarily from the highly diverse Washington, D.C., area, while the early-career students come from across the nation. By enabling the School to attract more mid-career students, the proposed revisions should significantly enhance the School’s overall student diversity.

XIII. REQUIRED RESOURCES

As indicated above, the proposed revisions will not by themselves require any change in management, faculty, or staff resources. While the changes are expected to result in greater demand for the Executive Master’s track, the School will increase its overall student body only if it makes strategic sense and it has the resources to do so. The changes in the minimum experience requirement and curriculum of the Executive Master’s track though could, if the School and campus chose, lead to a substantial increase in the number of students entering that program, consistent with the School’s approved strategic plan. The Executive Master’s track is currently offered only as a self-support “entrepreneurial program.” Thus, any growth would be self-funding as approved when the Executive Master’s track was initially created.