

Michigan Capital Area  
Chapter of The  
American Society for  
Public Administration

Mid-Michigan's Voice for  
Public Service  
Since 1951



# PA Forum

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## MSU Launches New Master in Public Policy Program

**By Dr. Saundra Schneider and Catie Hilbelink**

Many of you are familiar with the Master of Public Administration (MPA) Program which was offered in the past by Michigan State University (MSU). Indeed, some of you may be graduates of that program! But, you probably don't know very much about MSU's Master of Public Policy (MPP) Program. Let us take this opportunity to acquaint you with this new professional degree.

### What happened to the MPA degree?

Michigan State University offered a Master of Public Administration from 1973 to 2005. Across that entire time frame, the MPA program at MSU awarded hundreds of degrees and placed graduates in key management positions in a variety of public, private, and non-profit organizations. The MPA program first sought and received accreditation by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) in 1994 and it was re-accredited by NASPAA in 2002.

During the process of conducting a self-study report for the last NASPAA re-accreditation, the MPA faculty began meeting to reconsider the structure and orientation of the MPA degree. During these discussions, a consensus developed that the program should be revised to focus more directly on public policy analysis. To highlight this shift in emphasis, a new graduate degree program—a Master's Degree in Public Policy-- was proposed which would replace the existing MPA degree. The university approved this change: Admission to the MPA program was suspended during the 2004-2005 academic year and the new MPP degree program was born.

### What is the goal of MSU's new MPP program?

The goal of the MPP at MSU is to provide high-quality graduate-level instruction in quantitative analysis, program development, policy implementation, public finance, and policy evaluation. The program is designed for those who want to pursue professional careers in policy analysis, program management, and policy advocacy within the public, private, or non-profit sectors. It was created for individuals committed to public service and interested in working on policy issues at the local, state, or national level.

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- Networking with, and learning from, mid-Michigan's public service leaders
- Invitations to seminars and workshops
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- Future opportunities to apply for mini-grants to support public service research

**Go to:**

**[www.aspanet.org](http://www.aspanet.org)  
for a membership  
application!**

## MPP Program *continued...*

### **When was the MPP program implemented?**

The MPP program was officially launched last year, and the first cohort of twelve students began taking courses in Fall 2007. These twelve students came to the program with very different backgrounds, experiences, and substantive interests. But, they all share one thing in common: They are keenly focused on developing the necessary skills to become professionally-trained policy analysts. This enthusiasm and interest is obvious in the classroom. And, it has already made a positive impression on the broader academic and practitioner community. Faculty who have taught in the program have remarked on the high-caliber of the students, their collegial behavior, and their dedication to the subject matter. Administrators in public and non-profit organizations have expressed strong interest in having the students involved in policy research, and have already approached the program to recruit students even though the first cohort will not graduate for another year!

### **What are the requirements of the MPP degree?**

Students in the MPP program must take 39 credit hours in order to fulfill the degree requirements of the program. A set of core courses provide students with a foundation in the skills of policy analysis. Students supplement this instruction with elective courses in specific policy areas or in more advanced analytic techniques. Taken together, these courses teach students to address complex societal problems, reconcile conflicting political and ethical values in policy-making, make informed decisions about program activities, and provide effective leadership in policy development and implementation.

### **How is the MPP degree administered?**

The Master of Public Policy is administered jointly by the Department of Economics and the Department of Political Science. Faculty from both Departments are involved in admissions decisions, course instruction, and program monitoring. Indeed, one of the strengths of the MPP program is the collaboration that exists between these two departments.

### **What distinguishes the MPP Program at MSU?**

The MPP program strives to provide a positive, but demanding, learning environment. Students in the MPP program benefit from relatively small class sizes. This enables them to engage in collective discussions, share experiences with one another, and work together on team projects. And, it also allows students to apply the skills and ideas that they learn in the classroom to real-world issues and problems.

*Continued on page 3.*

The MPP program at MSU hopes to build upon the legacy of the MPA degree in several important ways. It wants to continue to take advantage of the fact that faculty and students in East Lansing have access to officials, programs, and resources of a state capital in a large, industrialized state.

It also recognizes the importance of public policy skills in regional and national venues, and in the context of international development organizations. In addition, the program seeks to continue to draw upon a diverse population of students with both on-the-job experiences as well as more recent college graduates interested in professional development.

The Master of Public Policy Program at Michigan State University is uniquely positioned to draw upon the rich legacy of the previous MPA program and to increase its impact on public policy decision-making and analysis.

### How do I get more information about MSU’s MPP program?

Please visit the program website for complete information about program admission, course requirements, and program activities (<http://www.polisci.msu.edu/MPP/MPP.htm>).

*Saundra K. Schneider, Professor and Director of the Master of Public Policy Program Department of Political Science, Michigan State University.*

*Catie Hilbelink, MPP student, Michigan State University.*

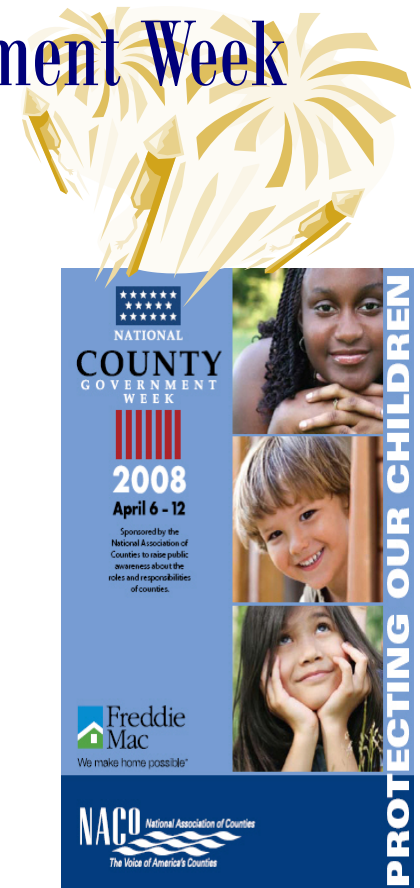
The screenshot shows the website for the Masters in Public Policy Program at Michigan State University. At the top, there is a header with the Michigan State University logo and the text "Department of Political Science" and "College of Social Science". Below the header is a navigation menu with links for "Home", "About", "People", "Programs", and "Contact". The main content area features a heading "WELCOME TO THE MASTER IN PUBLIC POLICY PROGRAM AT MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY" and a list of links on the left: "Welcome", "Program Curriculum", "Application process", and "Faculty". The main text describes the program's goals and objectives, stating that the MPP program is designed for students who want to pursue professional careers in policy analysis, program management, and policy advocacy within the public, private, or non-profit sectors. It also mentions that the program teaches students to address complex societal problems, reconcile conflicting political and ethical values in policymaking, make informed decisions about program activities, and provide effective leadership in policy development and implementation. The text concludes by stating that the Master of Public Policy Program at Michigan State University is for you.

# National County Government Week

The National Association of Counties as designated the week of April 6—12, 2008 as National County Government Week. According to NACo, this year's theme is: **Protecting our Children.**

As you visit counties throughout the state, take a moment and reflect on the diverse range of public services provided to citizens.

Source: <http://www.naco.org>



## ASPA Regional Conference

### By MiCAP Board

MiCAP is pleased to support the Southwestern Michigan Chapter's initiative to host a regional ASPA conference later this year. The conference is scheduled for **November 6 & 7** at the **Amway Grand Plaza Hotel** ([www.amwaygrand.com](http://www.amwaygrand.com)).

Additional information will be included in future issues of **PA Forum** and posted on our Web site.



*Gerald R. and Betty Ford Presidential Ballroom*

# MiCAP is on the Web

## By MiCAP Board

MiCAP developed and implemented a new Web site in January 2008. You can access the site by pointing your computer to: [www.mipaforum.org](http://www.mipaforum.org). Although parts of the Web site are still under construction, MiCAP’s presence on the Web provides a useful resource for members to access our newsletter archives, identify contact information for board members, view a schedule of board meetings, and it serves as a marketing and collaboration tool.



Considering that the Web site will undergo frequent updating of content, please consider providing some critical feedback about the overall quality and value of the site and any suggestions for the site’s on-going improvement. Your comments are always welcome.



[www.mipaforum.org](http://www.mipaforum.org)

## Call for Papers and Articles

**Topics:** A broad selection of topics are welcome including common disciplines like governance, strategic planning, leadership, administration and service, public policy, non-profit management, technology, human resources, outsourcing, and case studies.

**Authors:** Practitioners, theorists, students, consultants, and so on. You don’t need to be a member of the MiCAP Chapter of ASPA (although we encourage you to join) in order to have your paper or article considered for publication. If you are a student, or recent graduate, publication of your article enhances your professional development and resume.

**Submission:** Citations must follow academically accepted formats (i.e. APA, Chicago, and Harvard styles). Send your articles, in Word or Adobe formats, to [gorban@voyager.net](mailto:gorban@voyager.net)

### Publishing Schedule:

January	July
March	September
May	November



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**MiCAP Mission Statement**

- Advances the art, science, teaching, and practice of public and non-profit administration.
- Promotes the value of joining and elevating the public service profession.
- Builds bridges among all who pursue public purposes.
- Provides networking and professional development opportunities to those committed to public service values.
- Achieves innovative solutions to the challenge of governance.

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**Upcoming Events & Opportunities**

- March 7—11, 2008:** ASPA's 69th Annual Conference  
Dallas, Texas  
[www.aspanet.org](http://www.aspanet.org)
- March 12, 2008:  
Noon—1:00 p.m.** MiCAP Chapter Board Meeting  
The University of Michigan—Lansing Service Center  
101 S. Washington Square, 7th Floor
- April 6-12, 2008:** National County Government Week  
Theme: "Protecting our Children"
- Spring 2008  
(date pending)** "Meet and Greet" your MiCAP Board Members  
University Center, Lansing Community College
- April 15, 2008:** University Student's Exhibition of Project Papers  
State Capital

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Public Service Jobs on  
the Web:**

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