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MPA and Certificate Programs Recognized

April 10, 2017

The [Master of Public Administration](#) and [Certificate in Public and Nonprofit Management](#) programs were recognized for outstanding assessment reports for the 2015-2016 academic year. The Programs received formal recognition for this achievement at the Academic Assessment Symposium held on February 15th and were two of only 30 programs out of 165 to receive this honor.

Academic Assessment is critical to our accreditation through the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges (SACS-COC), the official regional accrediting body for institutions of higher education in the southern states. The process involves the following:

1. Evaluation of the program's mission statement;
2. Evaluation of the program's learning outcomes for students in the program;
3. The mapping of learning outcomes to specific courses in the program;
4. Development of measures and documentation of the relationship between measures and student learning outcomes;
5. Development of a methodology for collecting data for measurement and maintaining the integrity of the data;
6. Development of achievement targets for each student learning outcome;
7. Compiling and presenting the results of the assessment process;
8. Interpreting the results of the assessment process;
9. Discussing the impact of past action plans for improvement; and
10. The development of new action plans to use the findings from the assessment to make improvements to the program.

The programs' efforts in the assessment process are reviewed by members of the University Academic Assessment Steering Committee each year and are ultimately reviewed by SACS-COC for accreditation purposes. The maintenance of this accreditation is important to our program and our students, and has been successfully maintained since the inception of the program. The assessment process is not only important for accreditation, but is used by faculty to drive continuous improvement to the program.

Posted in [Programs](#)

MPA Student Competes in the NASPAA-Batten Global Student Simulation Competition

April 10, 2017

On February 25 this year, about 400 graduate students from various public administration and public policy programs journeyed to eight locations (Maastricht, New York City, Washington D.C. area, Indianapolis, Bogotá, Tempe, Seattle, and Beijing) to compete in a one-day computer simulated challenge that tests NASPAA-Battents students ability to deal with issues concerning food security.



The NASPAA-Batten Global Student Simulation Competition conducted by NASPAA is organized yearly to deal with what is termed as “wicked issues”. NASPAA (Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration) is the global standard in public service education. NASPAA is a membership association of public administration and public policy programs that accredits master degree programs in universities across the world.

This year, **Kortnie Maxoutopoulis** represented Georgia Southern University’s (GSU) MPA program in this competition. Kortnie recounts that, her experiences participating in the competition were exciting and eye-opening. Kortnie, a second year MPA student recalls how beneficial the competition was, suggesting that students of GSU will be excited if a small-scale university-based competition is held every year to find solutions to “wicked problems” facing the

institution.

To enumerate further, the NASPAA-Batten Global Student Simulation Competition groups students randomly into the different regions to formulate ideas and policies to tackle these global issues and this year’s was no different. Kortnie recalls acting as the program director for the first round, brainstorming with other participants and then switching roles throughout the other rounds of mediating. After each round of mediating on global solutions, the region presents its solutions to a panel of judges. Each round represents a four year global growth, informing the progress of your region with respect to the policies implemented over the 4-year period. Every group is accorded a budget to embark on these projects that will combat food insecurity and global hunger.

Kortnie narrates how exhilarating and challenging it was in her first role as program director on the projects. She specifically points out that cutting budgets and deciding what projects to embark on was no joke. “The basic challenge was how to equip these regions to overcome hazards including floods, droughts and fire outbreaks as well as creating an atmosphere of environmental sustainability”, she discloses.

Kortnie believes that she has come off from the competition with the experience of teamwork and she believes her thought processes have shifted towards wicked problems and the processes that can realistically be employed to tackle these problems. Not only did she experience teamwork, problem solving and the decision making tactics, she has also forged networks with professors, competition judges and students alike.

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