Report of the School of Public Affairs to Baruch College General Faculty
Thursday, April 14, 2005

The academic year 2004-2005 has already seen a number of exciting events and developments in the School of Public Affairs, and several conferences and workshops are scheduled in the coming weeks. New faculty members have enriched our programs and allowed us to offer new electives at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. Everyone looks forward to Public Affairs week, now in its second year. The culminating event of the year, however, will be a gala marking the 10th Anniversary of the School’s establishment, and providing an occasion for reflecting on 50 years of the Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree being awarded at Baruch College.

Enrollment:

The Office of Graduate Admissions reports spring enrollment figures that attest to our success in raising the School’s profile, especially among working professionals returning to school, despite increased local competition for students. The spring 2005 entering class includes 95 new graduate students. Among these, 59 are traditional MPA students, a 90% increase over the 31 new traditional MPA students who enrolled last spring. Of the remaining new grad students, 19 are in a new cohort of United Way Senior Fellows, 13 are higher education administration students, and 4 are non-degree students. Of the 59 traditional new MPA students, 11 are attending full time. The 95 new students bring our graduate enrollment to 637. There are also a total of 145 declared undergraduate majors in the School. The ethnic breakdown for the 456 or the 637 graduate students who chose to indicate ethnicity is as follows: 52.2 White (non-Hispanic); 21.9% Black; 13.8% Hispanic/Latino; 8.6% Asian/Pacific Islander; .2% Native American/Alaskan; and 3.5% other. The School has faced an unusual challenge this past year in that we have been operating without a Director of Graduate Admissions and Student Services since April, 2004. This circumstance has had a short term impact on enrollment – minimized by the strong efforts of the GASS staff – but we are close to bringing a new director on board and look forward to

New Faculty:

Karl Kronebush joined the SPA faculty this spring as an Associate Professor. Dr. Kronebush, who received his Ph.D. from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, has served on the faculty of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and has been awarded a Robert Wood Johnson Scholars in Health Policy Research Fellowship. He was formerly an Associate Professor in the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health at Yale Medical School. Dr. Kronebush’s research includes mandated expansions of Medicaid coverage for low-income children, responses of government to federal policy change, and an analysis of enrollment changes associated with implementation of state children’s health insurance programs. This spring he is teaching Policy Analysis (PAF 9180) and Health Program, Policy and Performance Evaluation (PAF 9725) in the traditional MPA program.

Transition at Dean:

On February 4, Stan Altman announced that he would be stepping down as Dean at the end of the spring semester. He will remain a member of the faculty and plans to continue contributing to the growth of the School.

SPA has come to be recognized as one of the top public affairs programs in New York City, a status that received due formal recognition when it was named a Flagship Institution of the CUNY system in 2003. Dean Altman’s vision of creating an academic environment that combines traditional scholarship and teaching excellence with a strong commitment to public service and to building mission-appropriate
partnerships with outside organizations has been central to ascent of the School’s reputation. His innovative thinking is reflected in a variety of initiatives undertaken over the past six years. For instance, SPA understood the unprecedented continuity challenges posed by the implementation of term limits in 2001, and stepped in to become the “school” for the New York City Council, helping to ensure an orderly transition in city government. Another example of a public service ethic wedded to programmatic integrity can be seen in the partnership the School is building with the Department of Education to train NYC principals, using a nationally acclaimed curriculum developed by members of our faculty, one of whom was given a leave to take on the position of Academic Dean of the DOE’s Leadership Academy. Realizing the unique potential for intellectual collaboration and cross-fertilization that exists for a public affairs program situated in New York City, Dean Altman has emphasized the responsibility SPA has to become a neutral facilitator of informed public discourse on matters affecting the City’s various communities. The School has thus sought to establish itself as an intellectually vibrant but non-partisan forum for public debate on key policy issues of the day, bringing in scholars, analysts, and public officials who represent a diversity of viewpoints.

Since Dean Altman joined the School just prior to the fall 1999 semester, the full-time faculty has grown from 28 to 36 members. The number of graduate students has risen from approximately 560 to the current level of 637. The number of undergraduate majors has nearly doubled in the same period. Under the Dean’s leadership the MPA degree was re-designed to incorporate a four track structure – Public Management, Nonprofit Administration, Policy Analysis and Evaluation, and Health Care Policy – which has permitted students to specialize in an elected area while preserving a common academic experience for all program graduates through the core course offerings. A re-design of the BS in PA degree is currently underway.

The School, in short, has grown in size and reputation for quality under Dean Altman’s watch. He sets the bar high for his successor. While his administrative leadership will be missed by faculty and staff, we are delighted that he will remain a member of the SPA family.

**Spring Events at SPA:**

On February 15, the School sponsored a public policy conference focused on examining findings and recommendations for reforming and restructuring New York State’s fragmented health care system. Panelists included Stan Altman, Baruch College; Stephen Berger, Working Group on Healthcare; LaRay Brown, HHC; Joel Giambra, Erie County Executive; Laurel Pickering, NY Business Group on Health; Kenneth Raske, Greater NY Hospital Association; Harry Rosen, Baruch College; Tom Suozzi, Nassau County Executive; James Tallon, Jr. United Hospital Fund; Dennis Whalen, NYS Department of Health.

The Nonprofit Group of SPA held the Nonprofit Advocacy Conference on March 10. The day-long conference was organized to provide information, ideas and advice to New York nonprofit organizations on lobbying and advocacy about public policy issues and what is required for them to meet the needs of the people they serve. Speakers included Gail Nayowith of Citizens Committee for Children, Catherine Abate of Community Health Network, Susan Stamler of United Neighborhood, Lillian Rodriguez Lopez of the Hispanic Federation, and several others. Lilliam Barrios-Paoli, CEO of Safe Space, delivered the keynote address.

Former New York Governor Mario Cuomo came to Baruch on March 15 for a SPA-sponsored public policy breakfast call “The ‘Values’ Issue: Substance and Strategy. He discussed the past election and the future agenda for the Democratic Party, with special emphasis on the social and family values issues that played such an important role in the 2004 presidential campaign.
On March 30, the School’s Nonprofit Group will sponsor the Nonprofit Consulting Day. Consultants will be available to meet with nonprofit professionals to discuss the challenges they face in nonprofit service. you face as a nonprofit professional.

On April 12, former Speaker of the City Council Peter F. Vallone Sr. will present the capstone lecture of his 2004-2005 lecture series, "Ethics and Good Government." The lecture will address such current controversies as campaign finance reform and the commuter use fee.

On April 19, The Lillie and Nathan Ackerman Lecture Series on Equality and Justice in America at the School of Public Affairs presents, The Voting Rights Act at 40: Past, Present, and Future Challenges. Sonia Jarvis, a graduate of Yale University with a degree in law, is the sitting Ackerman Chair and a visiting associate professor.

The Nonprofit Group will sponsor, “Win Win Strategies to Bridge the Grantor Grantee Divide,” on April 20. The speaker will be Michael Seltzer, who has been active in the philanthropic and nonprofit sectors since 1968, and is the current President of New York Regional Association of Grantmakers (NYRAG).

**Public Affairs Week:**

From April 4-7, the School of Public Affairs holds Public Affairs week. The goal of Public Affairs Week is to build, through a rich and varied set of programs, on the School's commitment to provide a forum to discuss the ways in which research and practice inform public affairs as well as to enjoy a thoughtful community-building activity that includes students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends of the School.

This year’s series of lectures and break-out discussions covers four issue areas in four consecutive days. The topic on April 4 is, “Debt, Deficit and the Risk of Financial Crisis,” with Laurence J. Kotlikoff as the featured speaker. The topic for April 5 is “Civil Liberties vs. National Security.” The featured speakers will be Amatai Etzioni and Matt Bowles. On April 6 Jason DePerle and Rose Washington will be the featured speakers for a discussion of, “The Future of Welfare.” Finally, on April 7, Helen Butler and Trevor Potter will address the topic, “527s and the Future of Campaign Finance Reform.”

**Fifty-Ten Event:**

The School will host a program and a gala reception on Tuesday, June 7. It will mark the close of the academic year which celebrated the tenth anniversary of the founding of the school, as well as the 50th anniversary of the Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree at Baruch College. CUNY Chancellor Matthew Goldstein, Baruch College President Kathleen Waldron, Dean Stan Altman, former and current faculty, alumni, students, and friends of the School of Public Affairs are all expected to attend.

**Faculty Highlights:**

Doug Muzzio has been nominated for an Emmy Award for his CUNY-TV series, “City Talk.” He was cited in the category “Political Programming: Series.”

Shoshanna Sofaer is the Co Principal Investigator on a grant, “Translating Data into Information: Designing Report Templates for the AHRQ QIs” This project will develop and formatively test a set of templates to report comparative data on health system quality that utilize administrative/claims data that are regularly collected by State agencies and which are a part of the Health Care Utilization Program (HCUP) of AHRQ. The AHRQ Quality Indicators (QIs) address prevention of hospitalization through improved ambulatory care; inpatient effectiveness; and hospital safety. The grant amount is $175,000.
Gregg VanRyzin was the lead author of “Drivers and Consequences of Citizen Satisfaction: An application of the American Customer Satisfaction Index Model to New York City,” which appear in Public Administration Review, Vol. 64, #3. The article received the 2004 Louis Brownlow Award for best PAR article involving a practitioner. Fellow SPA professor Douglas Muzzio was a co-author, as were Stephen Immerwahr of the School Survey Research Unit, and Eve Martinez, an SPA adjunct.

Searches:

Searches for three faculty positions – one in Health Care Policy, two in Nonprofit Administration – are well underway. Three candidates were invited in for the Health Care Policy position, and a total of five were invited in for the two Nonprofit positions.

A search for a new Dean of the School has begun. The search committee is co-chaired by Myrna Chase, Dean of the Weisman School of Arts and Sciences, and Professor Ted Joyce of the Zicklin School of Business. Also on the committee are Neil Bennett (SPA), Diane Gibson (SPA), Fred Lane (SPA), Cynthia Wittaker (WSAS), Carmen Pedrogo of the Affirmative Action Office, and Associate Provost Dennis Slavin. Two students from SPA will also join the committee.

SPA Move:
Expect us to be in transition in late spring and early summer as the SPA’s Office of Graduate Admissions moves out of the 4th floor of 137 East 22nd Street, and into space next door in 135 East 22nd, where the Dean’s Office moved last summer. If you have not yet seen our new space on the 8th and 9th floors of the “D building,” (135 E 22nd) please pay us a visit.