

## **School of Public Affairs Strategic Plan 2013-2018**

The Strategic Plan adopted in December 2006 has served the School exceptionally well. Though crafted for an institution that was in many respects very different from today's School of Public Affairs, it set goals that we went on to achieve and must continue to embrace moving forward. We committed to attract and retain a diverse faculty of great distinction, and we have done that. We committed to attract and graduate a diverse, talented, and substantially larger student body while remaining true to our historical commitments to address the educational needs of New York's under-served communities, and we have done that too. We decided that we would internationalize the School to offer our students a more global perspective, principally through the introduction of comparative themes in the curriculum and through partnerships with universities in other nations; we had no international programs at that time and have relationships with institutions on four continents today. We also committed to seeking ways to bolster our resource base, and while we are still looking for a naming gift, the introduction of the MPA Differential Tuition and Academic Excellence Fees for our programs in Educational Administration have provided significant new sources of revenue that have in turn bolstered our staffing complement, our ability to provide scholarship and research opportunities to students, and to support faculty.

We have also deepened our involvement with the communities we serve. SPA is, to a degree unusual among our peer institutions, a community-facing school. Consider that our Center for Nonprofit Strategy and Management brings representatives of more than 2,000 third sector organizations across our threshold every year for workshops, seminars, or executive education program, and that Baruch College Survey Research partners with a wide range of nonprofits, health care organizations and governmental agencies to produce high quality policy surveys for decision makers, while our internship programs place scores of students in service roles throughout the City, and in the nation's capital as well. Our Mexican Leadership Project has collaborated with the Mexican Consulate, the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs and the NYC Department of Education to perform vital research and educate hundreds of community leaders. Many of our faculty serve on boards critical to the sound stewardship of public sector organizations and/or policy initiatives. And of course many of our faculty produce research that is not only distinguished scholarship, but also of enormous utility to policymakers and managers in all of the areas that constitute our professors' very wide scope of interest.

We have in all of these respects amply fulfilled the mission first adopted by the School in 2001 and reaffirmed with minor modifications in December 2012:

The mission of the School of Public Affairs and its degree programs is to enhance the performance of governmental and nonprofit institutions in New York and the nation in the interest of effective and equitable public service and public policy in a diverse society. Using insights from theory, research, and practice, we are a multidisciplinary community of scholars engaged in teaching, research, and outreach to achieve this mission. We place special emphasis on educating responsive and accountable leaders who combine managerial expertise, creative and critical thinking, and rigorous analysis in the formation and execution of public policy. The School also serves as a site for debate and reflection on issues of public importance to New York and the world beyond.

And now we must do more. The challenge over the next five years will be to continue to address the demands of “the world beyond” while enhancing and expanding our historical role in the nation’s most dynamic, global city. A regional program when we last set down to plan, we are now a national and international program with a global perspective, recruiting students and faculty from around the world. We have assumed leadership roles in national organizations germane to our fields and are involved with other organizations working on parallel processes internationally. We must find ways, systematically and thoughtfully, to inhabit these larger stages as effectively and forcefully as we have placed our stamp on public sector scholarship, education and civic participation in New York City. We come to this task too with a newly adopted College-wide plan that lends shape to some of our aspirations and the promise of support from a College that has made its own strong commitments to globalization, to leveraging technology in the service of pedagogical excellence, to serving our students more effectively in the classroom and in the community, and to developing administrative mechanisms and resources consistent with our goals.

The ten goals outlined below will realize the School’s full potential in the area of undergraduate education, add vitality to the curriculum through reinvestment in ongoing programs and the development of new programs in selected areas, improve students’ campus experience and reconnect with our alumni, create a communication and marketing capacity consistent with our accomplishments and ambitions, and improve support for our faculty as both teachers and scholars.

### Ten Goals for the Next Five Years

*Build a Large, Distinguished Undergraduate Program in Public Affairs.* Prior to 2012, the BSPA assembled an array of classes on methodology and substantive policy that provide a good introduction to the processes and challenges of developing and implementing policy in a diverse environment. It has now been redesigned to do much more. The new BSPA:

- Harnesses innovative curricula to engage students directly in research and community service
- Teaches students how to analyze and advocate for policy at every level of government
- Provides every student with an outstanding preparation in qualitative and quantitative methods that will make students attractive candidates for graduate study and prepare them for challenging careers in public service
- Carefully stewards the student experience to improve planning and communication and to build community

In order to capitalize on these new dimensions of the program, we must:

- Establish a high profile for the BSPA among New York City High School administrators and New York City public school students.
- Make the BSPA better known among all on-campus constituencies (e.g., students, faculty, College Advisement, Campus Communication & Marketing, etc.)
- Ensure BSPA students are successful, that they gain meaningful internships, receive prestigious fellowships, study abroad, launch satisfying careers, and pursue graduate studies at leading universities.
- Develop a national reputation for the BSPA, drawing students from across the nation.
- Establish linkages between community colleges and BSPA through marketing initiatives, articulation agreements, and joint degree programs.

- Develop a national reputation for the BSPA among law schools and public affairs graduate programs at leading colleges and universities.
- Cultivate an awareness of the BSPA among SPA's constituencies, including nonprofit organizations, unions, legislative bodies, and government agencies at the federal, state, and local levels.
- Create a linkage between SPA and veteran's organizations to significantly increase the number of veterans pursuing the BSPA.
- Provide our students with opportunities to participate in the full range of Honors education at Baruch College.

Over the next five years, we will secure and extend the recent curricular and instructional changes for a student body of 800 undergraduates by 2018. We will also explore ways to further enhance and distinguish Baruch's undergraduate program. One possible avenue is to provide every BSPA student with opportunities to participate in research. The University of Maryland-Baltimore County has pioneered innovative, laboratory-based models of science education that produce enormous success among a diverse, low-income, first generation base of students not unlike Baruch's. We are unaware of any college that takes the same approach toward the study of the social sciences. Through situated challenges derived from real needs in real communities and research teams stewarded by dedicated faculty, SPA's undergraduates can use New York as their laboratory to build an experientially and academically rich understanding of the intersections of culture, language, politics, government, and private sector participation in civil society. The size and diversity of the nonprofit community serving New York City, including arts and cultural organizations as well as social service agencies, provides internship opportunities for BSPA students to experience first-hand the satisfaction of helping others while nurturing their own careers. Our Hagedorn Fellows program and the work performed under the auspices of the campus chapter of the Nonprofit Leadership Alliance provide a rich and varied platform on which to build. We see abundant opportunities across any and all of the specific policy emphases in the faculty's areas of expertise and particularly in survey research – where we have the opportunity to provide research experiences at scale across the campus – migration, demography and urban affairs. *The Baruch College Strategic Plan 2013-2018* commits to providing as many undergraduates as possible with research opportunities. The School of Public Affairs should be at the forefront of that initiative, through the BSPA and our general education courses.

*Develop and/or Further Develop Several Substantive Emphases in the Curriculum.* As the public and third sectors change and strategies for dealing with every one of the policy arenas we touch change accordingly, our curricula and pedagogies will have to change in all of those areas as well. Some of these changes are already underway. We are, for example, collaborating with our two sister Schools on a master's program in Arts Administration that will be housed in the Weissman School of Arts & Sciences but will draw student interest and faculty participation from the Zicklin School and SPA as well (we note with pleasure that SPA faculty have been deeply involved in efforts to expand arts education opportunities for all undergraduates at Baruch). We have for several years now been collaborating with Zicklin's Entrepreneurship program on courses and extra-curricular programming related to social entrepreneurship. We have also, through faculty hires and new recruitment efforts, begun to rebuild our resources and curriculum in government per se and will continue to do so. We will also develop several new emphases over the next five years. These may find expression in existing or new concentrations in any one of our degree programs, not necessarily new concentrations and certainly not new degree programs. The following areas are ripe for further development.

- International NGOs. Building on our exceptionally strong base in nonprofit management, we should assemble the faculty and other resources necessary to be a leading if not the leading program in this arena. Beyond our internal assets, our location in New York, with the UN and literally thousands of other INGOs a short distance from our campus, this should be an area in which we achieve great distinction.
- The Policy Concerns of Global Cities. We have long focused on New York because it is our home and the first component of our mission. We need, increasingly, to leverage New York's role as a global city and the larger world that role implies. This emphasis buttresses and is buttressed by our international outreach. It links to a host of other concerns such as sustainable communities and comparative policy studies. As more of the world's population assembles in global cities, this is a forward-looking arena in which to develop our students' and our scholars' expertise, cognizant and supportive of our historic commitments while charting new territory in internationalization.
- Sustainable Cities. We have just approved a concentration in Urban Development and Sustainability and hired new faculty to extend our expertise in this area. We should continue to do so and address this large and rapidly growing policy arena.
- Build the Policy Analysis Track in the MPA. Students who want to extend their methodological sophistication as policy analysts need more support. Over the next five years, we should repurpose, strengthen and highlight the existing policy analysis track, building on our strong, deep and committed faculty in the area.
- Food Policy. Courses on food policy have become the most frequently requested new area of elective study among our students. The Food Matters club is the largest of the policy-related student organizations. Along with the considerable interest in these courses there are important policy questions that connect to our interests in sustainability, service delivery, INGOs, and global cities.
- Migrations and Diasporas. Several of our faculty work at the intersection of policy, migration, civic integration and political participation. We should formalize our offerings in this arena and capitalize on synergies with some of the program areas mentioned above, such as Global Cities and INGOs.

*Improve and Expand the Masters of Science in Higher Education Administration.* Our MSED-HEA is the only such program at a public university in the downstate area (as mentioned earlier SUNY Stony Brook has begun to advertise a program at their 28<sup>th</sup> Street facility but it does not yet appear to be in operation). With new staff and a fresh focus, this program is poised to grow substantially and to expand its reach beyond the Tri-state area. Building on the recommendations of the 2007 review committee, we should:

- Integrate the MSED-HEA with the MPA, for courses such as the methods sequence. Faculty synergies between these two programs are a practical benefit and underscore the animating rationale for a school with a diverse array of administrative programs.
- Sharpen the elective concentrations, for example, in Student Services, Fiscal Management, Institutional Research, Management of Online Education, and Management of International Education. This list is intended to be illustrative not definitive: we need clearly shaped elective sequences; identifying the right ones will be up to program leadership and the Curriculum Committee.

- Seek New York State Education Department Certificate status for each of the elective concentrations and market those globally. Most if not all of the courses in each sequence could be offered online.

The MSED-HEA now has two full-time faculty members with a newly hired director. Now is the time to bring that program to provide the program with an appropriate faculty complement and to reinvest in the rigor of the preparation we provide for its students.

*Expand and Leverage our International Programs.* SPA has made significant progress toward internationalizing its curricula and creating opportunities for the exchange of students and scholars. Having developed a credible core of relationships with the promise of more to come, we can now involve our present and future partners more fully in our research and educational efforts. Specifically we propose to:

- Engage partner institutions by linking courses, both in short-format, face-to-face intensives (perhaps on an executive program model), and through distance technologies, in semester-long exchanges over joint objects of study (e.g., social welfare systems in Europe and the US; elder care in Shanghai and New York; migration in Mexico and the US; etc.). This would require teleconference capacity in some Baruch classrooms and would benefit from the placement of teleconferencing technology in all Baruch classrooms. We note with enthusiasm here and later in this document the overall College commitment to improving our development and delivery capacity in the area of online education. This is certain to be an important feature of many of our programs in the very near future and our market competitiveness, nowhere more so than in international education.
- Expand our visiting scholars program. Leveraging support from the China Scholars Council, the Fulbright Program, the Nehru program, the North American Mobility Program, and other sources, SPA has maintained an active visiting scholars program over the past three years. Continuing to work in concert with external funders, we would like to double the number of scholars inbound and to make it possible to send at least one of our own faculty members abroad in exchange in every academic year. This in turn would require that additional office space be allocated toward this purpose.
- Develop sources of support to subvent the costs of SPA students' study for one term abroad. SPA's students need international exposure as much as any students who aspire to public sector leadership. Unlike students at some other programs, however, our students often come from low income backgrounds and cannot afford even the cost of a semester or 3-4 week program abroad. We estimate a need of \$5,000 per traveling student per term. If we aim for 3% of SPA enrollees annually and expect one semester abroad, that would mean, at current enrollments, \$200,000 *in new resources* for support for study abroad.

*Revive the Discussion about SPA's Involvement in Doctoral Education.* Our 2006 plan contained a commitment to explore creating a doctorate in SPA, perhaps in concert with the Graduate School and University Center. That effort was suspended when the Chancellery asked that new doctoral programs not be considered during the fiscal downturn. Now that CUNY has a stable funding environment for at least another three years, it is time to revisit the question of SPA's participation in preparing students for policy and administrative studies at the doctoral level. The success of the Certificate program in Demography offers one non-degree approach to doctoral education and should be considered alongside a traditional doctorate. We are aware that this effort is necessarily exploratory and requires many

approvals beyond our direct control, but the importance of doctoral education and its relevance to our broader reputational and research objectives demand further attention.

*Improve our Practices in Assessment of Student Learning.* SPA does not do enough to ensure that learning goals are clearly stated and that we have clear, consistent, continually reviewed and updated mechanisms for assessing students' progress toward those goals. We should do more as well to assess our programs' influence on alumni careers. It is beyond the scope of this document to recommend specific practices or call out specific concerns, but very much in its purview to recommend the establishment of a standing committee on assessment to be permanently in charge of designing and implementing assessment activity. Assessment should also receive administrative support with the explicit assignment of staff to that function.

*Improve Students' Quality of Life.* This is a broad category that includes consideration of students' opportunities to pursue their studies in a flexible and timely fashion, ensuring access to advisement and other staff, improving career outcomes and fostering additional opportunities for interaction, both while registered at Baruch and after graduation. The following are some examples of the kinds of things that we could do:

- Ensure seamless provision of classes and services across daytime and evening student populations. As SPA adds more full-time student enrollment, it is important that we ensure the availability of daytime classes consistent with demand and equally important that these classes not come at the expense of evening offerings which must also remain robust. Similarly, student services should be provisioned and scheduled for a student body present seven days a week over fourteen hours of every weekday.
- Offer additional online sections, particularly in the core curricula of our several degree programs, to provide students with a flexible option for study. This is one of the ways that SPA will do its part to meet the *Baruch College Strategic Plan 2013-2018* target of 20 percent of coursework offered in fully online or hybridized formats.
- Beyond online classes, SPA needs to make better use of digital platforms for everything from student recruitment to advisement and alumni relations. To this end, SPA strongly supports the College's goal of improving Baruch's online facilities and broadening the expertise of students, faculty and staff in making best use of those assets.
- Find additional ways to engage graduate students in faculty (and their own) research. While GA appointments will continue to be the primary vehicle for students to engage deeply with faculty research, we should find additional ways to involve the large majority of our students who are not on graduate assistantships, such as encouraging capstone papers to become conference papers, starting a student journal, etc.
- Ensure that international students are fully integrated into the School. They should, along with other students, benefit from the kind of outreach described in this section. Given the strong probability that they will present with needs somewhat different from the general student population, such as language differences, cultural dislocations, etc., they should receive additional support as well. We note with approval that improved service for international students is included in the overall College plan, and believe that we must make our own efforts toward the goal in SPA as well.
- Develop additional programs to engage alumni after their departure from Baruch. These could range from social event to ongoing education for mid-career professionals.

SPA's ability to continue to stand out from competitors will be greatly enhanced by thoughtful attention to these quality of life issues, which must evolve along with the School's size and ambition.

*Continue to Build Our Partnership Base.* We have found that international partnerships are enhanced when teams of US universities work with teams of universities abroad to foster richer programs than any bilateral program can provide. To that end, we feel that we should seek where possible to expand our efforts by joining forces not only with international partners, but domestic partners as well. We have projects today in gestation with SUNY's Rockefeller College (for expanding our respective elective sequences via distance technologies), the University of Maryland (for an Atlantis Program application and a series of Brussels/Washington/New York executive programs), and a joint agreement among the Maxwell School, the University of Oregon and SPA (for educating provincial officials from China). We should seek where possible to build on these partnerships to leverage expertise, regional positioning and institutional arrangements that we could not easily achieve on our own. Our relationships with several school principal development organizations, including New Leaders for New Schools, the New York City Leadership Academy, and the NYC Department of Education are good examples of the ability to extend programmatic reach through partnership. The same principle extends to non-academic institutional partnerships such as those SPA has long nurtured with nonprofit umbrella organizations, government agencies, and operating foundations. For example, the School has developed relationships with the arts and cultural affairs community in New York City through the Baruch College-Rubin Museum project. These partnerships bring students to our degree programs, provide opportunities to develop new, non-credit programs, increase faculty members' opportunities for research involving constituent organizations, and increase visibility.

*Build a First-Class Research Infrastructure.* The research infrastructure in 2006 consisted almost exclusively of CUNY-wide assets, such as the PSC-CUNY award competition, centrally licensed software, local computer purchases, and our GA pool. Resource cuts in FY 2008-11 effected reductions in support in all areas not related to the development of the centers listed above. The arrival in FY 12 of the MPA tuition differential and Academic Excellence Fees built our GA pool back up to pre-rescission levels, but there is much more to be done. We propose:

- A seed money pool of not less than \$50,000 per annum be established to provide faculty with funding of up to \$20,000 for a single project to purchase datasets, fund surveys, engage research assistance, travel to collections, provide summer support, or otherwise develop large-scale research projects with an eye to external funding; the faculty Committee on Research would review proposals and make funding recommendations to the Dean.
- Appointment of one pre-award specialist in year one of the new five-year plan and a post-award specialist when grant receipts improve by \$5M, both of whom would work in close concert with SPAR. Most funded research will continue to rely on external monies; we need the capacity to attract it and manage it. Funding for these posts would ultimately derive from the increased base of funded research.
- Expanding SPA's data management capacity: data servers, application servers, remote access, and the computing capacity to integrate many contributors on a single platform.
- Physical space to support these endeavors; space constraints at present make it impossible to bring additional staff to the College to sustain research compatible with the nature of our projects or the scope of our ambition.

We would expect from this investment an increase in funded (particularly federally funded) research; a series of large-scale projects to attract new professors, post-docs, and graduate students; increased competitiveness for grant awards, and improved capacity to integrate students onto research teams.

*Develop a Resource Base Consistent with our Teaching, Research and Community Engagement Goals.* It goes without saying that many of the proposals listed above require financial support, but beyond that, and in areas not described above, they require other kinds of resources as well. For example:

- Staff. SPA has among the lowest staff-to-student and staff-to-faculty ratios in any area among APPAM member schools. It will be increasingly difficult to take advantage of the opportunities presented by our faculty's accomplishments, our students' quality, our Advisory Board's energy, or broader progress in the field without a more generous staffing structure. Some of the areas of greatest concern include communication and marketing, grant support, support (pending further development of the College's overall commitment to online education) for helping faculty to develop and deliver courses online, and student services and recruitment.
- Resources for adjunct faculty. Alone among Baruch's three schools, SPA has no dedicated space for adjuncts. This makes it very hard for them to maintain office hours or even to make photocopies after hours, much less to feel like full-fledged members of the community. Adjuncts need shared office space and compensation for professional development. With these in place, we can be more demanding of teaching quality and other expressions of institutional commitment.
- Resources for Marketing. As we improve SPA's visibility among national and international audiences and seek to differentiate ourselves in an ever more competitive environment in New York, we need to be able more regularly to make ourselves known in the appropriate print and digital venues. Recent additions to our marketing budget have made a significant difference in our ability to promote the School domestically, but much more remains to be done and the international audience remains largely unaddressed. The new IMPACT theme has been well-reviewed but will need to be extended throughout the full range of branding materials, and will of course need to be refreshed before the end of the period covered by this plan.
- Space for graduate students. Beyond seats for graduate assistants, SPA has no space for student purposes, such as a lounge, office or event space. Students deserve space during their time here, not just because it's enjoyable, but because it is essential for the development of the durable professional networks that we promise in our recruitment literature. Our students do manage to forge lifelong connections with one another; we should make that much easier than it is today.
- Space for Executive Programs. SPA has made a substantial commitment to providing Executive Leadership programs for nonprofit and government institutions in New York. We now propose to extend those models nationally and internationally. We desperately need space consistent with the expectations of executive-level learners. We are pleased that this is also a priority for the *Baruch College Strategic Plan 2013-2018* and underscore SPA's strong sense of the importance of acquiring or repurposing appropriate space as soon as possible.
- Space for staff and contract researchers. This need is outlined above.
- The ability to leverage distance technologies to invite other participants into every classroom – and whole classrooms in other parts of the world – in every room in which SPA courses are taught. The College's overall plan makes this a priority. In the same spirit, we observe that providing distance education capacity in our classrooms is relevant not only for wholly online or



hybridized courses, but for traditional courses that may draw from experts and/or other students around the globe from time to time.

Some of these needs – space chief among them, and in the absence of space, staff – will be very difficult to address in the near term. But it is not realistic to talk about the kind of ambition described here without adducing the resource base necessary to make it possible. A naming gift should be the cornerstone for these efforts, but we will also have to identify other sources of earned and donated support.

### Conclusion

In the almost 20 years since it was founded as an independent School of the College, SPA has made enormous strides. Now among the largest and best schools in the nation, recognized nationally for the quality of its scholarship and teaching, with a highly decorated faculty operating at the highest levels of their respective fields, the School's achievements substantially exceed the most optimistic expectations voiced at its inception. The new *School of Public Affairs Strategic Plan 2013-2018* dovetails with the new *Baruch College Strategic Plan 2013-2018* and charts a course that builds on the 2006-2011 plan, leveraging our location in and long term commitment to the nation's most dynamic global city to address a changing environment for service delivery and the steady pace of internationalization in all of the sectors that most concern us. The new plan gives us the wherewithal to consolidate our presence nationally and around the world while maintaining our core commitments to opportunity, diversity, rigor, and service to New York, which we know we cannot continue to do without taking full account of "the world beyond."