Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management

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To: **APPAM Executive Committee and Policy Council**

From: **The Strategic Planning Committee**

Re: **Strategic Planning Committee Report**

Date: **October 18, 2011**
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Introduction

This report is an overview of the strategic planning process and is intended to provide a more detailed explanation of the 'Strategic Objectives and Recommendations' document (hereafter referred to as the 'Strategic Plan'). This report offers guidance on how the strategic goals and strategies contained in the plan might be implemented. It also contains recommendations for the adoption of specific tactics that might be considered by those responsible for the further development and implementation of the plan. However, the companion document, the strategic plan, has been edited based on feedback from committee members and the executive committee. This document does not fully reflect the changes that were made as a part of this feedback process; rather, it reflects an earlier stage of the committee work and is meant to offer a historical perspective on the process and a more detailed record of the discussions and consideration of issues the committee undertook in the last year.

History of the Strategic Planning Process

In the fall of 2010, then President of APPAM, Richard Burkhauser, named a committee to develop a strategic plan for APPAM. In his memorandum to committee members outlining his charge, Burkhauser wrote:

> *APPAM is undertaking a strategic planning process in an effort to establish long-term goals for our organization and a strategy for how best to achieve them.… [it] is the charge of the Strategic Planning Committee to collect data, assess alternatives, and present them with recommendations.…Based on the information collected, the Strategic Planning Committee will consider which strategic options can best serve the needs of the stakeholders…Based on these discussions, you will generate draft and final recommendations for a course of action, which will be submitted to the Policy Council for review and approval.[1]*

Members serving on the strategic planning committee are:

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[1] *Burkhauser, Richard, Letter to members of the strategic planning committee. October 18, 2010 (Appendix I, Page 16)*

Paul Decker, Mathematica Policy Research, Chair
Maria Cancian, University of Wisconsin, Chair
Scott Allard, University of Chicago
Sandra Archibald, University of Washington
Angela Evans, University of Texas, Austin
Judy Gueron, MDRC
Ron Haskins, Brookings Institution
Stephen Raphael, University of California, Berkeley
Tara Sheehan, APPAM Executive Director

Prior to the creation of this committee, APPAM had not undertaken a formal strategic planning process for many years. The impetus for initiating a strategic planning effort came in 2010, during the search for a new executive director. During this search process, candidates asked if APPAM had a strategic plan identifying the direction the association was taking over the next 3-5 years. The search committee concluded that the creation of a strategic plan, which contained short-to-mid-term goals for the association, would be worthwhile and advised the Executive Committee of such.

The Executive Committee agreed and set forth several broad objectives, including the following:

- All APPAM stakeholders would be involved in the development of the plan. Stakeholders included APPAM professional members, student members, institutional members, leaders in the public policy community, the APPAM leadership, and former association members.
- APPAM policies and their execution should reside with the Policy Council and a strategic plan would help the leadership determine direction. In the past, control of these activities rested largely on the executive director and often did not reflect input from the broader APPAM leadership and general membership.

History of the Committee, its Charge, Activities to Date and Next Steps

The committee undertook its work in five phases: (1) determination and design of the methodology to be used in collecting and analyzing data and general participant input, (2) actual data collection and analysis, (3) structured consultation with the Policy Council and Institutional Representatives, (4) final analysis and deliberations, and (5) review of recommendations and decisions.

Each of these phases and the outcome of the work completed are discussed below.

Phases 1 and 2: early 2011.
- Telephone Interviews: committee members interviewed thirty-eight members, former members and leaders in the public policy community. Their responses were compiled and synthesized into objectives for future APPAM activities and endeavors.[2]

- Online survey: all APPAM members were sent an online survey containing questions about, and ratings of, general membership issues; programs and activities; and overall direction and impressions of the association. The survey produced a 41% response rate (It was sent to 2,212 members and 914 members took the survey).[3]

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[2] *Summary results of telephone interviews. March 4, 2011 (Appendix II, Page 17 - 20)*
[3] *Summary results of online member survey. March 4, 2011 (Appendix III, Page 21 – 23)*

The team compiled the results of the telephone interviews and the survey responses and formulated several themes that reflected the strategic priorities identified by the members and stakeholders. They are listed below as part of the full discussion of Phases 1 and 2.

Phase 3: April 2011. The Strategic Planning Committee met with the Policy Council and Institutional Representatives in Washington, D.C. to: (1) solicit feedback on the data collected through the interviews and surveys; (2) share the themes that emerged from the process; (3) propose a framework for the strategic plan**;** and (4) begin identifying strategies to meet the goals set forth in the proposed framework. Forty three institutional members, Policy Council and executive leadership members attended and participated in the strategic planning meeting.

Phase 4: June 2011. The members of the strategic planning committee, along with APPAM President Helen Ladd, met in Chicago to assess the outcomes of Phase 3, consider which strategic options would best serve the needs of all identified stakeholders, and discuss initial proposals to support these options. Members of the committee were responsible for different parts of the all-day meeting. Several members facilitated the sessions designed to develop specific goals and strategies that could translate the general themes into a strategic framework. This is discussed in detail under "Theme/Goals from the Summer Committee Meeting".

Phase 5: November 2011. The strategic plan is the final phase, or phase 5, of the strategic planning process. The committee has drafted the plan to present to the Executive Committee and Policy Council at the November governance meetings. The Policy Council will vote on the plan and if approved, the plan will be adopted by APPAM and will guide the work APPAM does in the future.

PHASES 1 AND 2: Themes/Goals for Strategic Planning – Data Collection

The data collected in the phone interviews and general membership survey consistently supported members' general satisfaction with APPAM, particularly with the Fall Conference and the *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management (JPAM).* While this support was strong, members also expressed support for growing the organization and the size and scope of the Fall Conference.

Six themes emerged from both the member survey and the individual interviews. They are detailed below.

1. **Increased practitioner and policymaker interactions**: There was general consensus that this should be a priority for APPAM and that more could be done to support this endeavor. Suggestions included conducting more DC-based Fall Conferences, targeted invitations and session formats to increase practitioner and policymaker participation in the conference, creating opportunities for institutional members to engage policymakers on behalf of APPAM, and better utilizing JPAM as a resource for policymakers.

2. **Expanded program/issue areas**: There was broad support (almost 80% of respondents) for APPAM to move into new or under-represented program/issue areas. Interviewees and respondents identified member expertise in poverty, social welfare, education and methods as strengths within APPAM. The respondents identified several additional issue areas upon which members suggested that APPAM focus including: health, environment and energy policy. Further, members suggested that expansions occur in issue areas that: (1) are closely related to APPAM's current areas of strength;

(2) would benefit from rigorous policy analysis; and (3) address critical policy questions that are under active deliberation.

3. **Expanded student participation**: There was broad support (95% of respondents) for increased student participation in APPAM, particularly among doctoral students. The consensus was this focus would not only help students consider APPAM as an organization that would benefit their career, but it also would help increase APPAM's membership rolls and future leadership capacity.

4. **Increased global focus**: The overall support for this theme was not as strong as those mentioned above. In part this might be due to the lack of a clear definition and understanding of what is meant by adopting a "global focus". Respondents reported that instilling a global focus into APPAM's activities would reflect the current expansion of policy determinants. The lack of a consistent definition on what is meant by global focus, however, resulted in a wide range of possible activities that APPAM could support. Some of these suggested activities included: supporting or increasing the number of international conferences in which APPAM participates/organizes, attracting researchers from outside the US to participate in the Fall Conference, utilizing JPAM to publish more articles on international issues, and reserving a Policy Council seat for an international member. However, the benefits of this expansion were not clear, and members expressed concern over the feasibility of these activities and their overall impact on the association.

5. *Broader or more focused analytic/research methodologies:* There was no clear consensus opinion in this area. Some identified the emphasis on traditional quantitative methods as a core strength of APPAM; others argued that the current emphasis is unnecessarily rigid, thus narrowing APPAM's research focus. There was very strong support (95% of respondents) for promoting a diversity of research methods at the Fall Conference while there was strong support (63% of respondents) for APPAM to focus solely on promoting best practices. Participants in the Spring meeting ultimately concluded that a focus on methods could be addressed through a more integrated approach applied to all programs and activities in which APPAM engages.

6. **Recommitment to public management:** There was no clear consensus about the state of public management within APPAM. Participants expressed concern that APPAM was losing public management as one if its core issues and retaining it would require a relatively high level of effort. Participants in the Spring meeting ultimately concluded that a recommitment to public management could be addressed through a more integrated approach to all programs and activities in which APPAM engages.

PHASE 3: Themes/Goals for the Spring Meeting

The six themes above formed the basis for the work conducted at the Spring meeting in Washington DC. At the conclusion of the Spring meeting, three themes emerged as having the strongest support. They served as the basis upon which the remaining work proceeded. They are presented below.

1. **Create greater integration** in the association activities, particularly in the content of the Fall Conference. Integration can be defined on multiple dimensions. For example, it could include integration of topic areas, with the intent of breaking down the topic silos that tend to develop naturally at the Fall Conference. Another dimension of integration would involve a diversity of methods and perspectives in addressing critical policy

questions. For example, a given policy question could be posed so as to encourage discussions that address both the policy and management aspects of the question.

2. **Encourage greater policy relevance and visibility** of members' efforts. Members want more contact with practitioners and policymakers to increase the visibility of their work. They also would like to adapt their work to meet the needs of practitioners and policymakers to have greater influence on policy in the long run. APPAM can advance the interests of members by sponsoring activities to help achieve this objective.

3. **Expand student participation.** Expanded student participation is seen as a way to create a stronger pipeline of new, committed APPAM members, helping to sustain the long-run pursuit of the association's mission.

PHASE 4: Themes/Goals for the Summer Committee Meeting

The three themes from Phase 3 formed the basis for the continued discussions and refinement of the strategic plan. The committee's work focused upon: *strategies for increasing integration*, *strategies to increase policy relevance*, and *strategies for increasing student membership*. The purpose of the summer meeting was to begin formulating recommendations for each of the three themes and to identify other relevant issues that should be addressed in the plan. During this meeting, the committee members identified other important issues of relevance to the strategic planning effort, particularly those affecting the implications for APPAM resulting from the execution and implementation of the plan. The committee discussed staffing capacity, governance structure, authorities and budget issues.

The daylong meeting was broken up into five sessions:

1. Theme 1: Achieving greater integration across all APPAM activities

2. Theme 2: Encouraging greater policy relevance and visibility

3. Theme 3: Expanding student participation

4. Other issues (any issue that committee members felt was important enough to perhaps be included in the plan)

5. Operational issues (staffing, budgeting and governance issues that would affect execution of the strategic plan)

The group leader for each of the five sessions facilitated the discussion and summarized the recommendations derived from the sessions.

Throughout the sessions, the committee specifically identified current, ongoing activities conducted by APPAM to ensure that the goals, strategies and recommended actions did not duplicate these activities. The list below represents those ongoing activities.

- Fall Research Conference: Annual conference with 200+ panels, roundtables, symposia and poster sessions in 15 – 20 policy areas. Attracts about 1,200 members of the public policy community.
- Spring Conference: Annual conference for APPAM's institutional/organizational members to network and discuss issues of common concern.

- JPAM: *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, JPAM is the journal of APPAM. It is published quarterly and prides itself on the dissemination of the highest quality, multidisciplinary research in public policy and management.
- APPAM Awards: APPAM presents up to nine awards annually (some are not given each year) to celebrate the best in public policy analysis and management. Awards include lifetime achievement, best dissertation, comparative policy, achievement in financial management and achievement in education policy.
- Networking opportunities: APPAM promotes informal networking and idea exchange at events throughout the year. APPAM has prided itself on the strong associations and relationships its members forge at the Fall Conference, Spring Conference and other events throughout the year.
- APPAM/NASPAA Admissions Directors Meeting: Annual meeting for APPAM/NASPAA admission directors to network, analyze annual research and discuss issues of common concern.
- Publicservicecareers.org: Job board jointly owned by APPAM, NASPAA and ASPA; it is a central repository for posting/finding public service career positions.
- APPAM/NASPAA Institutional Data Project: Annual data gathering project for APPAM and NASPAA members measuring public policy masters and doctoral programming staff, curriculum trends, student enrollment, student graduation rates, etc.
- International Conferences: APPAM's international conferences are held annually across the world. They can cover one policy area or span multiple topics. The conferences are designed to attract an international audience and expand APPAM's reach into the international policy community.

Phase 4: The Summer Meeting Results

The three goals and their attendant recommendations formed the basic framework of the strategic plan. Below are the committee's recommendations in each of the theme/goals areas.

GOAL I: Increase policy relevance and interaction between policy makers and practitioners

Below are three strategies for achieving this increased interaction. For purposes of the strategic plan, policymakers are defined as elected, appointed, or career officials working in local, state, or federal government. Practitioners are defined as professionals who work in various types of intervention programs including teachers and other education leaders (principals, superintendents, and school board members), social workers, and those involved in more specialized intervention programs such as programs to reduce teen pregnancy, prison release programs, programs for the disabled, etc. Foundation officials are also included in the definition of practitioners.

1. **Institute a system of preferential treatment in favor of symposia, panels, or roundtables at our conferences, in JPAM and on APPAM.org that feature policymakers or practitioners. This can be achieved in two ways**:
   a. In each issue of JPAM and in the announcement for our conferences, state that preference will be given to articles or sessions that involve policy makers or practitioners writing or speaking from their perspective.**[Responsibility: President, President Elect, JPAM Editor and Meetings/Conferences Committee].**

NOTE: This goal is not meant to dilute the quality of the articles in JPAM or the rigor by which they are judged. All editorial decisions will still reside with the JPAM Editor. This goal is meant to encourage a more aggressive outreach to the research communities of many disciplines. It should also be noted that the final goal in the strategic plan was amended somewhat based on feedback from the Executive Committee.

b. Authorize the APPAM president-elect to organize sessions. While the exact number that feature policymakers and practitioners should be left up to the president-elect, these numbers should either be no less than 5 or should represent a specific proportion of the total sessions offered. Similarly, encourage the program committee to submit and include papers by policymakers or practitioners at our conferences. **[Responsibility: President-elect and Program Committee].**

2. **Create opportunities for APPAM members to talk directly with policymakers or practitioners. Some ways to achieve this are:**
   a. Creating a session before or during the Fall Conference in which APPAM members could talk directly with policymakers or practitioners. Four to six tables could be set at which one or more policymakers or practitioners would be available for informal discussions with APPAM members. **[Responsibility: President-Elect and Meetings/Conferences Committee.]**

   b. Sponsor a roundtable discussion between an APPAM member and a policymaker or practitioner. This would likely happen at the Fall Conference but can also happen at a stand-alone event or in conjunction with the Spring Conference. The APPAM member would initiate the discussion, the policymaker or practitioner would respond, and then others in attendance would be expected to join the discussion. An example of such a session would be topical policymakers, like Republican members of the House budget committee who supported the Ryan budget or Democratic members who opposed the budget; the Medicare chief actuary (Richard Foster) who recently emphasized Medicare's impending insolvency; or the superintendent of a city or county school system to discuss the reforms they would like to see when Congress reauthorizes the No Child Left Behind program. **[Responsibility: President to issue an invitation to members for proposals, to be screened by the Meetings/Conferences Committee].**

3. **Feature occasional articles in JPAM and content on APPAM.org covering important and timely issues of policy or practice. Details on this strategy include:**

   a. Develop APPAM.org content to feature content on important issues, offering contrasting views about the issue at hand with one or more of the entries to

be written by policymakers or practitioners. An example could be an exchange between a Republican member of the president's deficit commission who voted against the Bowles/Simpson deficit plan and a Democratic member who voted for the plan. **[Responsibility: JPAM Editor and Executive Director].**

b. Encourage the JPAM Editor to consider the potential value of occasional symposia in the journal about important and timely issues of policy or practice. **[Responsibility: JPAM Editor].**

c. Investigate and develop new opportunities to engage policy makers and practitioners in a more "virtual' manner, which can supplement the conferences and *JPAM* as venues for these efforts. This would lower the costs to policy makers or practitioners of participating in APPAM activities and it can also enhance the accessibility of these efforts to APPAM members. For example, we might consider sponsoring webinars that follow a point/counterpoint format to get policy makers more engaged with APPAM. **[Responsibility: Executive Director (implementation) and Communications/Web Committee (supporting access to the technology)]**

GOAL II: Create greater integration across disciplinary, methodological, topical and academic/practitioner silos

Below are three strategies for achieving this:

4. **Dedicate 5-6 sessions at the APPAM Fall Conference focused on a particular policy topic or program area, but organized to achieve diversity in methods, discipline, and academic/practice perspective.**

[*The initial allotment of 5 to 6 panels should be expanded over time as the number of conference panels expands in the coming years and as submissions for integrated sessions increase. Program committee members could identify "model" integrated sessions and advertise those sessions on the website and in the Fall Conference Program. However, there are current constraints on APPAM's ability to grow the Fall Conference due to long standing contracts with hotels until 2016. In order to grow the conference by adding additional sessions, APPAM would need to secure additional hotel space and these additional hotel contracts would require additional financial commitments for APPAM.*]**.

The panels could take the format of:
a. Using different types of rigorous quantitative and qualitative analytic methods to understand the scope of a problem, program implementation, or the impact of a program
b. Exploring the many different stages of policy process
c. Creating a panel of committee staffers from Congress and the White House to discuss budgetary or policy topics and the implications of research for budget or policymaking activity

    d. Creating a panel of federal, state, and/or local practitioners or administrators, together with researchers, in a particular policy topic or programmatic area

[Responsibility: The President-elect will work with the Program Committee to identify which policy areas or topics will be included in the request for integrated paper and panel proposals. The President-elect will appoint a program committee member(s) to assemble integrated panels from the targeted submissions or from relevant submissions received from other Program Committee members. The integrated panel organizers also would identify a chair and designate a discussant. Because the regular submission process remains, it is not necessary for the themes to cover the full spectrum of APPAM member interests every year].

5. **Create 5 to 6 special small-group sessions where two panelists would engage in a point-counterpoint discussion of a particular policy research issue, method, or dilemma. This strategy is close to that contained in 2a.**

    a. Panelists would be asked to prepare and coordinate comments in advance, present those comments, and facilitate discussion among the 6-8 attendees at each table. Sessions would last about one hour and could be held during the morning as breakfasts or after the last panel session.
    [Responsibility: The President-elect would work with the Meetings/Conferences Committee to identify which policy research areas or topics will be included in these small-group sessions. Researchers, policymakers, and practitioners open to diverse perspectives and well suited to facilitate discussion in a given area will be invited to participate as panelists. Separate tables for each topic will be arranged in a single ballroom.]

6. **To encourage integration of perspectives across all panel sessions, APPAM should consider creating a database of experts on a particular topic so that when chairs/discussants are needed, the Program Committee could refer to the expert database and solicit participants who would bring experience and relevance to the panel. Data on policy/practice experience, discipline, methods, and demographic information about the expert should be included to promote diversity on the panels.**
[Responsibility: Executive Director and Data Committee].

GOAL III. Increase student participation in APPAM

**NOTE: in the strategic plan, this goal was broadened to 'Expand Active Membership' and included strategic goals for all segments of APPAM's membership, including professional, student and institutional members.

The following strategies will enhance the participation of students in APPAM programs and activities.

7. **Establish two seats on the Policy Council for Ph.D. students. The students would serve two-year staggered terms.**

a. The procedure for selecting student members of the Policy Council would follow the one used to ensure practitioner representation. The membership would vote on a roster and choose one Ph.D. student to serve on the Council. For the first year of implementation, methods would be established to phase in the two-year staggered term. For example: choose one student the first year to serve a two-year term, then the following year choose the second student (who also would serve a two-year term). **[Responsibility: APPAM Nominating Committee and Executive Director (oversees governance issues].**

8. **Establish a collection strategy and reporting protocol to identify certain demographic characteristics and career information on student members by institution of study, the years they remain in the association, the reasons they participate in the Association's activities and the roles they assume within the association.**

   a. This information would provide an authoritative source for future activities aimed at assessing the state of student participation in the Association and the motivations that underlie this participation.
   [Responsibility: Executive Director].

9. **Establish an APPAM fellowship awarded annually to a to-be-determined number of Ph.D. students from diverse backgrounds to support membership in the Association and attendance at annual Association conferences.**

   a. A committee drawn from institutional reps, policy council members and past officers would select Ph.D. students to receive this financial support. The source of this support could be a grant received from a foundation, an endowment, or contributions from institutional members who offer Ph.D. programs. An analysis of the current budget of the Association could also be performed to find the resources to implement the fellowship. The fellowship could be for 1-2 years and fellowship awardees could be required to serve on the Association's Fall Conference program committee (or some other assignment determined by the President of the Association).
   [Responsibility: Membership committee (creation of fellowships), Executive Director (analysis of budget to identify areas where support could be sought] and Diversity Committee (to ensure diversity goals for APPAM were met).

10. **Recommend that one of the discussants for some of the panels within each policy area be a Ph.D. student.**
    [Responsibility: President-elect and Program Committee].

11. **Recommend that program committee members identify panels, roundtables, workshops, or poster sessions in which Ph.D. students might appropriately participate.**
    [Responsibility: President-elect and Program Committee].

12. **Develop an aggressive communications and enrollment program to increase graduate student participation in APPAM.**
    Note: The advantages of aggressively seeking student membership, especially among the Ph.D. and MPA/MPP students include:
    - Developing a long-term relationship with the Association early in their careers which will result in loyal memberships as careers progress
    - Receiving professional exposure among researchers and practitioners thus creating a community for the students as they enter their career
    - Offering insights into the research-publishing arena that could be helpful early in their academic/policy careers
      [Responsibility: Executive Director and Communications/Web Committee]

13. **Actively inform graduate students in institutions that hold institutional membership status of the availability of complementary one-year memberships to APPAM.**
    [Responsibility: Executive Director and Communications/Web Committee]

Other Issues

The outcome of the work to develop a strategic plan with goals, strategies and recommended actions has been represented in this report and in the accompanying memorandum which discusses strategic directions.

In the process of conducting its work on the strategic plan, the committee identified other areas that would be beneficial for APPAM to pursue. While not all of these are part of the official strategic planning report, the committee thought it important to bring these areas to the attention of the Policy Council and the general membership.

Collaborations with Other Organizations

One feature of the changing policy and research environment is the growth of other research organizations in various subfields of interest to APPAM members, including, for example, the Population Association of America, the Association for Education Finance and Policy, and the Public Management Research Association.

The growth of alternative public management organizations such as PMRA was a particular cause of concern given the "M" in the name of our organization and the sense that many of the younger researchers in the field of management are foregoing APPAM, and also JPAM, in favor of other organizations. The committee concluded that it would be neither possible nor desirable to compete in the sense of trying to attract members back to APPAM away from other organizations. Instead,

the preferred strategy would be to collaborate with a variety of other organizations in ways that would promote the strategic interests of APPAM.

APPAM currently has two "official" collaborators – the Public Policy and International Affairs (PPIA) program and the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA). The committee discussed the potential for fruitful affinities with other organizations such as AEFP, PAA, and PMRQ and also discussed the history of APPAM's current collaborations. The committee agreed that the APPAM executive director should not be making these collaborative decisions for APPAM unilaterally, and should consult with the Policy Council/Executive Committee regarding major collaborative initiatives. Such collaborations/arrangements should be regularly reviewed to determine if they still benefit APPAM. The general conclusion of the strategic planning committee was that affinities/collaborations are healthy and desirable, as long as they are flexible collaborations that are mutually beneficial to both organizations. APPAM leadership should undertake further explorations of these types of collaborations.

Ph.D. vs. Master's Students/Curriculum Building for Institutional Members

The strategic planning committee is aware that most of the students in APPAM member academic institutions are master's students, not Ph.D. students. Moreover, many of our non-academic institutional members hire primarily MPP students, not Ph.D. students. This fact raises the question of what services APPAM can and should provide to our institutional members related to their master's degree students (either MPP or MPA).

The committee discussed whether APPAM should create guiding principles for its institutional member schools to help with curriculum building that strengthens analysis and research. Some committee members thought that APPAM should not be involved in this kind of endeavor and others thought it important that APPAM play a role in helping schools give students the skills they need to compete in the "real" policy world and in promoting best practices.

Some strongly supported the idea of using the Spring Conference to discuss curriculum building, as it has been used occasionally in the past. Despite these differences among committee members, the committee did agree that APPAM should be providing an outlet for programs (and their leadership) to talk to one another and to potential employer groups.

Some committee members suggested that a working group made up of institutional representatives, policy board members, past officers, and graduate students be created to determine how APPAM can enhance the research and career interests of master degree students. The group could provide the Association with information about graduate students in a terminal Master's program, particularly the expectations they hold for participating in a research focused association and the relevance of the Association's activities to their work. Masters level students may be interested in learning how research affects policy deliberations and how practitioners and researchers relate. The institutional members and their representatives could be helpful in leading this effort.

Although there was no clear consensus on this point, it was clear that further explorations of this issue should continue in the future.

Operational Issues

Please note that proposed governance structure changes are recommended in a separate document and are designed to be supportive of the goals, strategies and recommendations contained in the strategic planning report. The discussion below outlines some the issues the committee identified as necessary to address if the implementation of the strategic plan is to be successful in making the necessary changes to move the Association forward.

Execution of the plan and changes to the current size, governance structure and staff structure should be addressed to ensure success of the plan. Moreover, the length of time of the strategic plan, the division of labor to execute the strategic plan and any budgetary changes will be addressed in this portion of the report.

1. **Growth**

During the course of the strategic planning process, the idea of growth was discussed several times. The committee determined that in order to achieve the strategies/goals above, growth was desirable, particularly regarding sessions at the Fall Conference. Further, the committee generally endorsed the idea of moderate growth, as long as it was growth with the purpose of achieving the objectives of the organization. Growing the Fall Conference, as many of the goals require, would likely grow APPAM membership, as the structure of registration for the Fall Conference makes it advantageous to become an APPAM member. For the purposes of focusing the growth discussion, the committee estimated that modest meant 20%. This was based on majority opinion of the strategic planning committee and was used solely for the purposes of discussing APPAM operations.   There was no assertion or suggestion of 20% growth as a goal.

There are current constraints on APPAM's ability to grow the Fall Conference due to long standing contracts with hotels until 2016 (as mentioned under Goal II, Strategy 4). In order to grow the conference by adding additional sessions, APPAM would need to secure additional hotel space and these additional hotel contracts would require additional financial commitments for APPAM.

Participation in pre-conference workshops would help increase participation at the Fall Conference and would introduce more people to APPAM as an organization.

The committee discussed growth in APPAM membership as a goal, particularly student and institutional membership. APPAM has not actively recruited membership from among these groups. The committee found that a lack of membership benefits---differentiating benefits apart from the Fall Conference activities-- was deemed an important challenge to increasing membership.

2. **Staff Structure**

APPAM has a staff of three – the Executive Director (handles all governance issues, oversees all meetings, site selection, APPAM's financial health, all marketing and promotion functions, execution of the strategic direction, etc.), the Program and Conference Coordinator (handles details of the Fall Conference, the Spring Conference and International Conferences, administration of the APPAM awards, updating of APPAM.org, member communications, etc.), and the Membership and Business Coordinator (handles all membership inquiries, member billing, invoicing, APPAM's bookkeeping functions, HR functions, office administration, etc.). All three staff people are fully engaged.

In analyzing the proposed goals/strategies of the plan, it is obvious that current activities will need to be substantially reduced or restructured and/or additional resources will be needed to service a growing membership and a growing Fall Conference. Estimating a 20% increase in the size of the

membership (increasing from 1,726 members to 2,071, statistics from 09012011 APPAM Membership Report) and in the size of the Fall Conference (increasing from 214 sessions to 257 sessions) indicates that one person servicing the membership and one person servicing the Fall Conference would seriously affect the quality of the services rendered.

Further, more advanced communication and organizational tools and increased attention to, and maintenance of, these systems will likely be necessary to achieve some of the strategies (e.g., Point/Counterpoint on the website, increased ability to organize panels for the Fall Conference, increased outreach to students, new collection strategies to identify students and their needs, creation of fellowships, etc.).

The committee recommends that the APPAM Executive Committee consider the possibility that successful implementation of the plan will require expanding APPAM staff. Enhancing APPAM's expertise in communications may be a priority. A new communications expert staff person might be needed to assume responsibility for member communications, create content for APPAM.org, make maintenance of APPAM.org a priority, perform outreach with groups APPAM wants to create/forge closer ties, and help manage the Fall Conference by acting as a new team member to help with logistics, etc.

There are, however, space and budget constraints associated with this recommendation. The current office space APPAM leases from NASPAA include 2 offices, one of which is shared by 2 employees and there is little flexibility in the budget for an additional staff person. In order to achieve the budgetary flexibility to hire an additional staff person, some budget offsets should be considered. Should a new staff person not be hired, APPAM needs to consider scaling back its growth recommendations to ensure that the current staff can keep up with the workload. Should scaling back on growth not be the preferred choice, APPAM Policy Council members should consider assuming some of the responsibilities of an increased workload resulting from adoption of the new strategic plan.

The committee recommends that upon adoption, APPAM staff and the Executive Committee work very closely together to determine roles, responsibilities, tasks and deadlines for execution and completion of the strategic plan. Both the Executive Committee and APPAM staff share responsibility for successful execution of the adopted strategic plan.

A more detailed discussion of the governance structure is contained in a separate document that accompanies this report.

3. Completion of the Plan/Oversight

In order for the strategic plan to be successful, APPAM's leadership must produce a clear plan that contains a timeline of when the plan will be implemented and a schedule for when the Policy Council will review the plan's progress and make any necessary adjustments.

The committee recommends that the strategic plan span four years. This means that all of the strategic goals outlined above would be accomplished by November 2015 (assuming the Policy Council votes for adoption of the plan in November 2011). Further, the committee recommends that the Executive Committee have the responsibility of overseeing the implementation of the plan, creating measures to evaluate the progress being made in implementing the recommendations, and formulating desired outcomes that would be generated by these recommendations. The committee

believes that is important that the leadership of APPAM undertakes a thorough review and analysis of the plan and makes recommendations to the Policy Council for its adjustment periodically.

Summary

The APPAM Executive Committee has been working since the fall of 2010 to create a long-run strategic vision for APPAM. In order to create this vision, the committee performed member research, conducted interviews with various stakeholders to determine feelings and attitudes about APPAM membership, services and programs and held in-person meetings to create a set of themes and objectives upon which APPAM should focus.

The strategic plan, if adopted, would guide APPAM's direction and focus for the next four years.

This plan is not meant to imply that the goals identified in the plan are the only goals for the organization. APPAM's mission statement is still the guiding principle for all the association's activities, "*APPAM is dedicated to improving public policy and management by fostering excellence in research, analysis, and education.*"

Appendix I: Letter to members of the strategic Planning Committee, October 18, 2010

Thank you for agreeing to serve on APPAM's Strategic Planning Committee. APPAM is undertaking a strategic planning process in an effort to establish long term goals for our organization and a strategy for how to best achieve them. Ultimately the Policy Council is responsible for setting APPAM strategy and goals, but to assist them in doing so, it is the charge of the Strategic Planning Committee to collect data, assess alternatives, and present them with recommendations. In this process, the committee will solicit the views of key stakeholders--including APPAM leaders, other APPAM members, and APPAM nonmembers—regarding the role of APPAM in the public policy community. Based on the information collected, the Strategic Planning Committee will consider which strategic options can best serve the needs of APPAM stakeholders. The committee will consult with the Policy Council, Executive Committee, and APPAM's Institutional Representatives at key points in the process. Based on these discussions, you will generate, draft and make final recommendations for a course of action, which you will submit to the Policy Council for its review and approval.

Your service on this committee will commence with a conference call on Monday, October 18th and will likely conclude at the Fall Conference in 2011. While the number of in person meetings the Strategic Planning Committee will require is undetermined at this point, APPAM will cover any costs associated with your attendance at these meetings.

Thank you in advance for your participation on this important committee. Your committee's work will establish a strong foundation for APPAM's further success.

Regards,

Rich Burkhauser
APPAM President

Appendix II: Summary results of telephone interviews, March 4, 2011

A. Points of Substantial Agreement

1.   APPAM activities

Respondents generally voice appreciation for APPAM as a professional organization. There is strong support for a continued focus on the fall conference and JPAM as the primary activities--most respondents feel both activities function well. Few respondents support expanding to new journals or new conferences. When asked about the spring conference, respondents feel they do not know much about it or that is less useful than other APPAM activities.

Several respondents feet that APPAM's role in job placement could be expanded, although newer members mentioned that APPAM was already a significant factor in helping them find a job.

Some respondents feel there should be more focus on assisting professors in effective instruction of policy students and on ways in which policy schools can improve. It's worth noting that some of the same respondents feel the spring conference is not useful in its current form.

> Contributed ideas/strategies:

- Special issue of JPAM focused on methods

- Shift the spring conference to being every other year (or even less frequent), with specific themes for each event

- In the fall conference, rely less on panel proposals to determine the content of the conference

- More JPAM articles on methods, pedagogy, and management

- Generate greater use of website

- On-line journal

2.   Interaction of policy makers, practitioners and scholars

Although several respondents feel that APPAM does an adequate job of supporting interaction among these groups, nearly all respondents would like to see greater involvement of practitioners and policy makers in APPAM activities, particularly in the fall conference. There appears to be greater involvement of these folks in some topic areas (although sometimes respondents apply the term "practitioner" or "policymaker" to anyone from a federal agency). A few people mentioned specifically that they would like to see more state and local practitioners and policy makers involved. Having the fall

conference in DC helps maintain some involvement of federal practitioners and policy makers, so this is an important feature of the conference. Some worried about the practicality of getting true policy maker involvement, given time demands, etc. Several asserted that getting more involvement of practitioners and policy makers would require a significant commitment to engage them more fully.

Contributed ideas/strategies:

- More roundtables at fall conference with practitioners and policy makers

- Attract participants by having conferences in nice locations

- More targeted invitations to key people for speaking roles

- Have sessions focused on the "demand side" needs or perspectives

- Expand roles for non-researcher beyond the discussant role

3. Topic areas

There is broad agreement that APPAM's core strengths are in poverty and social welfare, education, and methods (some also mention policy management as a core strength, but see later section regarding disagreement on this point). A few respondents worry that the organization has gotten stuck a bit in the social policy arena, failing to keep up with new policy trends. There is fairly broad agreement that APPAM would benefit from building up some underdeveloped areas. Topic areas most often cited for expansion were health and energy/environment. Other topics mentioned included disability, public management, international (such as cross-national comparative work) or development, retirement/pensions, criminal justice, technology, and state and local policy.

Some respondents mentioned guiding principles to use in deciding which areas might play to our existing strengths:

- Those where the rigorous social science analysis that APPAM folks already do can be effectively applied

- Those that are most closely related to APPAM's current areas of strength.

- Areas where the big questions are yet to be resolved (education as a current example)

Contributed ideas/strategies:

- Cultivate key researchers in areas as advisors to APPAM

- Annual plenary session with a comparative focus

4.   Growth/size

Most respondents think that the degree to which APPAM grows should be driven by other strategic decisions or objectives. Few if any respondents express support for dramatic growth in APPAM, but most see modest growth on the current margin as necessary and desirable, particularly as it facilitates expansion of underdeveloped topic areas or expands participation of practitioners or policy makers. At the same time, many respondents express appreciation for the modest size of the fall conference—they contrast it with some of the larger association conferences, which they criticize for dilution of quality and lack of intimacy. Other respondents assert that a larger conference is needed to accommodate new offerings and disciplines. The body of responses suggests that we need to weigh carefully the degree to which we can develop new offerings/disciplines against the current appreciation for the modest size of the fall conference.

B. Points on which there was not clear agreement

5.   Global focus

On this point, there is a fair amount of disagreement among respondents. On the positive end, several respondents feel that APPAM should welcome international researchers as participants in APPAM activities--the fall conference should include panels to encourage international participation and there should be more global content in JPAM. A number of folks describe becoming a global organization as an important, natural or inevitable progression, offering promise for APPAM if we can do it well. A few express support for the current joint international conferences as a useful experiment, in which we can learn about what it means for   APPAM to become more global. Some folks also feel that cross-national comparative research should be a larger part of the APPAM's portfolio. The primary benefits that are cited include: (1) expanded APPAM membership base and participation, (2) increased knowledge about programs and problems in other nations, (3) exposure to a wider set of policy tools, and (4) improved policy analysis across the world.

Few if any respondents strongly oppose a more global focus, but many lack enthusiasm or worry about the feasibility. Some of these respondents are unclear about what we expect to gain from a more global focus or even state a preference for keeping the association focused primarily on domestic policy. Several feel that it might be hard to build attendance of international researchers at the fall conference without a substantially changed and expanded agenda (for example, one respondent stated the current conference is too US-focused to attract Canadian policy scholars; another former institutional rep from Europe asserted that APPAM is too American-centric.). It may also be hard to build in this area because there are other established organizations. Others are concerned about whether a move in this direction might stretch APPAM too thinly, leading to fragmentation of the APPAM community, or distracting APPAM from other, more important, strategic initiatives.

Contributed ideas/strategies:

- Focus recruitment on foreign institutions, such as international policy schools

- Provide financial incentives

6.   Methods

Perspectives differ regarding the role of methods in APPAM, and responses suggest this is an area of controversy for the organization. Some respondents highlight an emphasis on rigorous quantitative methods in the research that dominates much of APPAM as a key strength of the organization. Other respondents feel that an increased focus in APPAM on microeconomics and on methods to identify causal relationships has caused APPAM to become too narrow and that we should actively encourage a broader range of methods to maintain fields in which accepted methods are more diverse. Methods mentioned as getting shortchanged currently include qualitative studies, implementation studies, benefit-cost analyses, and political analysis.

A couple of respondents cite this as **the** critical issue affecting the association's ability to attract and retain members. According to these and other respondents, the path to success for APPAM on this front is to create more collaboration across disciplines.

7.   Risk of losing public management or education

Some respondents mention public management as a strength of the organization, while others express concern that we are losing (or have lost) our public management strength, as folks in this area are tending to drift away from APPAM to other venues (such as the Public Management Research Association). A similar worry is expressed about education, as several competing associations (such as the Association for Education Finance and Policy) offer alternatives to APPAM as a venue for education analysis. Several respondents think we might need to take steps to retain these two areas as strengths. For several respondents, concerns about the loss of public management are linked to concerns about an increased focus on microeconomic methods in the fall conference and JPAM.

Appendix II: Summary results of online member survey, March 4, 2011

APPAM Strategic Planning Membership Survey Report

As part of its strategic planning efforts, APPAM surveyed its members in early 2011. The survey asked for feedback on the spring and fall APPAM conferences, member attendance and participation, and prompted members for feedback regarding APPAM's future directions with respect to the conference, publications, and other activities. The survey was sent via email to the entire membership of 2,212 people, of whom 914 (41%) took the survey.

Membership profile
- Of those responding to the survey, over a fourth (26.8%) have been members of APPAM for less than one year. The majority of respondents (61.8%) have been members for less than five years while 24.9% have been members for longer than ten years.
- 58.6% of respondents are employed by a university or college while 10.9% are employed by the government, 17.3% work for a non-academic research organization, and 13.3% are currently students.
- Nearly half (45.6%) of respondents have their primary training in public policy, 25.2% are trained in economics, and 10.0% in political science.
- The respondents' areas of expertise vary widely. Allowed to choose only one answer, the greatest proportion selected Education (16.5%), Social and Family Policy (11.0%), Public and Non-profit Management (10.9%), and Health (8.5%).

Conference Attendance and Participation
- While the majority (74.4%) had attended the APPAM Fall Research Conference, 79.5% had never attended the spring conference and only 57 survey respondents had attended the spring conference more than once or twice.
- For most survey responses (60.5%), participation in a presentation or poster session was listed as a "very important" reason to attend the Fall Research conference.
- Meanwhile, interest in the conference theme, the ability to network, the opportunity to learn about the latest trends in policy research, and the conference location all factored as "very important" or "important" for more than half of survey respondents.
- 82.6% of respondents that had attended the Fall Research Conference indicated that they were "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with their experience. A similar proportion answered "satisfied" or "very satisfied" as to their opportunity to present or participate in the conference.
- However, relative to those that consider it their primary professional organization, respondents who do not consider APPAM their primary professional organization were more likely to be only "somewhat satisfied" (13.9% compared to 7.3%), and less likely be "very satisfied" with their experience at the Fall Research Conference (21.1% vs. 31.3%).

APPAM Participation
- 45.6% of respondents consider APPAM their primary professional association.
- Nearly two-thirds (63.4%) of respondents indicated that they had served as a paper presenter, discussant, or chair of a conference session and 19.5% had participated in job interviews at a conference.
- Members expressed the greatest interest in improvements in APPAM in "The Opportunity to network with members during the year (not limited to Fall and Spring Conferences" (32.8% indicating only "somewhat satisfied" or "not at all satisfied"; 52.4% if NA are excluded). A similar proportion expressed dissatisfaction in APPAM's ability to provide access opportunities to the policymaking community.

JPAM
- 17.3% of respondents have authored a JPAM paper and 4.4% have served in an editorial position for JPAM.
- Among members that have been involved in APPAM for five years or less, the rate of paper authorship is 5% while for those with memberships of six years or more, the rate is 33.8%.
- Members who identify APPAM as their primary professional organization have a higher rate of JPAM authorship, 20.6% relative to 13.5% of members for whom it is not their primary professional organization.
- Nearly 72% of those not replying "N/A," indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with JPAM.

Priority Areas
- Most members identify maintaining APPAM's current strengths as a top priority with 36.9% advocating "[continuing] to promote "best practices in the research, analysis and management of public policy at the most important priority area while 25.2% chose "[Making] APPAM the authoritative source of research and analysis for leaders in the policy making arena."
- Meanwhile, fully 45.6% of respondents ranked having APPAM "Become a more global organization" as the least important priority area while 42.6% ranked "Expand[ing] into new or undeveloped policy areas" as either the least or second least important priority.

Future Directions
- The consensus among respondents for future directions is to maintain APPAM's current focuses while conservatively building its membership and participation demographics. It appears that there is strong agreement that increased participation among public policy researchers, practitioners, and policy makers outside of academia would be a positive addition with between 85.9 and 94.7% either strongly agreeing or agreeing with statements to that effect.
- A majority also considered increasing the participation of public policy graduate students an important direction to consider alongside an increased emphasis for APPAM in serving as a clearinghouse for the hiring of public policy researchers and practitioners.

- Reactions are mixed to the possibility of increasing APPAM's international focus. While 74.9% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that APPAM should continue to sponsor international conferences regularly, and two-thirds (66.6%) of respondents thought that increasing the number of participants from outside the United States during the Fall Research Conference would be a positive, nearly half disagreed that APPAM should expand its international focus and 59.4% disapproved of APPAM investing in research conferences outside the U.S.