

Central Florida Chapter



Strategic Plan

2007-2011

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Central Florida Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration has undertaken the strategic planning process in an effort to optimize organizational effectiveness and further develop methods of accountability for board members and programs. Creating public value and establishing a premier organization for public administrators across the Central Florida region is of key importance for the members of this organization, and the commitment to a strategic plan will help engage this vision of the future.

An analysis of mandates of the organization, both formal mandates like federal laws regarding non-profit operation and national organization by-laws and codes and informal mandates that involve the establishment of relevant and interesting programs and facilitating knowledge exchange was initiated and key findings are detailed. A stakeholder analysis along with an evaluation of the mission to “advance excellence in public administration” was undertaken to include more specific values of the Chapter and to increase stakeholder commitment to organization values.

As the Central Florida region is currently experiencing unprecedented population growth, the need for public services has increased while the satisfaction with those services decreases. Recent measures regarding property tax reform in the state restrict public funding, and affect public service professionals in a number of ways. In order for the Central Florida Chapter of ASPA to be successful, it must address these environmental factors in a meaningful way. An assessment of organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats was undertaken in order to identify critical issues for the organization. The following were determined as critical issues facing the Chapter:

- **How can the organization maintain and increase active membership?** The organization must have adequate membership in order to remain active Chapter status, must have active members for success of programs and to increase discussions impacting the region. If there is not an active and increasing membership, the organization could lose its status as an active chapter.

Executive Summary

- **How can the organization establish a good reputation and increase visibility in the community?** Many people do not know what the organization is or does, and there are currently not sufficient communication tools at the national or chapter level to bring the organization into a positive light. If this issue is not addressed, membership will continue to suffer, the organization may face another long period of inactivity, and professional will lose a valuable opportunity for networking if the organization does not establish itself visibly and by reputation.
- **How can the organization increase funding?** Inadequate resources have been linked to low turnout for conferences or meetings; if membership increases, funding for organizational functioning must also increase. If funding issues are not addressed, the organization may not be able to meet any of its other goals of greater membership and visibility. Without adequate financial resources, the organization may not be able to function for long-term success.

Evaluation mechanisms and an implementation plan have been developed to help steer organizational effectiveness towards its vision of becoming a premier organization in the field of public service, and outcomes and target dates for completion of action plans are outlined in the concluding sections of this plan.

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INTRODUCTION

The American Society for Public Administrators (ASPA) is an unincorporated association founded in 1939 and exists under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code to advocate greater effectiveness in government. The Central Florida Chapter of ASPA was founded in 1978 to offer networking and educational opportunities for public service professionals in the Central Florida region. The chapter encompasses the entire Central Florida region, including six counties: Orange, Osceola, Brevard, Seminole, Volusia and Lake. In addition to the geographic area covered, The University of Central Florida currently acts as an affiliate institution to assist the Central Florida Chapter.

Program meetings focused on current events in public administration are held for Chapter members on a monthly basis, and allow members the opportunity to become involved in the local public administration community and to enhance professional relationships. Annual Chapter meetings are held in May of each year to elect board members and to ratify Chapter By-Laws. In accordance with ASPA's Constitution, active chapters must at minimum elect a president, vice-president, and a secretary/treasurer to serve as board members and to create program plans for the organization. The Central Florida Chapter Board of Directors currently consists of the following positions: Chapter President, President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, Vice-President of Programs, Vice President of Outreach, and Vice-President of Student Affairs. The terms of office are designated by the Chapter By-Laws. The President-Elect serves a term of two years, one as President-Elect and another as Chapter President to provide sufficient succession planning within the organization. The Secretary and Treasurer also serve a Two-Year term, while all other Board Members serve a one-year term of office (See Figure 1).

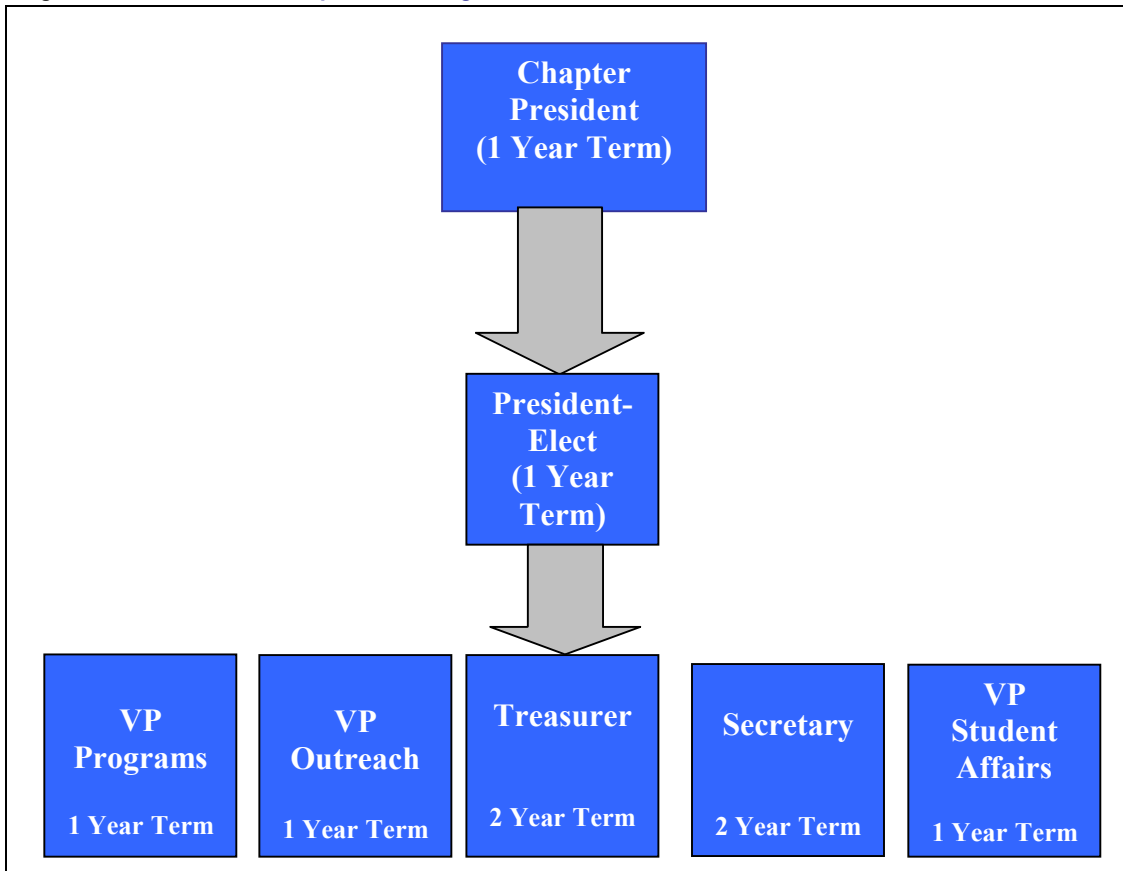
History

Although information on the early history of the organization is not known, a few general characteristics are known to have presented age-old challenges for the organization: its large geographic area, a lack of central location, and transient population. Shortly before the chapter's fall into inactivity in 2000, action was taken to address these challenges. As a result, the region of

Introduction

coverage was divided into two sections (North and South Central Florida). This action, however, had little effect on the organization as the Chapter fell into inactivity between 2000 and 2004.

Figure 1: Central Florida Chapter ASPA Organizational Chart



In February 2004, an organizational meeting was held to resume activity within the Chapter, and was done with support of a number of University of Central Florida faculty members. In May 2004, the first annual meeting was held and officers were elected for the 2004-2005 fiscal year.

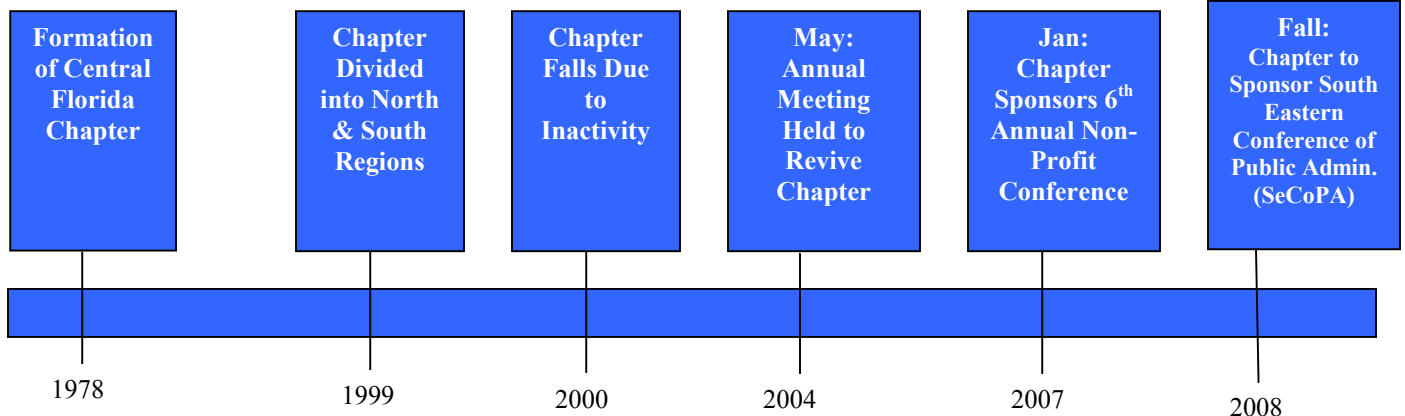
The 2004-2005 Fiscal Year saw a dramatic increase in activity within the chapter, offering five luncheons on special topics in Public Administration and developing the organization's long dormant financial status. At the same time, a burgeoning partnership with the University of Central Florida emerged through co-sponsored events.

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Building upon these successes, elected officers created program themes for the 2006-2007 Fiscal Year focusing upon enhancing professional development and increasing attendance and activity within the Chapter. Concurrently, the Chapter has become a sponsor for a number of important events in the area to increase its visibility in the area. In January 2007, the Chapter co-sponsored the 6th Annual Non-Profit Conference at the University of Central Florida. Currently, the Board of Directors is planning to sponsor the South Eastern Conference of Public Administrators that will take place in the fall of 2008.

The 2007-2008 Board of Directors were elected in May 2007, and are currently in the process of planning programs and events for the Chapter through May 2008. The Board of Directors has undertaken a strategic planning initiative in order to align current planning efforts with future organizational needs and to improve organizational effectiveness.

Figure 2: Time Line of Central Florida ASPA 1978-2008



FORMAL & INFORMAL MANDATES

Mandates inform an organization's responsibilities and determine its actions. **Formal Mandates** are formal rules that govern organizational functioning. **Informal Mandates** indicate specific pressures exerted upon an organization by its stakeholders. Taken together, mandates lay the foundation for the organizational mission and inform performance indicators for the strategic planning process. The identification of mandates, along with a subsequent stakeholder analysis will determine and guide the organizational mission.

Formal Mandates

The formal mandates of the Central Florida Chapter of Public Administration consist of federal law that defines the organization as a non-profit organization, the national ASPA By-laws and Code of Ethics, and the Central Florida Chapter By-Laws. A summation of the dictates of these formal mandates is provided below:

IRS Code Section 501c (3)

- Defines organization as non-profit, for professional & educational purposes
- Identifies chapters as subunits of ASPA and Group Exemption Status
- Allows tax deductions to benefactors for donations to ASPA
- Prohibits participation or intervention in political campaigns
- Holds ASPA liable for all debts incurred

ASPA Constitution/By-Laws

- Defines requirements for forming and maintaining active chapter status
- Determines Membership Guidelines, Officer Requirements, Tax Exemption Rules
- Requires Executive Director to sign off on any contracts issued on behalf of a chapter organization
- Requires annual meetings to elect officers, and the submission of annual financial reports

ASPA Code of Ethics

- Defines what is meant by serving the public interest
- Defines respectful behavior towards rules and laws
- Defines characteristics of personal integrity to promote public trust
- Outlines commitment to promoting ethical organizations to the public
- Defines commitment to professional excellence

Central Florida Chapter ASPA By-Laws, cont'd.

- Determines purposes of Chapter
- Allows for and determines policy regarding Chapter rights to take positions on matters of public policy
- Describes Chapter membership criteria
- Defines geographic boundary covered by Chapter
- Outlines Officer and Governing Body organization, election rules, and terms of office
- Describes rules regarding times, notice to members, and reporting of finances at Chapter meetings
- Outlines procedure for making amendments to Chapter By-Laws
- Determines Fiscal Year deadlines for Chapter

Informal Mandates

Informal mandates are less-defined functions of the organization, but functions that are expected from the organization as a result of past performance or regular organizational operations. The Central Florida Chapter of ASPA informal mandates are:

- Development of Chapter Program Plans
- Promote the exchange of knowledge on issues facing public administration
- Address important public issues relevant to the central Florida region
- Promote Attendance and increase membership and retention
- Find good professional speakers to draw attendance to monthly meetings
- Create greater professional network for people in the Public Administration field
- Addressing member interests in program development
- Create value for public professionals in their careers and endeavors

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

A **stakeholder analysis** is conducted in order to identify key groups that are concerned with the organization's successful functioning. By identifying stakeholders and determining the criteria by which these groups define organizational effectiveness, the strategic planning process can assess how well the organization currently addresses the needs of its constituency and determine feasible and organized solutions to further address these needs.

Internal stakeholders are groups within an organization, while **external stakeholders** are groups outside the organization who may be affected by the function of the organization.

Four major internal stakeholder groups and three major external stakeholder groups were identified as exerting pressure upon the Central Florida Chapter of ASPA. A list and explanation of the significance of each stakeholder groups is provided below. In addition, a chart is included to outline the criteria upon which organizational performance is judged by each of these groups (See Table 1).

Internal Stakeholders

ASPA National Council

The ASPA National Council acts as an oversight body to the national organization and develops policies and procedures for local chapters to utilize. In order for the chapter to continue to receive funds from ASPA, membership levels must remain above forty, financial reports from the chapter must be submitted annually, by-laws must be approved by chapter members, and the chapter must host at least three events annually.

ASPA Board of Directors

The Chapter's Board of Directors is currently comprised of eight members, who are responsible for conducting regular meetings, developing programs and strategies to increase membership levels, attendance at functions, and promote activity within the chapter. The Board is voted in at the annual Chapter meeting held in May of each year, for a term of one or two years depending upon position. The primary responsibility for maintaining activity within the chapter and coordinating with the national organization is given to this Board, and the survival of the Chapter is dependent on their continued activity.

Stakeholder Analysis

University of Central Florida/Department of Public Administration

The University acts as an affiliate to the Central Florida Chapter of ASPA, and its University Chapter was merged with the Central Florida Chapter two years ago. Coordination between the University and the Chapter creates a dialogue between academic professional in public administration and in field professionals to address issues of local and national importance. Successful coordination creates positive exposure for the University and assists in expanding its Alumni community. Because University members are currently the most active voice in Chapter functioning, University support remains essential for the survival of the organization as an active Chapter.

Current ASPA Members

Membership for the Chapter is currently listed at 102 members. In order to provide value for these members, the Chapter must offer attractive networking opportunities and professional development opportunities. Engaging programs and events are essential to draw members to Chapter events, and determine the vitality of the Chapter.

External Stakeholders

Public Service Professionals (Non-Members)

Public service professionals consist of government, profit and non-profit agencies, and are a potential future source of membership for the Chapter. If these groups see the Chapter as a professional and networking resource, they offer increased attendance and an expansion in public relations for the future of the organization's survival.

Students

Students are another future resource for the organization. They have a vested interest in organizations that provide mentoring, networking and job placement opportunities. These stakeholders need organizations that enhance their educational experience and offer guidance for career moves. Although the organization's survival is not dependent upon students, the Chapter's association with the University of Central Florida makes this group an important stakeholder.

Community

One of the goals of ASPA is to promote excellence in public service, and communities establish the perception of the citizenry in the job public service professionals are performing. These stakeholders are therefore key in meeting the organization's mission. Although community involvement is not essential for survival, it directly impacts the vitality of the organization and the desirability of the organization as a professional tool. The visibility of the organization in communities assists in creating support and membership for the Chapter.

Stakeholder Analysis

Table 1: Central Florida ASPA Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholder Group	Stakeholder Type	Performance Evaluation Criteria
ASPA National Council	<i>Internal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pressures chapter to function in accordance with national rules - Membership Levels - Financial Reports - By-Laws - Annual Meetings & set number of monthly meetings
Chapter Board of Directors	<i>Internal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attendance at events - Ability to raise money - Development of Programs for Members - Increase in Membership - Active participation by membership
University of Central Florida	<i>Internal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating Positive Perception & exposure for the university - Interaction between academic community and public administration professionals - Increase Alumni attractiveness for graduates of the University
ASPA Chapter Members	<i>Internal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Professional Networking Opportunities - Fun Events - Whether professional community is engaged in organization
Other Public Service Professionals (Non-Members)	<i>External</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating public value through community engagement - Professional Resource
Public Administration Students	<i>External</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mentoring - Networking opportunities - Active engagement - Whether it creates job opportunity
Community/Citizens	<i>External</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visibility - Addresses social needs in an underutilized way

MISSION STATEMENT

The **mission statement** is a clear summation of an organization's purpose and governing values. It is used both to inspire internal organizational effectiveness and to inform the public of the general purpose and character of the organization. The mission should provide a glimpse of the organization's philosophy, core values and responsibilities and is key to clarifying strategic plans for an organization.

The Central Florida Chapter of ASPA had not adopted a specific mission statement prior to this strategic planning effort, and had provisionally adopted the national organization's general mission "to advance excellence in public administration". Through the analysis of formal and informal mandates and the identification of stakeholder concerns, the mission statement was revised to include a more specific and meaningful statement of purpose. The revised mission of the Central Florida Chapter of ASPA is:

"To advance excellence in public administration in the Central Florida region through informed programs and events that supports a knowledgeable exchange of ideas between professionals, academics, and the public."

This revised mission statement concisely encapsulates the philosophy and core values of the organization to facilitate the exchange of knowledge, stimulate more extensive discussion and to foster continuous issues facing public administration professionals. Stakeholders place expectations upon the Chapter to create programs that increase activity, promote visibility, and provide professional networking opportunities for members. The revised mission statement reflects these combined concerns into a succinct statement of purpose for the organization and the public.

TRENDS AND EVENTS

Examining the external environment provides an organization with the knowledge to face present and future challenges in an anticipatory manner. External forces may be political, economic, social, and technological in nature, and provide valuable insight into the relationship between an organization and the external environment. **Trends and events** assist in identifying strategic issues facing the organization, and are essential to the future success of an organization.

Global Trends

Politically, public confidence in government has continued to decline over the years as an increase in the need for services has emerged. Moves towards privatization in governmental activities has blurred the line between public, non-profit and private sectors and governmental reforms have reframed the way in which organizations serve the public. This trend encourages serving the public as customers while encouraging performance measures through the use of incentives and flexibility within organizations.

Economically, the recession limits resource available to organizations, and creates tension with the growing needs of the population. The downsizing of government has increasingly shifted the financial responsibility onto states and local governments to fund projects. These trends have led to “pay as you go” initiatives in the public sector and an increasing demand for financial assistance from non-profits and the private sector. In such an environment, a high level of competition has emerged for scarce funding resources.

The aging population is a major trend in the changing social demographics of society. As the “baby-boom” generation retires, challenges arise in meeting the changing needs of public services and in the demand for skilled workers to replace retirees in government. The need for succession planning and redefining governmental functions will continue to present challenges for public administration professionals in the future.

Trends and Events

Finally, the rise of the Internet has changed the way in which organizations communicate with their environments. Technological communication tools provide increased connectivity and accessibility to organizational resources, and in many instances provide an additional opportunity for the creation of feedback mechanisms that increase dialogue within an organization. The dynamic character of these technological communication tools allows for greater adaptation by the organization to the environment.

Local Trends

Statewide, there has been a growing political pressure exerted upon politicians for property tax reform in recent years. This translates to additional constraints in resources available to public administration agencies. This issue will impact public sector jobs, public service functions, and perceptions of public administration around the state. I

The lack of a state income tax in the state of Florida means that revenue for important government services must come from other sources. The current issues with property tax reform affect the employment of public administrators and on government services as whole. Pay-as-you-go programs across the state exert challenges on public administration to meet increasing demands for services and to compete for scarce resources. These economic crises foster negative perceptions on public administration.

Furthermore, growth trends in the area indicate a social environment of both rapidly growing and transient populations. According to reports from MyRegion.org, the population of Central Florida is expected increase by over 136% between the years 2000 and 2050¹. This will present dramatic changes in social make-up, the need for public services, and the perception of public administration in the region. The growing and diverse population of the region also creates a number of pressures to provide more social services, education and infrastructure. Because the region contains a large aging population, the pressure for social services for this demographic is on changes will tantamount in determining quality of life for citizens in the region.

¹ MyRegion.org (2006). *Central Florida's Quality of Life: Demographics and Social Services White Paper*. Retrieved on June 19, 2007 from <http://www.myregion.org/Portals/0/Publications/mrdss%20White%20Paper.pdf>

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS (SWOT) ANALYSIS

In order to identify strategic issues facing an organization, an analysis of internal **strengths and weaknesses** and external **threats and opportunities** is needed. Internal strengths and weaknesses involve human, financial, and organizational factors. These factors include the Board of Directors, membership, an assessment of the budget and funding resources, along with issues concerning internal communication mechanisms. Threats and opportunities are determined by political, economic, social and technological changes in the external environment. Combined, these assessments are key to an organization's survival, and synthesize organizational issues across internal and external boundaries in a strategic manner.

The Central Florida Chapter of ASPA Board of Directors met on June 19, 2007 and a SWOT analysis was conducted through a brainstorming session to identify key internal external factors facing the Chapter. Discussion ensued regarding human, financial, and internal organizational strengths and weaknesses. Further brainstorming efforts revealed important external threats and challenges facing the Central Florida ASPA Chapter, and coincide with trends and events outlined in the previous section of this plan. These strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were later categorized into groups to add clarity to the identification process, and were issued to the Board of Directors for approval and input regarding the identification of strategic issues.

Strengths

Board Members: The current Board of Directors meets on a monthly basis to plan organizational programs and strategies to make the Chapter successful and has high attendance at these meetings. This group is knowledgeable and has experience in public administration, and all members are well connected in the Central Florida community through participation on other organizations, boards and committees as well as this Chapter of ASPA.

Chapter Members: Chapter members come from a diverse professional background and include public administrators at early, mid, and late stages in career development.

SWOT Analysis

Programs: Over the last few years, board planning and the ability to identify and secure knowledgeable guest speakers has resulted in an increase in lectures on topics of local and national interest at member meetings.

Diversity: The diversity of professional interests and activities in public administration is great, and allows the organization to act as a hub for the larger community to voice concerns and take action.

Weaknesses

Board Members: The board members are currently a homogenous group of educated females and are also balancing commitments to the Chapter with commitments to other organizations in which they participate.

Member Support: Although a number of initiatives have been undertaken over the last year to increase attendance and participation at Chapter meetings, there remains continued low turnout for meetings.

Definition of Public Administration: It is difficult to define what Public Administration is because its scope is large and societal need for Public Administration changes over time. Marketing for name recognition is harder as a result of this particular trait.

Financial: Although the Chapter is fiscally responsible with its funding from the national organization, it currently does not support sponsorship efforts to subsidize student and smaller municipal attendance to costly conferences or events or offer scholarships to increase participation and strengthen the reputation of the Chapter.

Communication Tools: Currently, the Chapter does not have a newsletter or website to attract members and portray the Chapter as an organization to join.

Stagnant Membership: Membership is currently at 102 members, and has slightly decreased over the last year.

Outreach Efforts: A criticism of previous outreach efforts is that it focused efforts on targeting people who were already connected.

Threats

Reputation: Many ASPA members have been disappointed in the national conferences as of late, and this perception carries over into a negative perception of the Chapter and a reluctance to participate. In particular, it was noted that the national conferences are very insulated in leadership, and did not engage attendees.

Negative Perception of Public Administration and Government: As the need for public services has increased, public perception of government and public service organizations has declined. This factor acts as a hindrance to community support for organizations like ASPA.

SWOT Analysis

Competition from other Organizations: The board members identified the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) as a competitor for funding and support.

Lack of Visibility: Many people do not know what the organization is or what it does. This impacts membership and participation in the organization as a whole. The national website is also cumbersome, difficult to navigate, and portrays our Chapter as one that is inactive (e.g. there is no information concerning the Chapter on the national website).

Chapter History: The Chapter has only recently recovered from a long period of inactivity. This history acts as a threat to participation from members who may feel that the organization's activities will not be a long-term benefit to their professional development or to community endeavors.

Funding Sources: It is more and more difficult to gain adequate funding with the growing need for donations from a number of non-profits and decreasing budgets in government organizations. Although groups may want to help with funding efforts, they may not have those resources in the organization.

Opportunities

Partnerships: There is an opportunity to partner with ICMA, UCF, and other like-minded organizations to gain community consensus.

Networking: Creating network for public administration professionals to interact with one another, allow an environment for the exchange of ideas and to showcase best practices

Retention: To combat negative word of mouth from national convention attendees and to increase support for the Chapter, outreach efforts to retain current members may be undertaken

Fundraising: Developing fundraising efforts may assist in the fiscal viability of the Chapter in developing and retaining membership and outreach efforts that promote visibility for the Chapter.

Becoming a "Premier" Organization: The growing population and need for public services provides an opportunity for the Chapter to become a "Premier" Public Organization. There is an opportunity for the organization to bring together a diverse group of public service professionals and groups to set standards and accountability for issues affecting the Central Florida community.

THREATS, OPPORTUNITIES, WEAKNESSES, STRENGTHS (TOWS) MATRIX

The SWOT analysis is reconfigured into a **TOWS Matrix** of four quadrants in order to identify and prioritize the issues facing the organization. Issues regarding survival must always be addressed first, and subsequently issues regarding internal adjustments needed, external adjustments needed are addressed. Finally, organizational strengths and opportunities form a futures quadrant to be addressed. These quadrants assist in prioritizing organizational issues, and will aid in determining the top three critical issues to be addressed by the organization.

What became evident in this analysis are the overriding priorities in the areas of membership, reputation/visibility, and financial support. Maintaining and increasing membership arises as the most vital part of managing an active chapter, and the strategies developed to tackle this issue must take priority over all others. At various stages, tools must be utilized and strategies must be developed to increase the visibility of the organization and enhance reputation by members and the larger community. The organization is currently financially responsible with the annual funding it receives from the national organization, but if membership increases this may not be the case. As such, funding issues must be addressed alongside membership strategies in order to ensure that the organization can continue to effectively function.

An Emerging Vision

The core issues of membership, reputation/visibility, and financing are ongoing issues for the organization. As the organization meets the needs for survival, new visions for the organization emerge. In addressing internal issues, the organization will create better communication and networking tools to further increase its exposure and to reach untapped markets for community membership and input. Partnerships will also play a role in developing the organizational exposure and membership. Once established, these new organizational tools will allow the Chapter to become an organizational “hub” for the larger community, providing a voice for local and national concerns. The diversity of ASPA’s professional membership will aid in establishing a greater pool for idea generation and community initiatives. Funding will become an increasing need within the organization to meet the needs of its members and to act as an effective voice for community concerns in the Central Florida area. Continued support for these initiatives by board and Chapter

Threats, Opportunities, Weakness, Strengths (TOWS) Matrix

members, and greater exposure to the greater community will eventually help establish the Chapter as the “Premier” organization for public service.

Table 2: TOWS Matrix

Future Quadrant (Priority 4)	Internal Fix-It Quadrant (Priority 2)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dedicated Board Members ▪ Diversity of Membership ▪ Strong Programs ▪ Organizational “Hub” ▪ Partnerships with other area organizations ▪ Strong Recruitment and Retention Efforts ▪ Good Networking Opportunities ▪ Fundraising for Scholarships, sponsorships ▪ Obtain status as a “Premier” organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Homogenous Board Membership ▪ Low Attendance/Participation Difficulty in defining Public Administration ▪ Inadequate Funding for Subsidizing fees or creating scholarships to increase support ▪ Lack of Communication Tools (Website, Newsletter) ▪ Stagnant Membership ▪ Partnerships with other area organizations ▪ Expand Recruitment and Retention Efforts to untapped community members ▪ Networking Opportunities ▪ Fundraising for Scholarships, sponsorships ▪ Obtain status as a “Premier” organization to join
External Fix-It Quadrant (Priority 3)	Survival Quadrant! (Priority 1)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dedicated Board Members ▪ Diversity of Membership ▪ Strong Programs ▪ Organizational “Hub” ▪ Negative Reputation from National ASPA ▪ Negative Perception of Public Admin ▪ Competition from ICMA ▪ Lack of Visibility on National and Chapter Level ▪ Turbulent Chapter History ▪ Issues Gaining Donations/Funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Homogenous Board Membership ▪ Low Attendance/Participation from Members ▪ Difficulty in defining Public Administration ▪ Inadequate Funding for Subsidizing Fees or creating scholarships to increase support ▪ Lack of Communication Tools (Website, Newsletter) ▪ Stagnant Membership ▪ Outreach to untapped community members ▪ Negative Reputation from National ASPA ▪ Negative Perception of Public Admin ▪ Competition from ICMA ▪ Lack of Visibility on National and Chapter Level ▪ Turbulent Chapter History

CRITICAL ISSUES

Critical issues are fundamental questions of policy affecting an organization's ability to meet its mission, mandates, and values. These issues are identified through the analysis of organizational strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities. By identifying the top three strategic issues facing an organization, methods can be determined to meet these challenges and ensure organizational success.

The following critical issues were identified for the Central Florida Chapter of ASPA, and include explanations clarifying why it is important for the organization to address them and what will happen if they are not addressed:

- **How can the organization maintain and increase active membership?**

In order to meet the identified formal mandates and mission of the Chapter, active members that attend monthly meetings ensures the success of programs and increases discussions of regional concern.

Consequence if Not Addressed: If this issue is not addressed, organizational effectiveness is undermined by low attendance. Over time, this issue threatens the motivation within the organization to plan programs and the survival of the Chapter.

- **How can the organization establish a good reputation and increase visibility in the community?**

The external environment scan concluded that many people do not know what the organization is or does, and that there are currently insufficient marketing and outreach tools in place within the organization to address this need. This fact threatens the ability of the Chapter to meet its mission.

Consequence if Not Addressed: If this issue is not addresses, membership will continue to dwindle, the organization may face another long period of inactivity, and professionals will lose a valuable opportunity for networking if the organization does not establish itself. In addition, visibility may also affect the financial viability of an organization, and failure to address this will translate into missed opportunities for increasing Chapter funding.

- **How can the organization increase funding?**

The internal environment scan indicated that a shortage of funding affects the organization's ability to market the organization and events to the professional community, and this directly affects the ability to meet the Chapter's mission.

Consequence if Not Addressed: If funding issues are not addressed, the organization may not be able to meet any of its other goals of greater membership and visibility. In addition to affecting the ability to sponsor events and programs, without adequate financial resources the organization may not be able to function for long-term success.

ISSUES MANAGEMENT

Issues management involves the identification of goals, objective, strategies and indicators is necessary to provide an organization with a successful plan of action to address important issues facing the organization over the next several years. These goals, objectives, and strategies must be ethical, legal, technically workable, and politically acceptable. The overriding purpose to such an effort is to “effectively link the organization to its environment and create public value.”

(Bryson, Strategic Planning for Public and Non-Profit Organizations, 186)

Goals were identified by restating strategic questions into positive statements that reflect desired outcomes for the organization over the next few years. Objectives were developed for each goal to measure progress over time, and strategies for meeting the desired goals and objectives. Through the development of goals, objectives and strategies, and by linking the organization’s mission with external issues of concern, the organization will effectively anticipate and address present and future challenges to organizational success.

Issue 1: **How can the organization maintain and increase active membership?**

Goal 1: To recruit and retain members who are active in public service in the Central Florida region.

- **Objective 1:** Increase attendance at monthly meetings by 25 % over the next two years.
 - **Strategy 1:** The organization will research member interests and satisfaction with programs, and determine best times to hold monthly meetings.
 - **Indicator 1:** Draft of survey to be presented to Board of Directors by November 2007
 - **Indicator 2:** Survey to be sent out to members by January 2008
 - **Indicator 3:** Increase attendance at monthly meetings by 10 % by May 2008

Issues Management

- **Indicator 4:** Survey results provided to determine upcoming programs and events by April 2007
- **Indicator 5:** Increased attendance at monthly events by 15% by May 2009
- **Indicator 6:** Increased attendance at monthly events by 25% by May 2010

- **Strategy 2:** Match program types with member interests and send personal notes to target members that are most likely to attend monthly meetings based upon the program topic.
 - **Indicator 1:** Member composition matrix developed by March 2008
 - **Indicator 2:** At least 35% of targeted members will attend monthly meetings by May 2008

- **Objective 2:** Increase membership by 25% over the next two years.
 - **Strategy 1:** Plan a membership drive and enlist members to attract at least one additional member to join the Central Florida Chapter of ASPA.
 - **Indicator 1:** Membership Reward Program created December 2008
 - **Indicator 2:** Increase membership by 10% by October 2008
 - **Indicator 3:** Increase membership by 15% by October 2009
 - **Indicator 4:** Increase membership by + 5% by FY 2010-11

 - **Strategy 2:** Send out customized invitations to local government professionals inviting them to become a member of the Chapter.
 - **Indicator 1:** Invitations sent out by August 2008
 - **Indicator 2:** 15 % of targeted professional join the Chapter by May 2009

 - **Strategy 3:** Target influential members of the community that are not currently members of ASPA to join the organization.
 - **Indicator 1:** Targeted community members are identified and contacted by August 2008
 - **Indicator 2:** 15 % of targeted professional join the Chapter by May 2009

Issue 2: How can the organization establish a good reputation and increase visibility in the community?

Goal 1: To increase organizational visibility and create a positive reputation throughout the region and state.

- **Objective 1:** Develop an outreach program to increase awareness of Chapter activities and programs by May 2008.
 - **Strategy 1:** Create the Chapter website and link to the national organization's website to increase online accessibility and visibility.
 - **Indicator 1:** Active website accessible to members by September 2007
 - **Indicator 2:** Measure of hits to website to reach 500 by May 2008
 - **Indicator 3:** Determine best practices for technological outreach efforts by May 2010
 - **Strategy 2:** Develop a quarterly newsletter to raise awareness of organizationally sponsored events.
 - **Indicator 1:** Newsletter distributed quarterly to all members
 - **Indicator 2:** 10 % increase in attendance at Chapter events from date of first newsletter distribution by November 2008
 - **Strategy 3:** Place advertisements for Chapter events in PA Times and in the Orlando Sentinel to increase awareness of events.
 - **Indicator 1:** First quarterly advertisements of Chapter Events to be placed by September 2007
 - **Strategy 4:** Sponsor conferences to increased visibility of the organization and the region.
 - **Indicator 1:** Financial resources identified and fundraising needs assessed for hosting 2008 SeCoPA conference by October 2007
 - **Indicator 2:** Marketing Plan for SeCoPA efforts completed by March 2008
 - **Indicator 3:** Host SeCoPA conference in Orlando in Fall 2008

Issue 3: How can the organization increase funding to meet the demands of a growing organization?

Goal 1: To increase funding and/or expand funding sources available to the Chapter.

- **Objective 1:** Increase funding resources by 20% by 2009.
 - **Strategy 1:** Research banking information to ensure maximum management of current financial resources.
 - **Indicator 1:** Information related to banking fees paid out and comparative banking fees will be provided to the Board of Directors by October 2007
 - **Indicator 2:** If necessary, banking will be transferred to a more efficient bank or credit union
 - **Indicator 3:** A decrease in fees paid out to the banking institution will be noted by June 2008
 - **Strategy 2:** Enlist the assistance of the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP).
 - **Indicator 1:** AFP/ASPA Collaborative Meeting to take place by September 2007
 - **Indicator 2:** 10 % increase in funding by May 2008
 - **Indicator 3:** 20 % increase in funding by July 2009
 - **Strategy 3:** Hold fundraising events to accumulate funds for specific projects, like scholarships or essay contests. (This also helps with visibility)
 - **Indicator 1:** Fundraising committee established by January 2009
 - **Indicator 2:** Determination of event type(s) made by March 2009
 - **Indicator 3:** Event coordination meetings established By May 2009
 - **Indicator 4:** Fundraising Needs Analysis completed by September 2009
 - **Indicator 5:** Fundraising event(s) held no later than FY 2010

Issues Management

- **Strategy 4:** Partner with other local organizations (like ICMA) to co-sponsor events.
 - **Indicator 1:** Collaborative meetings held to determine potential co-sponsored events and finances required by September 2008
 - **Indicator 2:** Co-host an event with an organization affiliate by November 2008

EVALUATION

Evaluation provides accountability for stated goals, increases commitment to achieving those goals, and provides a continual method for analyzing the process and success of organizational goals and objectives. Evaluations should contain both formative and summative types. **Formative evaluations** are those that provide a continual evaluation of the implementation process and feedback on potential improvements of the process based on experience. **Summative evaluations** are those that assist in measuring the overall success rate in achieving the stated outcomes. Both types of evaluation are needed in order to ensure the success of the action plan.

Formative Evaluations

The Board of Directors meetings occur on the third Tuesday of each month, and provide an excellent opportunity for process evaluations of implementation plans. At each meeting, the Agenda will include a time for reviewing the progress of each category of objectives, and a quarterly report will detail the progress of these efforts. The Board of Directors will review these quarterly reports and make recommendations for changes to implementation processes on a quarterly basis. The sum of these quarterly reports will be used for the annual review of programs, and is included in the summative evaluation.

Summative Evaluations

An annual Chapter meeting occurs each May, and depending on the year and term of office, these meetings are used to elect board members. Board of Director meetings over the summer months determines programs and directions for the upcoming year. This fact makes the months of June-August an opportune time for summative evaluations. In June, the Board of Directors will meet for a prioritization of summative evaluations needed and determine responsibility for task completion at July and August meetings. At this time, the strategic plan should be analyzed and adjustments should be made as a result of experiential results. In addition, a number of annual reports will be put in place to assist in tracking the success of the

Evaluation

implementation plan and to provide effective succession planning efforts for Board Members. The required reports are detailed below:

Yearly Surveys/Program Evaluations: Yearly surveys will be distributed in April of each year to determine membership satisfaction with Chapter programs and key interests of members to assist in goal development for the upcoming year. At the July meeting, results should be analyzed against previous year results and discussion should be raised regarding both the results of the survey and changes to be made to the survey based on weaknesses in the data. Changes will be discussed and made annually in order to ensure the continual usefulness of the membership survey.

Outreach Efforts Report: The Board of Directors will evaluate the success of membership outreach efforts yearly, and ways to improve outreach efforts in the subsequent year will be determined. A yearly report will track outreach efforts over time, and best practices will emerge over time that detail good recruiting mechanisms. This benchmarking program will establish the organization as a leader in the community.

Communications Report: An annual report should detail the progress made in increasing the visibility and reputation of the organization, and recommendations should be included concerning improvements to be made to existing efforts and suggesting further efforts to be considered in the subsequent year. Over time, this process should be expanded to include best practices and benchmarking and will establish the organization as a premier source for communication in the region.

Financial Viability Report: In addition to financial forms sent to the national organization each year, a detailed Chapter-level report will be submitted annually. A summary will include efforts undertaken during the fiscal year to meet stated goals and improve the financial viability of the organization. This information should be general in content, and may be provided to Chapter members as part of the overall annual report issued to members. Subsequent sections should detail expenditure and outlays, specifically outlining most effective strategies undertaken that year to increase fiscal health. This report will be issued to the Board of Directors at the beginning of each fiscal year (June of each year) in order to understand current challenges and opportunities for the Chapter and to design goals that enhance fiscal performance.

ORGANIZATIONAL VISION OF THE FUTURE

A **vision** provides stakeholders with a valuable tool for continual focus and alignment of goals with the organizational mission by emphasizing the idealized future state of the organization given successful implementation of the strategic plan over the next three to five years. The vision statement also acts to inspire stakeholder dedication towards achieving the organizational mission and goals through the strategic planning process.

Central Florida Chapter of ASPA Vision Statement:

As the largest aggregation of public administration professionals in the area, the Central Florida Chapter of ASPA is the premier organization for the discussion and promulgation of important issues affecting the citizens of the Central Florida region. Our organizational goals and solid reputation provide public service professional and citizens with a dynamic, financially viable organization to stimulate extensive, knowledgeable discussion and to support excellence in the field of public administration.

This vision statement is supported by the organizational mission statement, reflects the values identified in the stakeholder analysis, and indicates dedication towards achieving essential goals for the organization's long-term success.

In five years, the Central Florida Chapter of ASPA will have sponsored a number of professional conferences to enhance its reputation as a vital force for public administration in the Central Florida area. These conferences, along with other fundraising efforts will improve the financial resources of the organization. Programs will continue to draw members to monthly Chapter meetings, and a strong membership advancing excellence will emerge through continued outreach and monitoring mechanisms that address member needs. Through dedication to strategic planning goals, the Central Florida Chapter of ASPA will become the premier organization for public administration in the region.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The purpose of an **implementation plan** is to transition the strategic planning efforts into strategic management and provide actions for the organization to undertake. By developing strategies, actions, responsibility and allotting resources to address critical strategic issues for the organization, the implementation plan legitimates the strategic plan and creates an anticipatory mechanism for achieving goals.

Issue 1: How can the organization maintain and increase active membership?

Goal 1: To recruit and retain members who are active in public service in the central Florida region.

Objective 1: Increase attendance at monthly meetings by 25 % over the next two years.

Implementation Plan

Strategies	Actions	Indicators	Person(s) Responsible	Resources Required	Date Due
<p>The organization will research member interest and satisfaction with program topics and determine best times to hold monthly meetings.</p>	<p>Develop and distribute first annual membership survey.</p>	<p>Draft of survey presented to Board</p> <p>Survey sent</p> <p>Increased attendance at monthly events by 10%</p>	<p>VP of Programs</p>	<p>List of Membership</p> <p>Paper/ Envelopes</p> <p>Time</p>	<p>Nov. 2007</p> <p>Jan 2008</p> <p>May 2008</p>
	<p>Collect survey results</p>	<p>Survey results will be provided to determine upcoming program topics and times.</p> <p>Increased attendance at monthly events by 15%</p> <p>Increased Attendance at monthly meetings by 25%</p>	<p>VP of Programs</p>	<p>Time</p> <p>Volunteers to rank survey result</p> <p>Person to analyze results and provide summary</p> <p>Paper</p>	<p>April 2007</p> <p>April 2009</p>
<p>Match program types with member interests and send personal notes to target members that are most likely to attend monthly meetings.</p>	<p>Develop matrix of categories for program types and membership composition</p> <p>Choose members to target from each composite listing/program type</p> <p>Develop/ Distr. personal notes and follow up with selected members to request attendance.</p>	<p>Membership Composition Matrix developed for organization.</p> <p>At least 35% attendance rate for targeted members</p>	<p>VP of Programs</p> <p>and</p> <p>VP of Student Affairs</p>	<p>Paper, other Office supplies</p> <p>List of target group</p> <p>Volunteers to make phone calls</p>	<p>March 2008</p> <p>May 2008</p>

Implementation Plan

Issue 1: How can the organization maintain and increase active membership?

Goal 1: To recruit and retain members who are active in public service in the central Florida region.

Objective 2: Increase membership by 25% over the next two years.

Strategies	Actions	Indicators	Person(s) Responsible	Resources Required	Date Due
Plan a membership drive and enlist members to attract at least one additional member to join the Central Florida Chapter of ASPA.	Develop a membership rewards program as an incentive to join program.	Membership rewards program created.	VP Outreach	Time	December 2008
	Create membership referral system to track membership recruiting efforts	Increase membership by 10 %.		Membership Reward Program	October 2008
		Increase membership by 15%.		Mail-Outs/ Emails	October 2009
		Yearly increase of 5% in membership			October 2010-11
Send out customized invitations to local government professionals inviting them to become a member of the Chapter.	List is developed of target organization members and compared against current membership list for targets.	Invitations sent out	VP Outreach	Paper/ Envelopes	First Invitations Sent Out August 2008
	Compare statewide/national member list against Chapter membership list for recruiting opportunities.	At least 15% of targeted professionals become members.		Time	May 2009
	Invitations are created/mailed out.			Volunteers for follow-up phone calls	
Target influential members of the community that are not currently members of ASPA to join the organization.	List of elected officials in region created & compared against membership list.	Make Contact with targets	Board of Directors	Time	August 2008
	Determine points of contact	At least 15% of targeted elected official become members.		Phone List	May 2009
				Volunteers	

Implementation Plan

Issue 2: How can the organization establish a good reputation and increase visibility in the community?

Goal 1: To increase organizational visibility and create a positive reputation throughout the region and state.

Objective 1: Develop an outreach program to increase awareness of Chapter activities and programs by May 2008.

Strategies	Actions	Indicators	Person(s) Responsible	Resources Required	Date Due
Increase online accessibility and visibility of Chapter activities and programs.	Collaborate with national organization to obtain needed materials/template for website.	Active website accessible to members. Measure of hits to website to reach 500.	VP Student Affairs		September 2007 May 2008
	Establish sections concerning membership, activities, and feedback mechanisms.	Determine best practices for technological outreach.	VP Outreach		May 2010
Develop a quarterly newsletter to raise awareness of organization-sponsored events.	Establish format of newsletter.	Newsletters distributed quarterly to all members	VP Outreach		Beginning January 2008
	Determine content for newsletter.	10% increase in attendance at Chapter events from date of distribution.			November 2008
Increase awareness of events through marketing and advertising efforts.	Price advertising costs and budget for year.	Quarterly advertisements of Chapter events.	VP Outreach		Beginning September 2007
	Target key advertising outlets and free sources of advertising.				
Sponsorship of conferences to increase visibility of the organization and the region.	Develop financial resources for hosting the SeCoPA	Financial Resources identified, needs assessed	President-Elect		October 2007
	Dev. marketing strategy	Marketing Plan Completed	Board of Directors		March 2008
	Finalize conference	Host SeCoPA Conference			Fall 2008

Implementation Plan

Issue 3: How can the organization increase funding to meet the demands of a growing organization?

Goal 1: To increase funding and/or expand funding sources available to the Chapter.

Objective 1: Increase funding resources by 20% by 2009.

Strategies	Actions	Indicators	Person(s) Responsible	Resources Required	Date Due
Research banking info. to ensure maximum mgt. Of current financial resources.	Call other banks to compare monthly fees against current banking institution.	Comparative banking fee analysis presented Potential Bank Xfer Decrease in fees paid to banking institution	Treasurer Board of Directors		October 2007 November 2007 June 2008
Enlist the assistance of the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP).	Meeting between ASPA Chapter representative(s) and AFP representatives, and establishment of plan.	AFP/ASPA collaborative meeting to take place. 15 % Increase in funding by 20 % Increase in funding	Chapter President & Fundraising Committee		September 2007 May 2008 July 2009
Hold fundraising events to accumulate funds for specific projects, like scholarships or essay contests. (This also helps with visibility)	Determine target groups within organization. Determine external focus groups needing assistance in area. Create projects based upon target group's abilities/needs analysis.	Fundraising committee established Determination of event type(s) made Event coordination meetings established Fundraising Needs Analysis completed Fundraising event(s) held	Fundraising Committee		January 2009 March 2009 May 2009 September 2009 FY 2010

<p>Partner with other local organizations to co-sponsor events.</p>	<p>Contact representatives from listing of potential like-minded organizations in area.</p>	<p>Collaborative meeting(s) held to determine potential events and funding needed.</p> <p>Co-host an event with an organization affiliate.</p>	<p>VP Outreach</p>		<p>September 2008</p> <p>November 2008</p>
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