



# Strategic Plan 2019-2023





# Table of Contents

Vision and Mission	4
Message From The Executive Director	5
At A Glance	6
Culture	8
Accountability	9
Objectives And Strategies	
Student Success	10
Community Advancement	12
National, Local and International Recognition	14
Competitiveness Resources	16
Moving Forward	17



# VISION

**The Hobby School of Public Affairs will leverage Houston's diverse population, its status as an economic leader in the global economy and its ability to serve as a laboratory for policy innovation.**



# MISSION

**From a foundation of integrity, the Hobby School of Public Affairs prepares its graduates to make government, business and communities work more effectively by harnessing data and research to improve public policy.**





Welcome. Our strategic plan provides the Hobby School's vision and goals in the coming years. Before turning the page, however, please permit a brief statement about the Hobby School.

The Hobby School was born on August 2016. This reality is yet another example of why Houston is such a special place. The Houston "vibe" –

that "can do" attitude – was crucial. What mattered most in the end, was the Houstonians who assisted in this process. From former Lieutenant Governor Bill Hobby to Representative Garnet Coleman and so many others, their actions and support was definitive.

The Hobby School reflects Governor Hobby's approach to public policy: an emphasis on quantitative analysis and the ethical debates on both values and how data are collected and released. This is how progress is made in the policy arena.

We are ever mindful of our task towards our students and the community at large. Students are trained with the quantitative and ethical ideals noted above, but that training is not done in a vacuum. Self-awareness is also important for student success beyond analytical and ethical training. With that in mind, students are also taught leadership skills needed to be effective within an organization. Our research, education and service obligations to the community is ever present. The Hobby School reflects the same openness we see in our supporters to new ideas that lead to policies that make day to day life better.

In the end, and to fulfill its promise, the personnel of the Hobby School support and enforce an internal culture that gives purpose to all individual efforts and ensures these efforts are tied to the goals of the Hobby School.

That culture is based on three ideals:

- Openness over hierarchy;
- Risk over stability; and
- Innovation over the tried and true

This Hobby School culture will ultimately be decisive in adapting to the coming challenges in policy research and training the students to adapt and thrive in such a dynamic environment.

# MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## Overview

Public affairs and public service missions have become essential to the top-ranked universities in the United States. This mission is particularly crucial for urban universities serving our largest cities. The top policy schools have a problem-driven research focus that can translate into basic and applied scientific contributions. The research findings can be used for numerous purposes, including the improvement of operational processes and the enhancement of decision making in the public and private sectors, as well as providing objective policy advice to policymakers. These schools also provide managerial and professional training for public servants and non-profit managers, and aid in efforts to train a diversified workforce.

## Purpose and Process

To foster both visibility and financial self-sufficiency, faculty support a set of incentives which support a culture emphasizing both professional development and the national and international competitiveness of the Hobby School.

The Hobby School was established in August 2016. What follows is a summary of the goals, strategies, and longer-term vision for a nationally and internationally competitive policy school.





# Culture

What defines the Hobby School culture is the everyday emphasis and ethos on three factors:

- Openness over hierarchy
- Risk over stability
- Innovation over the tried and true

With a healthy and dynamic internal culture, a relatively small entity (in contrast to other nationally-prominent schools) can reach its goals within a far shorter timeline. There is no substitute for a healthy culture that breeds teamwork and hard work.

## Faculty

John Antel, PhD  
Gail Buttorff, PhD  
Daniel Engster, PhD  
Jim Granato, PhD  
Johanna Luttrell, PhD  
Pablo M Pinto, PhD  
Alan Witt, PhD  
Sunny Wong, PhD

## Staff

Diana Benitez, CPM  
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Bianca Chukura  
Renée Cross, MLA  
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Donald J. Foss, PhD  
Jim Granato, PhD  
Cong Huang, PhD  
Nazrul Hoque, PhD  
Emily Janowski, MBA  
Scott Mason, MPA  
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Isaiah Warner, MA  
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Jason Casellas, PhD  
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Jennifer H Clark, PhD  
Harold Clarke, PhD  
Sue Collins, PhD  
Jeronimo Cortina, PhD  
Gordon L Dilmore  
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Donald J Foss, PhD  
Pete Gallego, JD  
Tim Gibson, BAAS, LP  
Peter Grossman, PhD  
William P Hobby  
Guillermina Jasso, PhD  
Mark Jones, PhD  
William Keech, PhD

Ryan Kennedy, PhD  
Patrick Leung, PhD  
Christine S Lipsmeyer, PhD  
Melody Lo, PhD  
Sarmistha Majumdar, PhD  
Terry Mayes  
David McClendon, PhD  
Richard Murray, PhD  
Philippe Nassif  
Suzanne Pritzker, PhD  
Jeff Reichman  
Bill Sarpalius, MBA  
Adam D Scioli, DO  
Joan E Sieber, PhD  
Robert Stein, PhD  
Lydia B Tiede, PhD  
Miao Wang, PhD  
Rick K Wilson, PhD  
Nancy Beck Young, PhD  
Hong Zhuang, PhD

The Hobby School of Public Affairs incorporates four of the six primary goals contributing to the University of Houston's Tier-One status while aligning with the School's activities and objectives:

- Student Success
- Community Advancement
- National, Local and International Recognition
- Competitive Resources

Since 2007, the University of Houston has tracked progress towards achieving these goals. The Hobby School of Public Affairs uses similar metrics to measure its success.



# OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

## Student Success

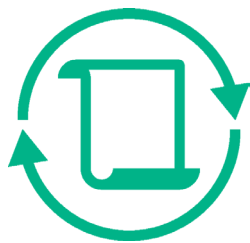
Measures and performance standards for Hobby School faculty and staff will include the following fundamental areas. These measures are also designed to enforce the Hobby School's culture and will figure in performance reviews of Hobby School faculty and staff.

- Aspire to a 100% student placement record.
- Multiple degrees offered including 4+1, dual MPP, and PhD.
- International teaching collaboration in Asia and Latin America.
- Use the international relationships as a student recruiting tool.
- Growing alumni: an alumni that is highly successful and readily engaged in decision making positions in the public and private sector.





Student success will be measured through the following statistics:



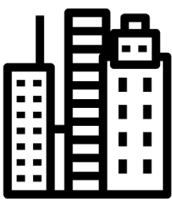
Graduate student acceptance rate



Total graduate student enrollment



Total degrees awarded



Job placement



Total undergraduate intern participation



Total number of participants in the Certified Public Manager Program (CPM)



Graduate and CPM student & intern satisfaction surveys

# Community Advancement

## Cultural Dynamism

The Hobby School will capitalize on the dynamism and resilience of Houston and will serve as an ambassador for what is becoming known as the “Houston way”—not only in Texas, but nationally and internationally.

Focusing on measurable outputs, and tying them to UH’s strategic goals, we will scale up on visible and needed research, education, and community advancement.

The activities to connect the Hobby School and UH to Houston take on the following forms:

1. Advancement of a public policy curriculum, which prepares students to work in both public and private sector policy arenas (e.g., government, non-profit, and for-profit sectors) to address key issues that impact the quality of life of Houstonians and citizen populations throughout the nation.
2. Through the implementation of workshops, seminars, forums, and symposia, serve as a premier training ground for policymakers who seek to develop or enhance their knowledge, abilities, and leadership skills in the effort to be effective practitioners.
3. Recruitment of potential and existing nationally-renowned instructional faculty as a means to promote student learning and advance effective models of community reform and improvement.
4. Serve as a research data collection, analysis, and reporting hub on matters of critical importance to the community and policymakers in the public and private sectors. In this respect, the Hobby School will be an institutional leader on best practices in the field of public policy through the publication of peer-reviewed journal articles, white papers, policy briefs and digital publications.
5. Serve as an institutional vehicle for the promotion of interdisciplinary policy-related problem solving across academic units within the University of Houston System and in partnership with other leading national and international universities in the areas of research, education, and community service and outreach.
6. Implement and expand the existing communications strategy to incorporate a broader reach, including regular appearances on television, weekly policy e-mail alerts, social media saturation, and both academic and mainstream publications.

# Creating a Seamless Connection to Houston

Consider the incredible attributes of Houston that make it ripe for a public policy school. The city of Houston and the state of Texas are undergoing significant economic development. Both are at or near the top nationally in job creation, business formation, and population growth. The need now is to have a university system that keeps pace and contributes to the ongoing surge in economic development.

Currently, the Houston metropolitan region and the state as a whole have too few top universities to aid in the human capital development and research activities necessary to support the economic and population surge. The regional shift in national economic strength from the north to the south must now also be manifested in a relative powerful shift in the higher education institutions from the north to the south, and from the east and west coasts to the third coast. This substantial shift creates the opportunity for a new and influential policy voice coming out of Houston, Texas, the nation's fourth-largest city and an international leader in business and entrepreneurship.

The dynamic Houston metropolitan area is ripe for major policy science investigations of the ongoing and potential social and economic challenges facing the area. Houston is a microcosm of what is starting to occur nationally, and there are significant international implications.

Currently, there are major immigration flows that will continue to transform Houston into the nation's most culturally-diverse metropolitan area. Houston is at the center of the transformation of the social, economic and political landscape of urban America. What is learned from Houston will be useful not only here, but is applicable to other national and international cities.



# National, Local and International Recognition

By 2021, the Hobby School will have reached eligibility for national ranking and the opportunity for national and international prominence. This progress will be secured by a growing faculty, staff, and the Hobby School institutes: Center for Public Policy (CPP), Institute for Civic Engagement and Research (ICER), Survey Research Institute (SRI), and the Civitas program. Moreover, as a nationally-competitive and respected policy school in research and education, we will also be a force multiplier on campus (via ongoing collaboration with other UH entities in degrees, research, and community advancement) and assist UH in attaining Association of American Universities (AAU) status.

- Build an ongoing media presence and communication strategies including television, radio, print and digital media, websites, and social media to publicize what is new at the Hobby School.
- Continuity and expansion of grant success.
- Establish branding in innovative, basic-level research (e.g., Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models (EITM)). Faculty will have reputations as creators and not just users of others' tools and training.
- Create branding for the educational regimen. Training "pillars" — quantitative, ethics, and leadership — are not treated as separate entities, but are part of molding a holistic student who can accomplish the following:
  - Compete successfully with other policy school graduates in the public and private sector labor markets as well as in the political arena;
  - Leverage state-of-the-art techniques to contribute to evidence-based policy making;
  - Be a thought leader in positioning ethical considerations to influence policy;
  - Serve as a transformative leader in promoting a healthy work culture; and
  - Demonstrate the quality of Hobby School training.
- Establish a PhD program to demonstrate the high-end quantitative tools that are a hallmark of the Hobby School.
- Expand the core faculty (innovative in their own right) to cover new policy areas to address the changing landscape of critical issues facing public and private-sector managers.
- Form international partnerships in education and research where the resource strengths of the Hobby School have full exposure, and combine these partnerships with an aggressive communications strategy for further international exposure.



National, Local and International Recognition will be measured by the following metrics:

- Number of national internship placements
- Number of national graduate employment placements in 1 year
- Number of nonresident students
- Number and quality-based placement of journal articles and books
- Number of local and national media outlets using Hobby School personnel for commentary
- Number of resident students
- Number of international partnerships in teaching and research
- Amount of revenue produced through research awards by national public and private organizations
- Number and quality of organizations that come to recruit Hobby School graduates



## Competitive Resources

The Hobby School's identity is built upon a rigorous academic foundation with well-defined performance measures and a commitment to public service. Subsequently, its distinctive identity will lead to increased research grants and contracts, recognition among leading academic peers, stronger ties to the community, professionalization of the public workforce and alumni pride, which in turn will result in assisting to raise the status of the University of Houston.

## Goals for a Newly-Formed Policy School



1. Achieve a high Top 20 national academic ranking and assist UH in attaining AAU status.



2. Establish a reputation for innovative research in public policy by a nationally and internationally recognized faculty.



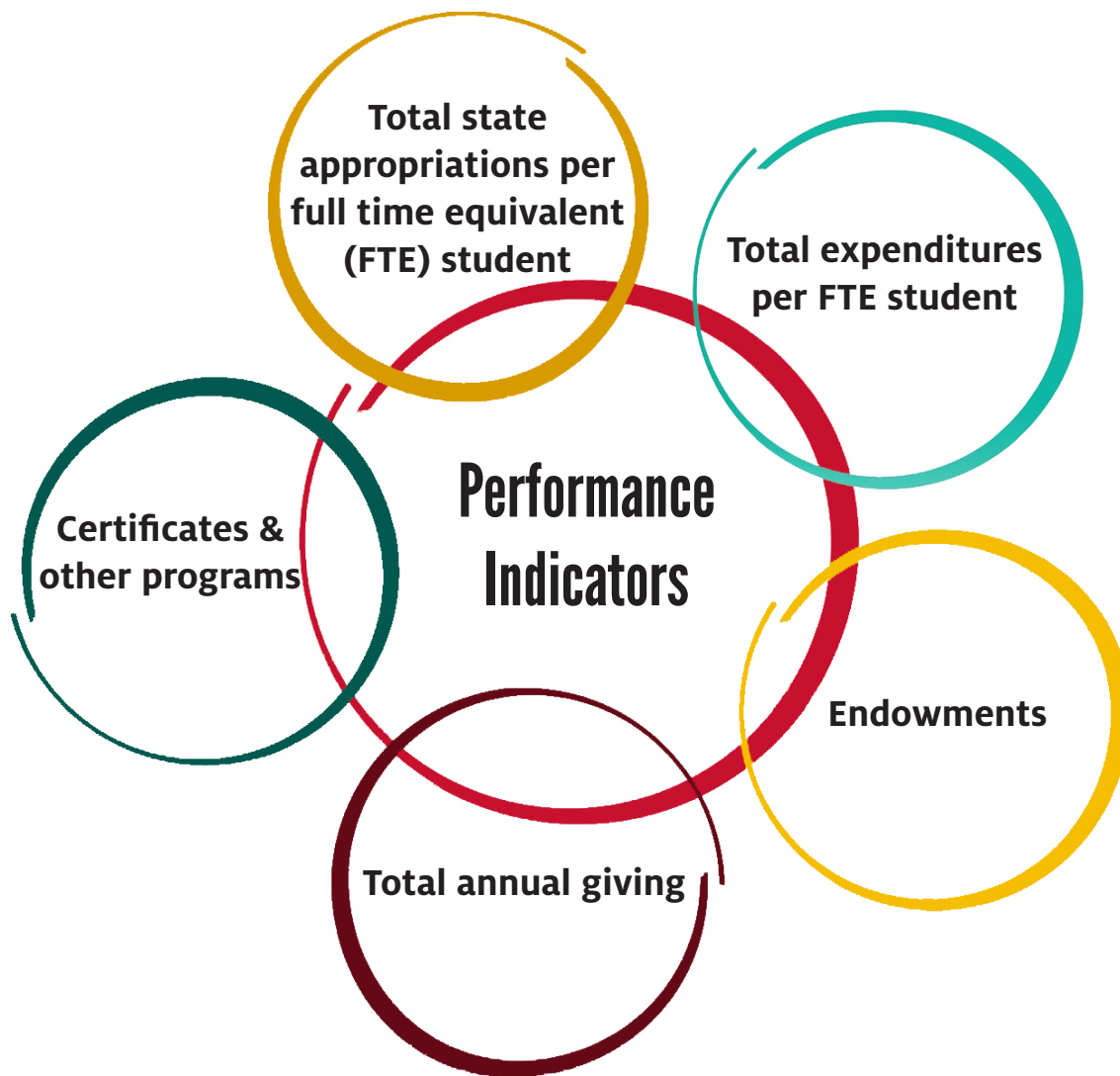
3. Foster a novel approach to analyze and evaluate the growth, flourishing and resilience of modern cities throughout the world. Make Houston the known laboratory for developing that new approach, and UH and the Hobby School will be known world-wide as the place to go to study the modern city.

## Communication of the Hobby School Brand

- Build on current momentum and success with capable and talented faculty and staff to assist in grant writing to garner support of innovative research projects from public and private sources.
- Achieve a national and eventually international reputation via an aggressive and robust communications strategy in education, research and community service to draw new and growing resource support.

## Performance Indicators

The Hobby School's effectiveness is measured by the following components:



## Moving Forward

In just two short years, the Hobby School created seven academic programs including the Master of Public Policy and accelerated 4+1 degrees allowing students the opportunity to earn quality degrees at a lower cost and in less time. The School's data and research projects — ranging from pension reform to voter identification to demographic projections — have had a solid impact on public policy. Meanwhile, various internship and training programs are building a new generation of leaders as demonstrated by civic engagement and job placements. The further expansion of the Hobby School's offerings in Houston, said to be a microcosm of the nation's demographic future, is certain to be of great benefit to other urban areas throughout the nation and beyond.

# HOBBY

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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