Core Course Descriptions, Objectives, and Competencies for the Master of Public Administration Program
February 16, 2007
(Revised: November 11, 2007, February 18, 2008 and June 23, 2008)

PA 6601 – Research Methods in Public Administration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Description:</th>
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<tr>
<td>An introduction to basic, applied, and evaluative research methodologies and data analysis techniques. Students apply these methodologies to issues, programs, and research problems in the field of public administration.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Learning Objectives:</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Describe the research process and its relationship to basic, applied, and evaluation research.</td>
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<td>2. Create, analyze, and apply quantitative and qualitative research models and research designs.</td>
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<td>3. Prepare and defend a written research proposal.</td>
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<td>4. Analyze current research problems in the field of public administration.</td>
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<td>5. Describe the ethical issues associated with research.</td>
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<td>6. Apply descriptive and inferential statistical analysis techniques using statistical applications software.</td>
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<td>7. Describe the role of research in decision-making.</td>
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<td>8. Demonstrate the ability to use computer technology in research methods.</td>
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<td>9. Demonstrate the ability to research complex issues using internet based resources and present results orally and/or in writing.</td>
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<th>Desired Competency:</th>
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<td>Students will be able to conduct their own research and interpret the research of others.</td>
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PA 6602 – Quantitative Methods in Public Management

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<th>Course Description:</th>
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<tr>
<td>An introduction to the fundamental concepts of descriptive and inferential statistics including bivariate analyses and parametric and nonparametric statistical techniques.</td>
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<th>Course Learning Objectives:</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Select and apply descriptive and inferential statistical techniques to public sector issues.</td>
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<td>2. Describe ethical implications of quantitative methods in decision models.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Demonstrate the ability to use computer technology in quantitative methods.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Create, analyze, and apply quantitative methods in decision making.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Demonstrate the ability to analyze complex public sector issues, identify potential solutions, and defend courses of action using quantitative methodologies.</td>
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<th>Desired Competency:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Students will be able to identify appropriate quantitative techniques and apply them to public and nonprofit issues.</td>
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### Course Description:
An introduction to economic theory emphasizing the application of microeconomic and selected macroeconomic theories to issues in public administration.

### Course Learning Objectives:
1. Use marginal analysis in the analysis of public problems.
2. Describe supply and demand theory and the consequences for society when government intervenes in a competitive market.
3. Differentiate among the causes and consequences of market failure and the role of government in correcting market failure.
4. Describe externality theory and governmental strategies for remedying the consequences of externalities.
5. Evaluate the role of regulation and the economic consequences of regulation on society.
6. Distinguish the consequences of economic activity on income distribution and poverty.
7. Describe fundamentals of macroeconomics such as taxes, spending, deficits, monetary policy, and the role of the Federal Reserve.
8. Demonstrate ability to analyze complex public sector issues, identify potential solutions, and defend courses of action using case analysis methodologies.
9. Demonstrate the ability to research complex public sector issues and present information orally and/or in writing.

### Desired Competency:
Students will be able to analyze public problems from an economic perspective.
**PA 6610 – Foundations of Public Administration**

**Course Description:**
An overview of the history and intellectual foundation of public administration including the major ideas, developments, theories, concepts, and contributors to the growth of public administration and its practice in the United States. The student is introduced to the case analysis method.

**Course Learning Objectives:**
1. Describe the evolution of public administration and its future as an academic discipline and a profession.
2. Differentiate among the various functions that public managers perform.
3. Examine the political, socio-economic, cultural, and diversity issues involved in major debates of public administration.
4. Explain the roles of public administrators as public managers and policy makers.
5. Explain the interaction of administrative and political processes in public administration.
6. Explain the importance of ethical standards and behavior of public managers.
7. Outline public information technology history and legislation, and discuss role of e-government in delivery of public services and citizen access to information.
8. Discuss managerial and political issues pertaining to managing public information such as technology for decision-making, managing data resources, hardware and software, systems development and implementation, acquisition, information security, and strategy.
9. Analyze complex public sector issues, identify potential solutions, and defend courses of action using case analysis methodologies.
10. Research complex public issues and present information in a logically organized method.
11. Explain the role of economic and social institutions and processes in public administration.

**Desired Competency:**
Students will be able to discuss the interaction of political and administrative processes, the roles of administrators, and how theories and concepts can be applied in resolving public problems.
**PA 6620 – Theory of Organizations**

**Course Description:**

An introduction to the major theoretical approaches and debates in organization theory including core concepts and key issues arising from the classical and contemporary influences. Emphasis is on the evolution of organization theory in the United States and the elements that distinguish public from private organizations.

**Course Learning Objectives:**

1. Discuss the historical development and evolution of organization theory.
2. Demonstrate the ability to examine organizations and organizational problems from multiple theoretical perspectives.
3. Discuss and evaluate the concepts and approaches of effective organizations.
4. Explain how theories of organization may concretely affect the structure, human relations, politics, and culture of modern organizations.
5. Analyze and synthesize information on current issues in management thought.
6. Explain how managers implement organizational systems to influence ethical and socially responsible behavior along several dimensions including race, ethnicity, sex, age, sexual preference and physical ability.
7. Describe the role of information technology in decision making, organizational design, and control.
8. Demonstrate the ability to research complex organizational issues and present information orally and/or in writing.

**Desired Competency:**

Students will be able to analyze organizations from various theoretical perspectives to improve organizational effectiveness.
**PA 6622 – Public Policy**

**Course Description:**
The study of the theoretical orientations underlying the public policy process and the conceptual framework for differentiating types of public policies. Students examine current issues and policies from various theoretical and practical perspectives.

**Course Learning Objectives:**
1. Analyze current public policy processes at the federal, state, and local level.
2. Explain the goals of the public policy decision-making process and policy development.
3. Develop, create, present, and defend a written policy analysis.
4. Identify the ethical considerations essential to all stages of the policy process.
5. Analyze public policy issues using appropriate theoretical policy analysis models.
6. Illustrate policy development that focuses on the needs of a diverse, multi-cultural society with respect to race, ethnicity, inequality, and poverty.
7. Demonstrate an understanding of information management and technology to support policy analysis.
8. Explain the role of economic and social institutions and processes in the development of public policy.
9. Demonstrate the ability to analyze complex public policy issues, identify potential solutions, defend courses of action using case analysis methodologies and present findings orally and/or in writing.

**Desired Competency:**
Students will be able to explain how public policies are developed and implemented and apply different theoretical models to analyze public policies.
### PA 6624 – Public Human Resource Management

**Course Description:**
A survey of the basic principles and functions that include planning, work analysis, position classification, job specifications, recruitment, staffing, performance management and appraisal, labor-management relations, training, and other personnel functions. Topics include statutory and regulatory constraints and outsourcing and privatization.

**Course Learning Objectives:**

1. Describe the evolution and future of public personnel administration to include pertinent legislation supporting the values of merit and patronage.
2. Identify the organizational and environmental functions affecting public sector human resources management.
3. Explain how organizations determine manpower needs and the various factors involved in filling those needs.
4. Describe the problems involved in developing training, career development, personnel evaluation and productivity improvement programs.
5. Explain the relationship of human resource planning, classification, selection and pay systems.
6. Describe approaches to personnel counseling, discipline, and control.
7. Demonstrate a familiarity with government regulations pertaining to occupational safety, equal employment, and labor-management negotiation.
8. Explain individual rights and responsibilities in public employment.
9. Describe affirmative action, prohibited practices, diversity, and EEO in the context of public personnel administration.
10. Discuss the importance of ethics in public personnel management.
11. Analyze the role of information technology in the provision of human resource services such as recruitment, classification, compensation, and benefits administration.
12. Demonstrate the ability to research complex public issues and present information orally and/or in writing.

**Desired Competency:**
Students will be able to perform key personnel functions as managers of personnel resources within their organization.
### PA 6631 – Program Evaluation

**Course Description:**
An overview of the theoretical foundations and techniques of program evaluation including need assessments, outcome evaluations, surveys, program outcome(s) and impact evaluation(s).

**Course Learning Objectives:**
1. Understand the diverse purposes that program evaluation can serve and the wide range of environments in which evaluations are conducted.
2. Develop capabilities to critique and assess program evaluations.
3. Understand the conceptual issues and primary methods (including both quantitative and qualitative) for conducting evaluations.

**Desired Competency:**
Students will be able to identify, design and interpret a formative, summative and confirmative evaluation conducted in a public setting using qualitative and quantitative designs.

### PA 6640 – Intergovernmental Relations

**Course Description:**
The administrative, fiscal, and legal issues that govern relations among the various governmental entities in the United States.

**Course Learning Objectives:**
1. Analyze the intergovernmental transactions among federal, state, local, regional, and special district governments.
2. Describe the federal system of government and the respective political, legal, social and economic roles of each level of government.
3. Describe when and how collaborative processes can be a useful approach to achieve better intergovernmental program management and results.
4. Analyze and explain the intergovernmental program of a particular agency.
5. Analyze and explain intergovernmental dimensions of a particular sector.
6. Explain the complexity involved in developing and implementing public policy at all levels of government in a diverse, multi-cultural society.
7. Explain the complexity involved in managing and coordinating complex and often incompatible information systems at all levels of government in an environment in which effective and timely information sharing is critical to successful public policy implementation.
8. Demonstrate the ability to research a complex sector of intergovernmental relations.

**Desired Competency:**
Students will be able to describe the political, social, economic, and legal issues that govern vertical and horizontal relations between public agencies and effectively use collaborative processes to achieve better intergovernmental program management results.
PA 6644 – Administrative Law

Course Description:
An overview of the legal environment of public administration. The focus is on the powers and procedures of administrative agencies including administrative discretion, rule-making, investigations, prosecuting, negotiating and settlement based on Constitutional law, statutory law, common law, and agency-made law and the liability of governments and their officers.

Course Learning Objectives:
1. Discuss the significance of administrative law for public administrators.
2. Explain legislative delegation and the power of judicial review
3. Define and discuss the concept of rights (entitlement and privileges) from conservative, liberal, and pluralistic views.
4. Describe the federal regulatory process and control of citizens through court action and administrative regulations.
5. Articulate arguments for and against the proposition that rule making is more efficient than adjudication on pursuing legislative outcomes through administrative law.
6. Describe the relationship between our court system and the executive agencies.
7. Articulate how the fundamental ideas of the framers of the constitution are challenged by the evolvement and growth of federal agencies.
8. Explain the impact of the Administrative Procedures Act on the processes of public administration.
9. Examine the importance of ethics and diversity in the administration of public agencies and in the regulatory process.
10. Demonstrate the ability to analyze complex public sector issues, identify potential solutions, and defend courses of action using case analysis methodology.
11. Demonstrate the ability to research complex public issues and present information orally and/or in writing.

Desired Competency:
Students will be able to analyze, understand and articulate the relationships and legal limitations of each of the branches of government and how they impact their agency.
**PA 6646 – Organizational Behavior**

**Course Description:**
The study of the various theoretical perspectives that help to explain complex organizational behavior in public and nonprofit organizations in the global environment including motivation, leadership, diversity, group dynamics, communications, power, conflict, culture, and change.

**Course Learning Objectives:**
1. Demonstrate a working knowledge of the important concepts and issues related to human behavior in organizations.
2. Explain how organization behavior concepts can be used to enhance the work environment, employee productivity and quality, and the quality of the employee’s work-life.
3. Demonstrate relationships between individual differences and their affect on behavior, inter-personal relations, and employee job performance.
4. Describe the theoretical underpinning of motivation theories and their relationship to workplace behavior.
5. Demonstrate how communication patterns are related to decision making, and intra and inter-group dynamics.
6. Demonstrate how conflict can be resolved constructively.
7. Describe various leadership models and how they are applied in work settings to enhance job performance.
8. Explain how managers implement organizational systems to influence ethical and socially responsible behavior along several dimensions including race, ethnicity, sex, age, sexual preference, and physical ability.
9. Demonstrate the ability to analyze complex public sector issues, identify potential solutions, and defend courses of action using case analysis methodology.
10. Demonstrate the ability to research complex public issues and present information orally and/or in writing.

**Desired Competency:**
Students will be able to understand and apply basic organizational behavior concepts to their organizations, their work environment and their organizational culture.
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<tr>
<th>Course Description:</th>
<th>A survey of concepts, principles, processes, and practices in governmental budgeting at national, state, and local levels and the interrelationships of planning, programming, and budgeting strategies</th>
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| Course Learning Objectives: | 1. Identify the major functions of the budgetary process and major actors at each phase of that process.  
2. Describe the relationship of public budgeting to public policy decision making, implementation, and evaluation.  
3. Describe the efforts to integrate planning and programming with the budget process.  
4. Articulate an understanding of: program analysis, PPBS, zero based budgeting, incremental budgeting.  
5. Identify the primary sources of revenues at all levels of government and evaluate the effectiveness and equitability of various revenues systems.  
6. Discuss economic policy, to include fiscal policy and monetary policy and their relationship to the federal budget.  
7. Explain similarities and differences in budgeting in the public and private sectors.  
8. Discuss the relationships between the U.S. federal, state, and local budgetary processes and public interest issues and politics.  
9. Discuss concepts relevant to organizational ethics, and the importance of ethical behavior in the budgeting and accounting areas.  
10. Apply information technology application in presenting and understanding budget data.  
11. Demonstrate the ability to analyze complex public sector issues, identify potential solutions, and defend courses of action using case analysis methodology. |
| Desired Competency: | Students will review, analyze and apply concepts involved in developing public sector budgets in an organizational context, and will demonstrate understanding of the structure and development of such budgets. |
### PA 6674 - Ethics in Public Administration

**Course Description:**
A study of the philosophical and practical issues related to ethical decision making in the public sector. Emphasis is on the analysis of ethical problems and the development of analytical skills and values framework to act ethically in public service roles.

**Course Learning Objectives:**
1. Distinguish various ethical models for decision making in a public sector setting: conceptual, philosophical, legal, political, organizational, and professional.
2. Evaluate the differences between personal and public ethics.
3. Differentiate the legal, ethical, and effective responses in resolving ethical issues.
4. Demonstrate the ability to understand and implement codes of ethics.
5. Relate ethical issues confronted by administrators in the public sector at the individual and organizational levels, with special emphasis on the importance of integrity, professionalism, diversity, and social responsibility.
6. Demonstrate the ability to research complex public sector issues and present information orally and/or in writing.

**Desired Competency:**
Students will be able to recognize and analyze complex public sector ethical issues, identify potential solutions, and defend courses of action using case analysis methodologies.

### PA 6694 – Internship

**Course Description:**
A practical learning experience in a public or nonprofit organization that includes a written paper analyzing a problem pertinent to the student’s concentration. The Internship cannot be used to satisfy an elective or core course requirement. Pass/Fail grade.

**Course Learning Objectives:**
1. To provide students with a rich context for interpreting the theories and tools presented in their public administration courses, and to provide them with an opportunity to apply those theories and tools in a practical setting.
2. To better understand the mission, organizational structure and culture, chain of command, management styles, communication strategies, and problem-solving techniques of public agencies in general.
3. To enhance each intern’s skill set, including writing, oral, technical, personnel, and other resume-building skills.
4. To provide students with public sector experience in order to better prepare them for future employment.
5. To contribute to the community by serving public agencies.

**Desired Competency:** Not applicable
**PA 6699 Capstone in Public Administration**

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<td>The required outcome assessment course using case analyses, papers, and/or computer simulations that emphasize the application of analytical skills and knowledge gained from curriculum courses to administrative, organizational, and policy problems. Students take the capstone course as the final core course or, with the approval of the instructor, in conjunction with the final core course in the MPA program. To successfully complete the course the student must achieve a grade of “A” or “B”.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Confirm a mastery of the concepts, methods, and processes for each of the program core areas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Demonstrate the ability to analyze complex public sector issues, identify potential solutions, and defend courses of action using case analysis methodologies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Be able to apply the theories, concepts and principles from the MPA program to identify and define the key problems/issues, stakeholders, and significant organizational conditions and timeframes.</td>
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<td>4. Be able to apply the theories, concepts and principles from the MPA program in developing alternative solutions.</td>
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<td>5. Be able to select the best alternative and discuss the feasibility of implementation.</td>
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<td>6. Demonstrate the ability to research complex public issues and present information orally and/or in writing.</td>
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<td>Students will interpret, synthesize and apply core course concepts, methods and processes to effectively manage public agencies, analyze complex public sector issues and identify potential solutions.</td>
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