

School of Public Administration

University of New Mexico

PADM 552: Designing Applied Research

Fall 2014

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Course meetings: Thursdays, 4-6:30 PM or 7-9:30 (ITV)

Course Description

This is a seminar course in which participants discuss, analyze, design and write up components of a public policy and/or administrative research proposal. The final proposal may feed into the professional paper culminating experience project for the Master of Public Administration degree. Course readings, discussions and activities focus upon: development of an appropriate and answerable research question; searching for and how to write about published research and theory; research methodology, including ethics and data collection; and developing a research and writing timeline for completion. Students will develop an independent research proposal and presentation during the course of the semester. Students will also be introduced to case analysis, another culminating experience option in the MPA degree program, during the course.

Participants are expected to actively engage in all components of the course. We will work from the premise that all participants bring important knowledge, skills, experiences and insights to the course that we can draw upon to create a productive collaborative learning experience.

By the end of the course participants will have:

- Developed an appropriate, meaningful and answerable public administration and/or policy focused research question to investigate;
- Conducted a literature search and written a literature review that is directly relevant to answering the research question;
- Drafted a research methodology and identified data appropriate to answering the research question with empirical evidence;

- Developed in-depth understanding of an issue that is of great interest to them and demonstrated mastery of a public administration and/or policy topic through research and presentation.

In addition, the following MPA core learning outcomes will be addressed in this course. Students will:

- Demonstrate knowledge of comparative case analysis;
- Analyze policies and programs by applying appropriate ethical research standards;
- Demonstrate excellent verbal communication ability.

Course Requirements, Grading and Readings

Class participation & attendance

Participation & attendance

This course relies heavily upon the participation of everyone involved. The instructor will present some material, but learning occurs primarily through active engagement with topics, including discussion of concepts, evaluation and analysis of materials, and application in cooperation with your colleagues. For this reason, your attendance and active participation is expected at all class sessions. **Each class session will begin promptly at the scheduled time. You are expected to be ready to engage fully in the course at that time.**

In order to encourage full participation and reward those that make strong contributions to the quality of the learning environment in the course, class participation forms a substantial portion of the grade (20%). A grade of “A” on class participation may be earned by attending all class sessions in their entirety and consistently contributing to class discussions, online discussions and other activities in a way that demonstrates thoughtful consideration of the readings.

Participation grades will be negatively affected by missing more than one class session, being disengaged during class, returning late from breaks, lack of participation in class or online discussions, coming to class late or without having prepared course readings (read and considered). Please notify the instructor of medical or family emergencies in a timely fashion so that these will not adversely affect the participation and attendance grade. It is your responsibility to communicate with the instructor about these matters.

Please note that class participation involves active engagement with course material as described above, as well as respect and consideration for the views of other members of the class.

Assignments

Research proposal

You will develop a substantial portion of an empirically based and analytic research proposal examining a public administration and/or policy issue of your choice (with instructor approval). Your final proposal should include the following sections and content (note that you will need to elaborate the contents):

Introduction (guideline: 2-2 ½ pages)

- Grab the reader's attention in the opening sentences
 - What is the problem? Why is this an important topic? Why should your committee members read this paper?
- Clearly state the research question(s) – in question form.
- What will this study contribute to our understanding of the topic?
- Include a paragraph that briefly describes your research methodology
- Include a bullet point that you will later replace with a paragraph previewing your findings and conclusions
- Conclude with a brief paragraph outlining the contents of the paper (a road map – tell the reader where you are going)
- Note: It may be appropriate to include a brief background section outlining history of the issue you have selected (or other contextual or background information) following the introduction, literature review or methodology. For many papers, this can be sufficiently addressed in the introduction section in 1-3 paragraphs, but some papers will require elaboration to help readers become more familiar with the issue. Consult with the instructor and/or your professional paper chair to help determine what is appropriate for your paper.

Literature review (guideline: 6-8 pages)

- Give a descriptive title to the section. For example: Emotional intelligence and disaster response leaders
- Introductory paragraph
- Synthesize and analyze published empirical and theoretical scholarship (focusing on academic peer-reviewed journals and books) with direct relevance to answering your research question
 - Organize contents thematically. For example:
 - Independent and dependent variables
 - Key historical developments (of legislation, for instance)
 - Other thematic organization. Do not write as an annotated bibliography!
- Summary paragraph
- Note: There is a general preference for current references (research and theorizing of the past 10-15 years); however, it is appropriate to include

seminal works and significant historical contributions dating to the late-20th century.

Methodology (guideline: 1-2 pages)

- Introduce the study methodology in a way that your MPA colleagues could understand if they were to read your paper
- Data & analytical strategy
 - Describe data sources and how you will collect data
 - Describe your strategy for analyzing data
- Ethics
 - Write at least one sentence (a paragraph may be more appropriate) concerning ethical considerations of your proposed research project, including that there are no concerns if this is the case (e.g. you plan to use publicly available and de-identified U.S. Census data versus a project in which you collect data directly from human subjects [a.k.a. people]).
- Limitations of the study
 - All studies are limited in the extent to which we can form conclusions about a given phenomenon. Write a paragraph about your study's limitations and potential contributions.

References, to be formatted in APA style (guideline: pages needed)

Timeline for completion

- Outline major steps in the research process and deadlines for writing and submission that you will aim to meet along the way (guideline: 1 page)

This is to be an original research paper. It may not be an extension or revision of work you have done in a previous or are doing in a concurrent course.

Format & submission

- The paper should be 12-14 pages in length (excluding title page, references and timeline)
- The paper should be double-spaced
- Use 12 point Cambria or Times New Roman font
- Use 1" margins
- Name the document as follows: first name_two or three key words_PADM552
- **Submit the proposal as a Word document to the Assignments folder in UNM Learn by 9 AM on Monday, December 1st.** This assignment is worth 30% of the course grade.

Presentation

You will present your research proposal, including introduction, literature review and methodology at a class meeting in the final weeks of the semester.

Requirements for the presentation will be posted in an announcement on UNM Learn. The presentation makes up 10% of the overall course grade.

Assignments supporting development of the research proposal

Discussion posts

The instructor will initiate discussion threads with relevance to class meeting topics in UNM Learn. You are expected to post at least one question and/or thoughtful/thought-provoking comment to each online discussion thread as assigned (see weekly schedule of class meetings, readings and assignments later in the syllabus). Post your questions/comments for regular discussion threads by 9 AM on Wednesdays (the day before the relevant class meeting) so that classmates and/or the instructor may address them in the discussion string or during class. All required discussion posts will be recorded for credit, no credit, late (only if posted before the relevant class meeting begins) or partial credit. Keep track of these carefully as your participation in online discussions contributes to the final course grade. Please note that you are also encouraged to post constructive comments and questions in response to your classmates' discussion posts.

- Tip: Draft responses in a word processing program and copy/paste into the discussion string. Do not attach documents with your comments.

You will have opportunities to submit other supporting assignments and smaller portions of the research proposal for review and instructor feedback, as well as feedback from your colleagues, during the semester. These are required assignments. Due dates are as follows:

August 27: published research paper analysis (a small group project)

- Each group member should post responses to question 8 and at least three other questions assigned (see handout) in the relevant UNM Learn discussion string (e.g. respond to a total of 4 questions). Post responses in the thread established for each question (all responses to question 1 belong in one thread, and so on). This is a credit/no credit/late assignment.
 - Tip: Do not simply divide and conquer on this assignment. You will learn much more from conducting a full analysis of the paper and reading your colleague's analyses. You will learn even more if you analyze both papers.

September 24: draft introduction (guideline: 1 ½ to 2 pages)

- Draw the reader's interest, justify the project and present a clear research question in 3-4 narrative paragraphs. Also include bullet points marking where you will briefly describe your research methodology, preview your findings and conclusions, and outline the contents of the paper.
- Name the document as follows: first name_two or three key words_PADM552.

- Submit as a Word document in the relevant Assignments folder in UNM Learn by 9 AM on Feb. 25th and bring enough printed copies for discussion in a small class group. This is a credit/no credit/late assignment.

October 13: draft introduction and literature review outline (guideline: up to 5 pages)

- This should include a revised draft of the introduction assignment, as well as an outline in paragraph or bulleted format of the contents of the literature review section by paragraph. I am not looking for a summary of each article, book or study report you are referencing, but an outline of how you plan to write about (synthesize and highlight) relevant points (factors and causal relationships).
- Include a list of all references in proper (APA) format.
- Name the document as follows: first name_two or three key words_PADM552
- Submit as a Word document to the relevant Assignments folder in UNM Learn by 9 AM on Monday, October 13th.

October 22: Certificate of completion online Human Research Protections training (CITI training).

- Name the document as follows: first name_CITI certificate_PADM552
- Submit as a PDF document to the relevant Assignments folder in UNM Learn by 9 AM on Wednesday, October 22nd. This is a credit/no credit/late assignment.
- See Week 10 assignments for more information.

Case analysis

Teaching cases engage students in analyzing real-life (or potentially real-life) situations/problems/circumstances encountered by public administrators. In case analysis, students are asked to consider options for addressing a problem (and possibly suggest solutions) within the safe confines of the classroom (or a written assignment). In the case analysis capstone course, you will be asked to examine cases through various lenses of analysis (such as stakeholder and network) and drawing upon your MPA course of study, particularly the major sub-disciplines (human resource management, public management, fiscal and budgetary administration and accountable management as addressed in courses like program evaluation and intergovernmental administrative problems).

Come to our class meeting on October 16th prepared to discuss and begin analyzing the following case: Improving decision making and patron service in the King County Library System (A). You should also read the UMass Boston College of Management “Framework for Case Analysis” document posted to UNM Learn. We will discuss both of these and case analysis as a culminating experience option for

the MPA program. You will work on the case with your group in the second half of the class meeting. Groups are to prepare a case analysis presentation to be delivered on November 13th.

Case analysis presentation

1. Prepare a presentation of up to 12 minutes focusing on parts b and c below:
 - a. Summary of the case (1 slide)
 - i. Summarize the case overall and identify one public administrative problem for themed analysis.
 - ii. Tip: You might draw upon one of the case issues as representative of a broader administrative problem: Video Loan Period Debacle; The Shift to Central Selection; or The Technology Revolution.
 - b. Themed analysis (3-5 slides)
 - i. Draw upon 3-5 outside sources (academic peer-reviewed journal articles and/or books) to offer theoretically and empirically informed insights to the selected problem. Based on these sources, what are likely to be effective solutions?
 - ii. Tip: Analytical lenses that might usefully be employed include change management, organizational culture, organizational structure, and public service motivation, among others.
 - c. Lessons learned (1-2 slides)
 - i. Discuss how what you learned from the case analysis can inform your professional practice (apply specifically to one group member's professional position) or how it applies to a relevant public policy/management issue in New Mexico
 - d. A question and answer period of up to 5 minutes will follow each presentation (12 m presentation + 5 m Q&A = 17 m total)
2. Your presentation should focus on articulating links between case specifics and your analytical lens/theme. What should MPA students take away from your case analysis?
3. Slide and presentation tips: Font should be large enough to read from a distance. Use no more than 35 words per slide. Don't use animation. Cite references in parentheses on the relevant slide (e.g. Smith 2013) and include full references on a final slide at the end of the presentation. Read as little as possible – focus on engaging the audience (making eye contact, using gestures to emphasize points). If at a distance site, look at the camera. Show the audience your expertise on the topic. Rehearse beforehand to get timing and transitions down.
4. One group member should submit case analysis presentation slides (Power Point or PDF) to the relevant Assignments folder by 9 AM on November 13th. Name as follows: first name of one group member_case slides_PADM552

***Note: Case analysis is to be distinguished from case study research as conducted by social scientists (see Yin textbook, 2014, p. 5).

Optional exercises

Some exercises *from the optional Patten workbook are suggested*. These will not be formally graded, but may be used as bases for discussion and learning during class meetings. You should primarily work through the exercises for what they can help you to learn as you work through the process of developing your research proposal.

Academic Integrity

All students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity throughout the course. Academic dishonesty, as outlined in the University of New Mexico's Student Code of Conduct, includes:

"2.4. Academic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, dishonesty in quizzes, tests, or assignments; claiming credit for work not done or done by others; hindering the academic work of other students; misrepresenting academic or professional qualifications within or without the University; and nondisclosure or misrepresentation in filling out applications or other University records" (see the Dean of Students Office website <http://pathfinder.unm.edu/campus-policies/student-code-of-conduct.html#studentcode> Accessed 1/4/2012).

Plagiarism—intentional or not—is unacceptable. Any words or ideas based on others' work should be fully credited. Any work submitted should be your own. The instructor will take action on incidents of academic dishonesty as allowed under the University of New Mexico's Student Code of Conduct. Please contact the instructor with any questions that may arise throughout the semester about what constitutes academic dishonesty.

Grading

Class attendance & participation	20%
Credit/no credit/late credit assignments	15%
• UNM Learn discussion posts	
• Draft introduction	
• Certificate of completion, Human Research Protection	
Introduction & literature review outline	10%
Research proposal & presentation	40%
• Research proposal	30%
• Presentation	10%
Case analysis (group assignment)	15%
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Total	100%

Assignments will be penalized half a grade for each day they are late. For example, one day late reduces from A to A-; two days late from A to B+; and so on. Penalties will not be applied in cases of medical and family emergencies, but cases of poor planning will not be excused.

Students with special needs

Please communicate with the instructor about how she can assist in assuring your rights to equal educational opportunities and reasonable accommodations to facilitate your success in this course. UNM's policy 2310 "Academic adjustments for students with disabilities" can be found at:

<http://www.unm.edu/~ubppm/ubppmanual/2310.htm> (Accessed 1/4/2012).

Readings

The required textbooks are:

- *The Essential Guide to Doing Your Research Project, 3rd Edition*, by Zina O'Leary
- Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. 5th Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

The books will be available through the university bookstore and are also available from online retailers.

Other required readings, including articles and chapters, will be posted as PDF files for you to access at your convenience on our UNM Learn course page. Please do not leave these to the last minute, as technical glitches are not an excuse for being unprepared to discuss readings and participate in class discussion.

An optional and highly recommended text for those who might appreciate a step-by-step walk through research proposal development:

- *Proposing Empirical Research: A Guide to the Fundamentals, 4th Edition (or later)*, by Mildred L. Patten

Other optional and highly recommended texts to support quality writing are:

- For direction on APA style, *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition*.
- For direction on word usage and essential grammar, *The Elements of Style* by Strunk and White. Get the original (such as the 4th edition), not the recent Kindle edition.

Reading tip

Make a habit of noting key points and questions about assigned readings and bringing them with you to class for discussion. This will not be formally graded, but it is likely to affect the quality of your participation during class, your performance on assignments and what you take away from the course.

Supporting resources

You may find the following resources, in addition to many identified over the course of the semester useful for proposal development and case analysis:

Public Administration Library Guide

- URL: <http://libguides.unm.edu/publicadmin>

Major scholarly public administration journals, including nonprofit studies

- *Administration and Society**
- *Administrative Theory & Praxis*
- *American Review of Public Administration**
- *Governance*
- *International Journal of Public Administration*
- *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*
- *Journal of Public Affairs Education*
- *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*
- *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*
- *Nonprofit Quarterly*
- *Policy Studies Journal*
- *Public Administration Quarterly*
- *Public Administration Review**
- *Public Budgeting & Finance*
- *Publius (focus on federalism)*
- *Review of Public Personnel Administration (human res. focus)*
- *State & Local Government Review*

*Starred journals are general PA journals that offer good starting points for literature searches

Schedule of Class Meetings, Topics, Readings & Assignments

<p>Week 1</p> <p>Aug. 21</p>	<p>Course introduction</p> <p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • O’Leary chapters 1 & 2 • Meilleur Graduate Level Writing Rubric • Optional: Read and work through Patten Part A exercises <p>Exercise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start small group exercise in class: published research paper analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Groups will select or be assigned Riccucci <i>et al.</i> 2004 or Smith & Neupane 2011. Available on UNM Learn & in class. Analysis due to UNM Learn in a series of discussion posts (respond to each question in the designated thread) by 9 AM on August 27th.
<p>Week 2</p> <p>Aug. 28</p>	<p>The introduction & research question(s)</p> <p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • O’Leary chapters 4 & 5 • Yin chapter 1 • Read on your own in PA journals and other resources to help inform your research question(s) and literature review <p>Assignments due</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post initial research question(s) to UNM Learn discussion by 9 AM on August 27th. Bring a copy to class for discussion. • Post published research paper analysis to UNM Learn discussion by 9 AM on August 27th (see Week 1).
<p>Week 3</p> <p>Sept. 4</p>	<p>Research workshop: Accessing resources to inform your study</p> <p>SPA’s library ambassador, Todd Quinn, will introduce and walk us through how to use several UNM Libraries resources and tools. This will help you to locate, access and document resources needed to develop and support your research proposal.</p> <p>***Meeting location</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4:00 section to meet in Zimmerman Library, Room 254 (computer lab) • 7:00 section to meet in our regular classroom. If possible, join the 4:00 section in Zimmerman Library. If not, please bring a laptop to class so that you can use the tools Mr. Quinn covers during the class meeting. <p>Assignment due</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow any posted (see Announcements) library account registration and practice search instructions prior to the class meeting. This is <i>very important</i> to get what you out of this class meeting.

<p>Week 4</p> <p>Sept. 11</p>	<p>The research question(s) & literature review</p> <p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • O'Leary chapter 6 • Yin chapter 2 • Galvan chapters 4-7 of <i>Writing Literature Reviews: A Guide for Students of the Social and Behavioral Sciences</i> (2009) • Read on your own in PA journals and other resources to help inform your research question(s) and literature review • Optional: Read & work through Patten Parts B & D exercises <p>Assignments due</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post revised research question(s) to UNM Learn discussion by 9 AM on Sept. 10th. Bring a copy to class for discussion. • Post at least one question and/or comment concerning research questions and/or literature reviews to UNM Learn discussion by 9 AM on Sept. 10th.
<p>Week 5</p> <p>Sept. 18</p>	<p>Research workshop: Accessing resources to inform your study</p> <p>Meet with Dr. Smith &/or Mr. Quinn to consult on your individual literature search</p> <p>***Meeting location</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4:00 section to meet in Zimmerman Library, Room 254 (computer lab) • 7:00 section to meet in our regular classroom. If possible, join the 4:00 section in Zimmerman Library. If not, please bring a laptop to class.
<p>Week 6</p> <p>Sept. 25</p>	<p>Research workshop: Drafting the introduction & literature review</p> <p>Use draft introductions to discuss next steps in developing the introduction and literature review sections. We will meet in small groups for discussion and feedback this week and next.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups and meeting times will be posted to UNM Learn Announcements prior to the class meeting. Some meetings will be held during office hours. <p>Assignment due</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft introduction. Post in the relevant Assignments folder in UNM Learn by 9 AM on Sept. 24th and bring enough printed copies for discussion in your small group.

<p>Week 7</p> <p>Oct. 2</p>	<p>Culminating experience project Q & A with Gene Henley</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>All students to attend:</u> 5:30-6:30 PM (Social Sciences Room 3030) or 7:00-8:00 PM (Dane Smith Hall Room 134) <p>Research & writing workshop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuation of Week 6 discussions in small groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Some groups may be scheduled during office hours ○ Main campus only section to be scheduled 4-5:30 PM ○ ITV section to be scheduled 8-9:30 PM ○ Check UNM Learn Announcements for your timeslot <p>Assignment due</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft introduction and literature review outline due to the relevant Assignments folder in UNM Learn by 9 AM on Monday, October 13th.
<p>Week 8</p> <p>Oct. 9</p>	<p>Fall break</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No class meeting <p>Tip</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look ahead to heavy reading and assignment due in 2 weeks
<p>Week 9</p> <p>Oct. 16</p>	<p>Case analysis: an introduction</p> <p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UMass Boston College of Management “Framework for Case Analysis” • Case: Improving decision making and patron service in the King County Library System (A) • Optional: Read Professor Rivera’s case analysis capstone course syllabus

<p>Week 10</p> <p>Oct. 23</p>	<p>Methodology: answering your research question & doing so ethically</p> <p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • O’Leary chapter 3 and chapters 7-14 • Yin chapters 3 and 4 • Optional: Read & work through Patten Part C <p>Assignments due</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post at least one question and/or comment concerning research methodology to UNM Learn discussion by 9 AM on October 22nd. • Certificate of completion, online CITI training. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Find the link at: http://research.unm.edu/IRBmaincampus/irb_training_outreach.cfm ○ Complete registration (select UNM Main Campus as affiliate, enroll as a student conducting no more than minimal risk research). ○ You will complete 3 modules. ○ Submit certificate of completion (a PDF with your name on it) to the relevant Assignments folder in UNM Learn. Due by 9 AM on October 22nd.
<p>Week 11</p> <p>Oct. 30</p>	<p>Writing it all up: process, analysis, findings, discussion & conclusion</p> <p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review O’Leary chapter 15 • Yin chapter 5 • Optional: Read & work through Patten Part J <p>Assignment due</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post at least one question and/or comment concerning process, analysis, findings, discussions & conclusion sections to UNM Learn discussion by 9 AM on October 29th.
<p>Week 12</p> <p>Nov. 6</p>	<p>To be announced</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check UNM Learn for an announcement concerning plans for this class meeting date

<p>Week 13</p> <p>Nov. 13</p>	<p>Case analysis presentations & discussion</p> <p>Assignment due</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit case analysis presentation slides to the relevant Assignments folder by 9 AM on November 13th
<p>Week 14</p> <p>Nov. 20</p>	<p>Research proposal presentations</p> <p>Assignment due</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In class presentations (group 1: to be announced); slides due by 9 AM on November 20th to the relevant Assignments folder in UNM Learn
<p>Week 15</p> <p>Nov. 27</p>	<p>Thanksgiving holiday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No class meeting • Office hours appointments available to review research proposal drafts
<p>Week 16</p> <p>Dec. 4</p>	<p>Research proposal presentations</p> <p>Assignments due</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final research proposal due by 9 AM on Monday, December 1st to the relevant Assignments folder in UNM Learn • In class presentations (group 2: to be announced); slides due by 9 AM on December 4th to the relevant Assignments folder in UNM Learn
<p>Final exam week</p> <p>Dec. 11</p>	<p>Class wrap up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete research proposal presentations (group 3: to be announced); slides due by 9 AM on December 11th to the relevant Assignments folder in UNM Learn • Wrap up comments and questions • Course evaluations