THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

School of Public Administration

PA 553, Fall 2014—Professional Paper Capstone Course
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Class Meetings: Tuesday 4:30-7 p.m., Woodward Hall, 147.
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Office hours: Tuesday 1:30-3:30 p.m. and by appointment.

Scope and Purpose of the Course:

This course is a classroom version of the MPA capstone, integrative assignment, the Professional
Paper. It is intended to provide opportunities for all students enrolled to analyze case material and
ancillary readings to produce cogent, incisive, and insightful professional-quality critiques of
agency, community, policy, and leadership dilemmas and challenges actually faced by public
servants in the public and nonprofit sectors, and in cross-sector collaborative management. The
vehicle for this exploration, to be undertaken through substantial written assignments and,
complementarily, group work and group presentation, will be four case studies specifically chosen
by the instructors for the accomplishment of these aims.

In discussing three introductory cases and one more substantial, final case study, and in writing three
short case analyses and one long case analysis corresponding to these, students will be integrating
knowledge gleaned from their MPA course of study—particularly in the major subdisciplines of
public and nonprofit management, fiscal and budgetary administration, and accountable
management. Students and instructors will draw from their practitioner and life experiences, as
well. Finally, they will both draw broadly from the extensive public administration academic and
applied literature in informing their analyses (verbal and written) of the cases assigned.

Functioning much like a seminar , the course is intended to help students find culmination in their
MPA experience, developing and mastering their critical-analytical skills, consistent with core
competencies required in the discipline. It also aims to strengthen their research, writing, verbal, and
team-based skills in contexts of professional public service in public administration.

The competencies involved (which translate into course priorities) centrally include the following: (1)
public ethics and accountability; (2) the ability to address the challenges of diversity, globalization, and
inter-organizational and cross-sector collaboration; (3) the ability to consciously address institutional
constraints and opportunities in the law, economy, and public policy; and (4) the ability to summon the
information, methods, sensibilities, and commitments that are essential for efficacy in public service.

There is no required textbook for the course. Course materials, in particular case studies and readings,
are posted to the UNM LEARN system. To access LEARN, students need to login to their My UNM
accounts. From there, in the top right hand corner is an icon labeled "UNM Learn." It is located next
to the "logout" icon. Once you click on that, you are in LEARN. From there, you just need to click on

the PADM 553 class under "My Courses" and then find the appropriate folder, labeled "Syllabus," "Case Studies," "Readings," etc.

Important Accommodation Note:

Anyone requiring special accommodation or assistive technology is asked to advise Dr. Huang within the first two weeks of class, so that reasonable accommodation may be provided. The School of Public Administration is committed to providing all necessary and feasible accommodation to students with disabilities so that they may fully participate in and contribute to their classes. Confidentiality will be maintained as indicated by the student's circumstances.

Course Requirements—Sources of and criteria for the final evaluation of student coursework:

Unlike your regular MPA courses, this course is graded just as the Professional Paper one-on-one course, and as are theses and dissertations at UNM, as CR (credit).

The evaluations of all four case analyses are being made on the basis of CR (credit) or NCR (no credit) or CR With Distinction (for the long case analysis) .

In order to provide more nuanced feedback to each student in the Professional Paper Capstone Course, I have devised a 5-point scale and assigned the first and prospectively the rest of the papers a rating on that scale, as follows:

0—NCR: Does not meet minimum requirements for passing the assignment and course. Must be thoroughly revised and resubmitted for re-evaluation until a CR assessment from both instructors is attained.. Student is required to submit the original paper and subsequent revision drafts online to the UNM Graduate Resource Center, available at http://unmgrc.unm.edu then clicking on the GROWL (Graduate Online Writing Lab) on the top left of the screen.

1 or 2—CR: Meets minimum requirements for passing the assignment. However, the paper exhibits serious (2 rating) to severe (1 rating) problems with expository writing quality and clarity, including organization of the paper, syntax, grammar, sentence construction, and phrasing, and also including lack of sustained clarity in the analytical effort represented by the paper. Student is strongly encouraged to submit the paper to the GROWL (Graduate Online Writing Lab) as specified above. Whether or not the Writing Lab is used, revision of the paper and submission of same to Dr. Rivera is expected, following the criteria in the syllabus.

3—CR: Exceeds minimum requirements for passing the assignment, with largely well-sustained and incisive written analysis, though with several lapses in paper organization, clarity, and quality of argumentation and expression. No revision/resubmission required, but revision may be undertaken by the student at his or her option.

4—CR: Well exceeds minimum requirements for passing the assignment, with largely well-sustained and incisive written analysis, but with infrequent, relatively minor shortcomings as to

paper organization, clarity, or quality of argumentation and expression. No revision/resubmission is expected or required.

5—CR, With Distinction: Far exceeds minimum requirements for passing the assignment, with well-sustained and incisive written analysis, and with high quality

The papers are expected, at minimum, to meet the standard of professional papers in practitioner contexts. The cases and all research and reading sources must be acknowledged and cited using the American Psychological Association (APA) citation style—this is the citation style required for School of Public Administration professional papers. A brief, free guide to APA citation may be accessed at the following URL: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01. If the hyperlink does not work, cut and paste the URL to your web browser—this webpage, from Purdue University, is regularly updated).

Acknowledgement of sources is essential, in order to avoid plagiarism. *Plagiarism, defined as presenting someone else's work as one's own, may result in failure in the paper assignment and may also eventuate in failure in the course. If referred to the University Dean of Students, it may also eventuate in other disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion from the Public Administration program, or from the University. This is consistent with the University's student code of conduct as well as University and School of Public Administration policy.*

Paper revisions: Each of the four case analysis papers may be submitted once based on the instructors' comments on the first submission, as indicated in the reading and assignment schedule below. Each initial paper submittal is to be proofread, clean, and in final form—***it is not considered a draft***. The paper is to be a finished, proofed, version. It may be revised, rewritten, and resubmitted once (based on instructor comments on the first submission) by the dates provided in the final syllabus.

The very best written-analysis and verbal-presentation work is original (don't repeat at great length what is stated in the case), evidence-based, clear, analytical (based on good analysis supported by sound logic and robust sources, e.g. current peer-reviewed journal articles, current books published by respected academic publishers, such as Georgetown University Press, etc.), and of well-sustained, consistently high quality. Expository and analytical quality for written work includes a well-organized paper or essay, paragraphs that correspond to separate topics and subtopics, cogent sentences with appropriate use of adjectives and adverbs, correct syntax, and other basic elements of grammatical, effective writing. Essential in this connection is concise, compelling, clear argumentation and analysis. Written work in every instance should draw on the case study under examination and assigned readings, as well as group presentations and discussions.

Only consistently excellent written work for the final 'long' case analysis will warrant a designation of 'With Distinction' rather than 'Pass' for the final Report of Examination submitted for each student at the end of the semester. These designations are standard for theses and dissertations and for the Professional Paper and similar capstone projects at UNM. Historically, only about one of ten or twelve Propapers at SPA has received the 'With Distinction' designation, which is therefore

reserved for truly exceptional work. However, 'Pass' is sufficient for completion of the MPA and for graduation. These designations and expectations will be explained more fully to the class. It should be noted, however, that all four papers should exhibit excellent writing and analysis, and that consistently excellent work across the board will have a bearing on the final Pass or Pass-with-Distinction determination.

Requests for clarification or reconsideration of instructor evaluation of student work: Evaluation of student work is always done with care, rigor, and thoroughness, aiming for fairness and for an assessment that reflects the quality of a student's work. Questions about the evaluation given in any given assignment must be raised in a timely manner, within one week of return of the assignment.

Any explanation of the criteria making for a specific evaluation of student work will be provided only in a one-on-one meeting with the student—such discussions are privacy-protected and confidential and may only be carried out with the individual student involved. In order for a student to receive a 'Pass With Distinction' designation for work in this course, *two SPA faculty and the course instructor have to agree* it is warranted by the quality of that student's work in the long case analysis.

Case Analysis Guidelines

You are being provided with several guides or sets of suggestions for carrying out a case analysis. Some are from business administration curricula or simply adapted to purposes, only partially overlapping with our own in this capstone course. What is essential for this course is how well you execute your critical written analysis. You will be carrying into your analytical effort everything from theoretical and conceptual frameworks (drawn from your readings, class lectures, discussion, and materials, the whole of your MPA experience) to your own professional experience and expertise. Insight is the key, along with clear communication of it on paper in incisive ways. So is compelling argumentation of whatever position(s) you take with respect to the case material.

Your short case analysis should:
- Follow the required sequence and structure, as specified in the short case analysis guideline.
- Be double spaced, and the pages should be numbered
- Have 1inch margins – top, bottom, left and right
- Use 12 point font size and any version of MS Word. Do not submit a PDF file.
- Analysis is to be closely proofread, free of spelling, grammar, syntax, and expository quality and clarity errors
- Use APA citation style

Your long case analysis should be between 12-15 pages long, double space. The structure of the long case analysis should be a scaled-up version of the short case analysis, containing four components:
1. The executive summary on the first page of the assignment along with your name, course number and name (PADM 553, Professional Paper Capstone) and due date Summary of the case (2-3 pages)

2. Two theme-focused analysis, drawing on the group presentations of theme-focused analysis (7-8 pages).
3. Lesson Learned that can be applied to your professional life or relevant policy/public management issues in New Mexico (3-4 pages).
4. Use at least 10 external sources. These should be referenced to back up your recommendations or to identify issues or to frame your analysis in the public administration and policy literature. This information would be ideally found in relatively recent journal articles and should reflect current public management thought or practice with respect to the issues identified.

Case analysis submission methods are specified in the course schedule. Generally, I expect main campus students to hand in hard copy in class, unless otherwise stated in the schedule. I will set up Case Analysis Dropbox on the Learn course page for distance site students.

<u>**Requirement of Short Case Analysis**</u>
<u>**PADM 533**</u>

The purpose of the case analysis is to critically and systematically analyze a case. The requirements for case analysis are as follows:

• Use the following memo heading format: To: Professor Huang, From:, Date:, Re:

• Page 1: Summary of the Main Points of the Case.

• Page 2-3: Case Analysis

Draw from the group case presentations and assigned case readings as well as external sources to analyze the case from at least two focused perspectives. Ideally, your analysis should tie what the theories suggest and what happened in the case. To what extent does the case event support the theories or departed from or challenged the theories?

Page 4-5: Lessons Learned
Explain the lessons learned from the case, informed by your theory-grounded analysis. Don't second guess or find fault with the actions presented in the case. Focus on the lessons learned. The Dos and Don'ts for your career or a current local or national policy situation.

• You may cite course readings or other quality sources such as peer reviewed journal articles or books. Include the author's name and date in parentheses for all sources and full reference information if citing an outside source.
• **Unless it is absolutely necessary, avoid direct quotation from the case. Use your own words to paraphrase the expressed ideas in the case.**
Write in short sentences, short paragraphs. A page should contain at least three paragraphs.
• Submit the case analysis double-spaced, not to exceed 5 pages in length in person per the course schedule.

• Grading will be based on your presentation of a logical argument, the extent to which you follow the guidelines above, and clear writing.

Requirements for Group Case analysis Presentation

Prepare a presentation of up to 15 minutes focusing on parts b and c below:

    a.   Summary of the case (1-2 slides)
           i.   Summarize the case overall and identify key public administrative problems/issues for themed analysis.

    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
           ii.

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?

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.

While the longer analysis case is yet to be selected, three short cases have been chosen.

Reading and assignment schedule; by class # and date (subject to revision):

Aug 19 and Aug 26: **Introduction to the Course.** Discussion of the case method and sample case analysis. Planning sessions for the course.

Two-week sequence on Case 1 William D. Ruckelshaus and the EPA :

Sep 2, 9: Group case presentation (Sep 2).

1st Case analysis due: Sep 9th (main campus students need to turn in hard copy in class)

Two-week sequence on Case 2: Networking a City or Improving Decision Making and Patron Service in the King County Library System.

Sep 16, Sep 23, Group case presentation (Sep 16),
No class on Sep 23, instructor out of town on a conference trip,
2nd Case analysis due: Sep 23th (through UNM Learn Case Submission Dropbox) .

revised 1st case analysis due: Sep 23

Three-week sequence on Case 3: Preventing Drilling in the Arctic Wildlife Refuge The Gwich'in Tribes and their Role in the National Policy Debate or Implementing Budget Cuts in the Basic Health Plan: A Case Study

Sep 30, Oct 7 and Oct 14, Group case presentation (Oct 7)

3rd Case analysis due: Oct 14
Revised 2nd case analysis due: Oct 14.

Two-week sequence on Long Case:
Oct 21, Oct 28, Group case presentation (Oct 28)

Long case 1st turn-in date: November 4th ,
Long case 2nd turn-in date: November 11th.

Important Note: Monday, December 7th is the final date for the signing of the Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) report forms by the Professional Paper Committee for all students in the PADM 553 capstone course.