PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION 497
INVESTIGATION AND REPORT
Spring 2014

Course Objective:

The objective of this course is to provide public administration majors with an opportunity to gain extensive research and writing experience. Each student will develop an in-depth understanding of a specialized topic in public affairs and public policy. Students will select a topic from a list provided by the instructor.

Students must meet with me at least two times during the semester to discuss and gauge the student’s progress.

Learning Objectives

• To identify a research area of importance in the fields of public administration, city planning, criminal justice or urban studies;
• To formulate questions that will be researched though library research, the Internet, or personal interviews;
• To discuss with your instructor on the progress of this research paper;
• To draft an outline of the research paper you will be writing;
• To write in a clear and organized fashion;
• To submit a final copy of your research paper with a title page, text, and reference list.
Paper and Course Requirements

1. Students must select one of the topics on the list provided by your instructor. The paper can have a local, state, national, or international focus. Dr. Rea must approve the specific focus of your paper as well as any changes in the paper topic.

2. Length of Paper: Each paper must be a minimum of 15-20 double-spaced typed pages of text. Use a 12 point font, Times New Roman. Title page, maps, figures, charts, bibliography (references), etc. are not considered text. Students may use any paper format style (e.g. APA) but must be consistent once the style is selected.

3. Grades will be based on the following:
   - Understanding of the issue(s) involved in the topic
   - Ability to write in a clear and understandable fashion – this includes a strong introduction and a discussion of how the paper is organized. The paper must be broken into subsections that flow in a logical direction;
   - Evidence that you have clearly researched the topic in and out of the library. This is generally considered to be a review of past research that has been conducted on the topic. Personal interviews with key individuals may be useful depending on the topic and your particular focus. Information, of course, can also be found on the Internet but the Internet cannot be the sole source of your information;
   - Ability to express your viewpoint on the topic being discussed;
   - Proper use of citations and a bibliography/reference list;
   - Proper grammar is important; spelling and punctuation also counts;
   - All course requirements and deadlines must be met.

4. Incompletes are earned. They are not simply given for failing to submit the required paper. In order to earn an incomplete, a student must submit evidence that he/she has conducted some research for the paper by the date the paper is due and request an incomplete. It is the student’s responsibility to contact me. If the permission is given for an incomplete, we will meet and agree on the date the paper will be due.

5. It is the student’s responsibility to select a paper topic no later than January 29, 2014. You may e-mail the topic to me or we can meet during class time.

6. You must submit a one-page description/outline of your paper by February 5, 2014. Be sure your outline includes the specific focus or component of the subject you plan to address; at least 3 references; and the method or methods of research you plan to pursue.
7. You must meet with Dr. Rea concerning the progress of your paper between March 5 and April 9 at least once. You are invited to meet with me at other times during office hours or class time whenever you require consultation or assistance.

8. The final paper is due no later than May 7, 2014. The paper should be delivered to me in my office (PSFA 177) or, in my absence, given to Julie O’Connor (PSFA 107) or Nancy Flitcraft (PSFA 101). Please retain a copy of your paper.

Manuscript Preparation

Manuscripts must be configured as follows:

- **Software:** Use MS Word.
- **Type:** Use 12 point Times New Roman type or equivalent at all times.
- **Spacing:** Double-space text copy. Single space end notes and references. Left justify the main text and indent first lines of paragraphs.
- **Margins:** Use page margins of at least 1 inch left and right and 1 inch top and bottom.
- **Graphics:** Tables, charts, and graphs should be placed in appropriate places throughout the paper.
- **Notes:** Put numbered explanatory notes in endnote form. Use sparingly and keep them brief.

Paper Components

Papers should have the following components:

1. **Introduction:** Write 2 pages describing the paper in detail. You should have a thesis statement whereby you tell the reader why and how this particular project is useful and what you intend to demonstrate or prove. Include a brief summary of how you plan to proceed in the sections of the paper that follow.

2. **Literature Review:** Write 2 or 3 pages reviewing the professional literature that relates to your project. This includes books, parts of books, journal articles, professional pamphlets and memoranda, internet sources, etc. This review should provide a framework for your thesis and give it some perspective. Try to determine if similar projects have been undertaken in other parts of the world.
3. **Method of Research:** Write 1 or 2 pages showing how you gathered data and/or information for your paper. Describe interviews with individuals who are knowledgeable about your topic, describe how you collected data if you did so (survey, observation, etc.), describe how you used Internet and library sources, and describe any statistical tool or computer analysis you may have used.

4. **Results and Findings:** Write 5 or 6 pages detailing the results of your research. This part is not an analysis but rather the facts that have unfolded from your work. For example, provide detailed accounts from people that you interviewed. What are the key points from the literature that bear on your project? If you developed tables or graphs, identify salient points from them. If you conducted a survey, simply report the results from each of the questions.

5. **Conclusions:** Write 4 or 5 pages where you analyze the information that you have collected and organized. The conclusions should take the form of policy implications. You should determine if your thesis which you put forward earlier is credible or not. These conclusions should be supported by the preponderance of the data and information that you have reported in the “results and findings” section. Finally, you should use the information and analysis to formulate your own opinion about how your research and/or project will have an impact on your subject area.

6. **Further Research:** Write 1 or 2 pages indicating how you could improve your study if you had a chance to conduct it again. Be specific. And then show how your study can be expanded in the future. What are the next steps in this area of research? How will the subject area benefit from your research and continued research?
Paper Topics

1. Address and discuss sexual harassment and discrimination in the workplace. Be sure to focus on the law – federal, state, and local. Also, address ethical issues.

2. Discuss the issue of racial profiling in law enforcement.

3. Discuss the sensitive balance between national security and individual liberties. Provide legal and historical perspectives; address societal implications.

4. Provide a thorough historical/legal treatment of the 2nd Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. In light of this perspective, discuss the current controversy over gun rights in the U.S.

5. Address the controversy of undocumented immigration in the United States. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of immigrants. Analyze potential solutions to this multifaceted issue.

6. Discuss the issue of domestic violence. There are many areas of the law to consider and the complexities are numerous. How can we address this issue and protect victims from the consequences of such violence?

7. Discuss the role of the media in our society. Do the media have undue influence on public policymaking? Is there a political bias in reporting the news or in deciding what to report on? Consider the implications of the 1st Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

8. There is a controversy in this country regarding the rights of women to make their own choices about health care. Address this controversy from a legal, historical, ethical – even religious -- viewpoint.

9. The role of the government (federal, state, and local) has evolved and expanded since the establishment of our Republic. Discuss the following controversy: Government is a necessary and important part of our lives as it attempts to regulate and influence markets or, in the alternative, government is intrusive in our lives – the less government is involved in our lives, the better.

10. Issues associated with gay rights (e.g. same sex marriage) are controversial. Discuss this issue from the perspective of other civil rights movements in the United States (people of color, women). Is this different from these other civil rights issues? Or is it simply the current struggle for citizen equality?