

EMPA Course Descriptions

PA 518: Leading Public Organizations

This introductory course seeks to develop an understanding of the essential ingredients of leading public organizations, including creating a vision, developing support for the vision, and transforming the vision into an organizational legacy. It focuses on the distinctive role responsibilities of the leader as an agent of the organization within the larger community setting, thus distinguishing the course from other leadership classes that focus on either an individual or organizational perspective. As part of this larger external focus, participants acquire the knowledge and skills to undertake inter-jurisdictional and strategic planning, conflict management, to work with the media, and to develop and implement collaborative agreements.

PA 517: Leadership Development in Public Organizations

Leadership Development and Public Organizations course follows Leading Public Organizations. This course focuses on two activities: (1) use of assessment instruments to prepare individual leadership profiles and (2) an examination of various leadership theories with applications to specific leadership situations. The goal of the course is to assist participants in understanding their own individual leadership styles and capacities and to better appreciate what is required to successfully lead at an individual, team/group, organizational, and larger community level.

PA 540: Administrative Theory and Behavior

This course addresses how to manage organizational systems to accomplish purposeful outcomes. Attention is given to how formal structures and informal processes influence organizational goals in public and nonprofit environments. This includes theories of organizational, group, and individual behavior, such as organizational design, power and authority, leadership, teamwork, communications, work design, and motivation. The focus is on managers and managing in public purpose organizations through reviewing major theories and their application and effective use.

PA 545: Organizational Development

This course considers how organization development is used as a strategy for organizational change. Emphasis is given to concepts and methodologies relating to organizational problem diagnosis, action research, planned change, change implementation and evaluation, and the development of appropriate interpersonal competencies and skills. This course also focuses on the public manager as change agent.

PA 533: Public Policy: Origins and Processes

Drawing on the general concept of the policy cycle, this course explores the central actors, processes, and issues associated with the formation of public policy. The course gives particular weight to interaction among the three branches of government, interest groups, and the private sector. Tensions between technocratic and political approaches to policy development also receive attention, as do intergovernmental concerns.

PA 534: Administrative Law

When policies receive the formal status of laws, they acquire a special significance for the executive and judicial branches. This course examines the process of policy implementation through the use of administrative discretion and the rule-making process. Delegation of legislative power, judicial review, informal adjudication, and the role of the administrative law judge are emphasized. The limits of

discretionary authority are explored. Students address the theoretical, practical, and ethical issues in implementation, giving particular attention to the relationship between stated goals and actual outcomes.

PA 552: Analytic Methods in Public Administration

This advanced methods course helps to analyze research and evaluation of public sector policies, systems, and programs in depth. Topics to be covered may include: qualitative and quantitative applications in research design and data collection; statistical modeling, forecasting, program evaluation, and other areas of applied research. This Analytic Methods course is important for your final Capstone Project as it introduces variety of methodologies and analysis techniques that you may be able to use in your project.

PA 583: Advanced Budgeting Concepts and Techniques

This course investigates how budgeting can be used to review, analyze, and establish public policy and administrative accountability. Students learn how to: 1) design the best budget system to fit various political environments; 2) review the effectiveness and efficiency of programs through budget analyses; and 3) use the budget to clarify public policy issues and establish management accountability for performance. The mechanics of public budgeting will also be discussed in detail, including developing a budget calendar, making fund balance estimates, balancing revenues and expenditures, and monitoring the approved budget.

PA 590: Human Resource Management

This course's focal point is on administration and management of human resource systems in public sector and nonprofit organizations. It underlines values of human resource management, related public policies, structural patterns, and the functional areas of HRM systems. Specific attention will be directed to the strategic roles of human resource management in day-to-day operations, merit system concepts and practices, position and wage classification systems, methods of securing a qualified labor force, and labor relations. Legal requirements in each of these areas will be examined. Emphasis will be on learning-by-doing, through the use of skill-building exercises, simulation and analysis of case materials, review of relevant case law, administrative rulemaking, and current literature.

PA 513: Administrative Ethics and Values

The Administrative Ethics and Values course explores values, ethics, and morality in public sector administration. Concepts and issues addressed include the following: personal and professional values and roles; the myth of value neutrality; the public interest; values, ethics, and change; value trade-offs; ethical ambiguities; ethical codes, fiscal ethics, and ethics and administrative discretion.

PA 539: National Policy Process

For the National Field Experience, the opportunity to go to Washington D.C. gives professionals from the Pacific Northwest a chance to visit the sources of national policy in Washington, DC. Over the course of a week, students meet with national agency representatives, members of Congress and their staff, the President's staff, lobbyists, and issue advocates. This up-close, case-study approach to learning about the policy process leaves students with a detailed understanding of the way work is accomplished in Washington, DC and gives them insights on how it affects their work in the Northwest.

PA 544: International Field Experience (international locations subject to change)

For the International Field Experience, previous cohorts have had opportunities to travel to Lanzhou, China, Hanoi, Vietnam, and Seoul, Korea. In Lanzhou, the students participated in the Government Performance Management and Leadership Conference. The focus of this conference was to engage in the conversation around the creation of new performance measurement and evaluation systems. Other new initiatives include the development of new governance processes and structures as well as new modes of leadership.

In Seoul, the students were invited by the Seoul Metropolitan Government and the University of Seoul to gain insight into other foreign cities' public administration and public service processes, and to experience and understand the heart of Korea's politics, economy, and culture during their stay in Asia's central city. The purpose of this course is to examine public administration with a comparative perspective, using Seoul, Korea as a case example.

PA 547: Culture, Values, & Leadership

In this course, students reflect and analyze their experiences in their international field trip to Vietnam/Korea by applying a theoretical framework for cross-national and cross-cultural comparison. Students will also integrate their learnings from the international trip and explore the implications of the comparative perspectives in cultural competence and public leadership.

Capstone Requirement (2 Courses = 6 credits)

PA 510: Advanced Case Analysis / 512: Reflective Practice & Case Analysis

Toward the close of their program of study, students complete a Capstone project that addresses a contemporary leadership, management, or policy challenge confronting a public or non-profit organization. The course counts for six hours of course credit. The Capstone project requirement provides participants with considerable latitude in the selection of topics. The program actively encourages participants to select problems of immediate relevance to their own professional practice or communities of interest.

Focusing on specific and personal leadership challenges affords participants the opportunity to hone their technical and analytical skills. The reflective practice component encourages participants to draw upon the experiences and information gained across the entire curriculum to craft novel yet practical solutions to these problems that add value to their organizations, communities, and the profession as a whole. Students will be required to present a case problem they developed as the basis of an exercise in administrative problem solving and coaching for their fellow students.