PDAM 5365.B01 Seminar in Public Administration: Capstone

SPRING 2019 Course Syllabus

Course Description: The capstone course for the MPA program is an integrative approach applying the skills, knowledge and values considered, discussed and acquired throughout the core courses to selected public and administrative problems through analytical exercises and case studies. All other core courses must be completed prior to enrollment in the capstone. This is the exit requirement for the MPA program. This course must be taken during the last semester prior to graduation. (3 credit hour seminar)

Class Meets: Monday 7:00-9:30pm in Bay Hall 201 & in Blackboard. This course is hybrid and will have 50-84% instruction online.

Instructor Information: Dr. Beth M. Rauhaus, Assistant Professor of Public Administration and MPA Program Coordinator
Office: BH 301
Office Phone: 361-825-3286
Email Address: beth.rauhaus@tamucc.edu
Office Hours: Monday 9:30-11:30am, Tuesday 6-7pm, Wednesday 9:30-11:30am

*It is best to contact me via email, not through Blackboard for a timely response.

Course Materials: The following two textbooks are required and may be purchased through the university bookstore. Any additional readings and resources will be accessible electronically in Blackboard or through the university library.


E-book accessible through the Library:


Course Objectives: To complete the MPA program at TAMUCC students will demonstrate the ability to:

- Lead and manage in public governance by utilizing different theories and decision tools to identify and analyze management and public sector problems.
- Participate in and contribute to the policy process by successfully analyzing policy alternatives and use policy models, instruments and management tools to address social problems.
- Analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions by utilizing analytical tools to analyze, present, and interpret data, including appropriate design, statistical, and evaluative techniques for both organizational decision making and policy decisions.
- Articulate and apply a public service perspective to administrative and policy decisions and actions by engaging public service principles that include inclusiveness; shared power and responsibility; public deliberation; accountability; aspiring to do the “right” thing rather than just do things right; respect and appreciation for diverse values and perspectives; wise stewardship of public resources, and an appreciation for lifelong learning.
- Communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry by effectively communicating issues to a diverse set of stakeholders, in a manner that is accurate, clear, and concise, while also being tailored to varied audiences.

Course Requirements: In order to meet the listed objectives, students will complete the following assignments.

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<th>Assignment Type</th>
<th>Total Possible Point Value</th>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Boards</td>
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<td>Research Certification</td>
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<td>Reflection Portfolio</td>
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<td>Capstone Project</td>
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Total Possible Earned Points in Course: 900

- Discussion Boards: During online class meetings, students will participate in online discussion boards, available in Blackboard. Throughout the semester, there will be a total of six discussion boards, which are listed in the course schedule.
Each discussion board is worth 20 points, making the total possible score for the discussion boards 120 points. Your grade will reflect not only your participation, but the quality of your posts. A comprehensive guide with details and online expectations will be forthcoming.

- **Research Training and Certification:** Since all students will be participating in active research involving human subjects to complete the Capstone Project, CITI certification and IRB approval are required. Students will submit their professional resume (50 points) and complete the CITI training (50 points). Visit [http://research.tamucc.edu/compliance/citi.html](http://research.tamucc.edu/compliance/citi.html) to access instructions to the CITI training.

- **Midterm Exam:** Students will have their comprehension assessed in a midterm exam, which is worth 100 points. Details will be forthcoming.

- **Reflection Portfolio:** Students will write a total of six (one-page, single-spaced) entries reflecting on the core competencies of public administrators and discuss their skills, knowledge, and abilities will be useful in serving the public. The first set of entries (3 entries) will be due Feb. 18th and the final set of entries (3 entries) will be due April 9th. Each set of entries will be valued at 100 points, making the total possible score for the portfolio worth 200 points. Student presentations of the portfolio will be held in class on April 1st and will be worth a total of 20 points.

- **Capstone Project:** Students will work on a capstone project throughout the course to help solve a public problem in local / regional government. Projects will incorporate theory building, methodological approaches, practices in civic engagement, community outreach, and policy recommendations. The theme of the project is civic engagement. This project will be on-going throughout the semester and conclude at the end of the semester with a written report and presentation worth 360 points.

**A few important notes regarding written assignments:**

For written assignments, please use standard font, such as Times New Roman, 12-point font, 1-inch margins, and double-spacing, unless otherwise instructed. Citations and note style should be consistent throughout, using APA Style citations. Papers should be of professional quality, thoroughly proofread, and clear of spelling and grammatical errors. Deductions will be made for such infractions.

References or sources of information for papers must consist of scholarly (peer-reviewed) articles or journals, government reports, or the readings for the class. The use
of Wikipedia or other Internet encyclopedia for any paper is not acceptable for graduate level work and will not be accepted.

For more information on APA style citations, access this useful guide: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/10/

Submissions must be handed in on time! Late submissions will be subject to a ten percentage deduction per day late. Do NOT email assignments to me, unless you have prior approval to do so.

Course Policies:

Class Attendance: Attendance is compulsory. Excused absences will be granted with documentation only (university-related functions, medical, etc.) You are responsible for any class work missed. Professional etiquette is expected at all times in the classroom. Respect one another by listening when others are speaking, avoiding the use of cell-phones or any other disruptive behavior.

Drop Date: I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. April 5, 2019 is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

Academic Misconduct: University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic integrity. Academic misconduct of any kind is unacceptable. THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS. Consequences for academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in an automatic F (0 points) for that assignment/test. If academic misconduct is suspected on any assessment, the instructor reserves the right to impose restrictions on future assessments for an individual or the entire class as needed. Please note that the university requires faculty members to formally report all instances of academic misconduct via an Academic Misconduct Incident Form. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, multiple submissions, collusion, and fabrication. Cheating is intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, notes, study aids or other devices or materials in any academic exercise.
Cheating also includes: 1) the dependence of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments or 2) the possessing, using, buying, stealing, transporting, selling or soliciting in whole or in part items including, but not limited to, the contents of an un-administered test, test key, homework solutions or possession at any time of current or previous test materials without the instructor’s permission. Plagiarism is intentionally, knowingly, or carelessly presenting the work of another as one’s own without proper acknowledgement of the source, with the exception of information that is generally accepted as common knowledge. Plagiarism also includes: 1) the use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment or 2) the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling or distribution of term papers or other academic materials. Multiple submissions is the submission of substantial portions of the same work (including oral reports) for credit more than once without authorization from instructors of the class for which the student submits the work. Collusion is intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic dishonesty. This includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized collaboration with another individual in progressing forward on academic assignments. Fabrication, falsification, or misrepresentation is the intentional altering or inventing of any information or citation that is used in assessing academic work.

If you have questions about the university’s policy on academic misconduct, please see the Student Code of Conduct and Procedure for Academic Misconduct Cases.

Academic Advising: The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

Grade Appeals Process: As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in
the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals. These documents are accessible online at: http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal in CLA, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html.

Disability Services: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116.
If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**Course Schedule:**
This schedule is subject to change. Stay abreast of class announcements in Blackboard.

**Week 1: January 14th**
Introduction to the Course
Review the Syllabus and functions of Blackboard

**Week 2: January 21st**
No class - MLK Holiday

**Week 3: January 28th**
Preparing for Research with Human Subjects
Read Part I of Creswell text: “Selection of a Research Approach”, “Review of the Literature”, “The Use of Theory”, and “Writing Strategies and Ethical Considerations”
CITI online training and certification, Resume due
Online Meeting: Discussion Board #1

**Week 4: February 4th**
Public Administration & Civic Engagement
Read: Guy and Rubin, Ch. 1 “The Public Context”

**Discussion Board #2**

**Week 5: February 11th**
Public Administration Evolving
Read Guy and Rubin, Ch. 2, 3, 4, & 5

**Week 6: February 18th**
Public Administration Evolving
Read Guy and Rubin, Ch. 6, 7, 8, & 9
Online Meeting: Discussion Board #3
**Portfolio: First Three Entries Due**

**Week 7: February 25th**
Midterm Exam

**Week 8: March 4th**
Designing Research
Read Creswell text Ch. 5-7 & 9-10

**Week 9: March 11th**
Spring Break

**Week 10: March 18th**
In-Class Discussion of Capstone Projects

**Week 11: March 25th**
Online Meeting: Discussion Board #4

**Week 12: April 1st**
Research Practices Used in Capstone Project
Online Meeting: Discussion Board #5
**Portfolio: Final Three Reflection Entries Due**
Week 13: April 15th
Student Reflections
Students will present major themes from their portfolio and reflect on how these concepts will assist in future public service endeavors.

Week 14: April 22nd
The Future of Public Service:
Read Guy and Rubin, Ch. 13
**Online Meeting: Discussion Board #6**

Week 15: April 29th
Students Present Their Capstone Projects and Submit their Final Project