



Master Of Public Administration

Upper Iowa University

Volume 1, Issue 2
Summer 2010

What's new at UIU? *The MPA website*



The new MPA website can be found at www.uiu.edu/mpa.

Our goal is to use the website as a recruitment tool for new students and as a resource for existing students.

The documents currently posted on the website include a handbook, 590 Research Seminar templates, the general emphasis declaration form, a universal degree plan, and the course rotation for the upcoming academic year.

Keep in mind the official course offering schedule remains the one posted at <http://www.uiu.edu/mpa>.

www.uiu.edu/currentstudents/schedules.html. However, it is my intent to not make major changes to the course rotation in the foreseeable future. This should help you with course planning.

I would like to highlight both the handbook and the 590 Research Seminar templates. The MPA Student Handbook does not supersede the policies and procedures spelled out in the Academic Extension Catalog and Student Handbook. If there are contradictions between the MPA Student Handbook and the Academic Extension Catalog and

Handbook, the Academic Extension Catalog is the final word. We created a MPA handbook to address some of the policies that are unique to graduate students in the MPA program. New policies will be added as they are developed.

The 590 Research Seminar templates (also included in the MPA Student Handbook) are another resource with which you should become familiar. They provide a general overview of how to structure your paper and the various elements that must be included in it. Of particular interest are the formatting requirements and the grading rubrics. Your paper will need to conform to these guidelines including using the title page, abstract page, and table of contents page.

If you have ideas or suggestions for improving the appearance of the website, or content that should be included, please let me know. I would like to hear from you.

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UIU MPA Program Goals

1. Encourage learners to make connections between theory and practice to improve the performance of government and non-profit organizations.
2. Appreciate the importance of upholding the public trust through ethical decision making.
3. Develop analytical and critical thinking skills to improve decision making.
4. Learn how to apply the scientific method to the collection and analysis of data through qualitative and quantitative research techniques.
5. Explain how public administration is impacted by economic, political, legal, and social forces.
6. Understand the policy making process.
7. Convey complex and technical information in a clear, concise, and understandable manner.
8. Appreciate and respect the importance of diversity in a democratic society.

Congratulations to our 2010 MPA Grads!

Please join me in congratulating these graduates from the UIU MPA program:

Lee Bennett – Homeland Security
Doreen Bourdeau – Homeland Security
Joyce Friederich – Health and Human Services
Jered Headrick – Health and Human Services
Erica Houston – Health and Human Services
Elizabeth Jaster – Health and Human Services
Michael Law – Homeland Security
Simeon Luke – Homeland Security
Jan Mitchell – Homeland Security

William Mitchell – Homeland Security
Michelle Mitten – Public Personnel Management
Penny Olson – Health/Human Services
Sunny Parr – Homeland Security
Kim Pomeroy – Public Personnel Management
Leighla Sharghi – Health and Human Services
Clayton Slater – Justice Administration
John Volk – Public Personnel Management

I salute each of you for a job well done. Please keep in touch! If I have missed anybody I apologize. Send me your name, and I will make it right.



590 Research Seminar: Current Requirements and Future Direction

Our 590 Research Seminar allows you to conduct in-depth research into a topic of your choice. Your paper should demonstrate an ability to conduct research, effective communication skills, and a firm grasp of MPA program objectives.

Due to the short time frame, we are instituting a new policy beginning in term one of the 2010/2011 academic year. At least one term prior to registering for PA 590 Research Seminar, each student must submit a research proposal to the program coordinator. This proposal must be approved before you will be allowed to register for PA 590.

A strong proposal will contain a clearly identified research question that is interesting, relevant, and can be answered in eight weeks. Academic sources that provide the theoretical foundation of the research and potential sources of data should be discussed and included in a bibliography. A brief overview of how the research will be conducted, potential problems, and expected results will round out the proposal. These requirements are explained in more detail in the MPA Student Handbook. I am more than happy to discuss your research ideas with you. The earlier we begin this dialogue the more confident you can be that you are going in the right direction.

Please reference the table below to see a summary of the essential elements of the research proposal.

A change to the curriculum content of PA590 will be introduced gradually this upcoming academic year. The structure of the present course focuses on basic quantitative and qualitative research

methods. With the creation of PA517 Research Methods, this will no longer be the case. While research methods will continue to be addressed in PA590 Research Seminar, more time will be devoted to specific issues such as how to develop and write a strong literature review or improve the effectiveness of data presentation. The goal of this change is to address in more detail the practical issues students face while conducting their own research.

Potential Changes

While nothing is definite, we are reviewing how PA590 is offered. One of the most consistent complaints students have about this course is the time frame. There often is not enough time to conduct the desired research or perform the expected analysis. One option we are exploring is expanding the course to sixteen weeks instead of the current eight weeks. The number of credits would remain at three but you would have more time to complete your paper.

A second idea we are considering involves a committee approach to writing and grading research papers. In this option students would choose a faculty member to help them guide their research project. The faculty member would then assess the final paper and submit a pass/fail recommendation to the faculty member teaching the course. The faculty member teaching the course would use that recommendation, along with his/her own assessment of the paper, to issue a final grade. The goal is to provide students with more guidance and advice during the research process.

Please let me know what you think about these ideas.



Essential Elements of a Research Proposal

1. Title Page with title of paper and your contact information
2. Abstract: Maximum of 250 words detailing the project and why it is worthy of study
3. Research question and explanation of why it is important
4. Bibliography of primary and secondary sources.
5. Discussion of the major issues and the theory used to investigate the research question
6. Working Hypothesis
7. Methodological issues including data collection and Institutional Review Board approval
8. Statement of expected results
9. Timeline for completion of the paper



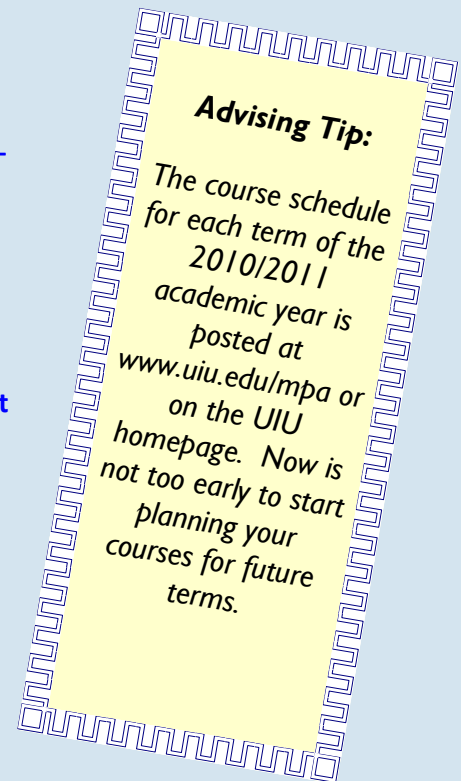
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NEW COURSES: Beginning this term we are offering new courses in different emphasis areas. PA531 Introduction to Health Care Systems, PA551 Introduction to Nonprofit Governance, and PA562 Seminar in Federalism and Intergovernmental Relations are being offered in term 1. In term 2 we are offering PA545 Labor Relations, PA567 Strategic Management, and PA564 Seminar in State and Local Government Management. Please see the course schedule at www.uiu.edu/mpa for additional courses in future terms. Each of the new courses will fulfill the elective requirement in your emphasis area.

It would be a good idea to review the scheduling of your courses. Let me know if you would like me to assist you with this review. Do not schedule your courses in the sequence listed on the degree plan. The exception is PA510 Public Administration, BA542 Managerial Statistics, and PA517 Research Methods. We want all students to take these three courses in this sequence and at the very beginning of the program. The other courses, core and emphasis, should be taken in a sequence that allows for the timely completion of the degree.

As you get close to the end of your program it would be a good idea to double check your degree plan to make sure you have actually completed all necessary courses. Do not rely exclusively on me or the Registrar to do this for you. Mistakes can happen and the last thing we want is for you to think you are graduating only to find you have another course to take. Early and frequent reviews can prevent this from occurring. The Universal Degree Plan worksheet found toward the end of the *MPA Student Handbook* is a helpful aide.



An Opportunity to get involved!

In the last newsletter I announced my plans to create a student MPA organization. This project remains in the planning stages. If you are interested in helping create and organize this group, please let me know.

Another organization I hope to create is an advisory board for the MPA. This board would advise us on current trends in the field and provide advice on possible curricular changes that are necessary to keep the program current and relevant. Membership on this advisory board would consist of professionals

Alumni Notes

All of us, faculty and students, would like to stay connected with you after you graduate from UIU. Please send us updates of what you are doing, where you are working, or other interesting tidbits you would like to share for inclusion in future newsletters. Send all correspondence to poppeg@uiu.edu.

Graduation Notes

As a candidate for graduation (associate or bachelor's degree), regardless of whether you plan to participate in the commencement ceremony, you must file an application for graduation with your program office or academic advisor (applications are available from your program). Processing of academic transcripts and diplomas are

prioritized by the date the applications are received by your program office. Applications received after the deadline will be honored at the next graduation date. There is an application fee of \$65. The application for graduation is valid for one year.

Career Tips

Finding a job in a tough economy can be challenging and frustrating. If you are looking for a job or thinking about changing a career, I would be happy to discuss career plans, future educational opportunities, or even review your resume.

Some interesting job sites:

1. USAJOBS (www.usajobs.opm.gov): The federal government's official job website
2. PublicService Careers.Org (<http://www.publicservicecareers.org/>) Public sector job site maintained by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration.
3. State Government Jobs (<http://50statejobs.com/gov.html>): Quick links to state government websites.



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