

CAPSTONE
The Evergreen State College
Master of Public Administration

Spring 2014 Syllabus
TRIBAL COHORT CAPSTONE

Session I April 11-13
Session II APRIL 25-27
Session III May 30-31

Senator John McCoy

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After class or by appt.

Office Hours: By Appointment

Program Overview

This class focuses on the completion of student-generated applied research projects based on the proposals completed in the previous winter tribal track course on policy. Students will implement their proposals selecting appropriate research techniques, analyzing data and making recommendations. The design of the Capstone is based on the concept of an applied research reflecting on the knowledge and skills developed in the second year of graduate studies and the content of the entire program. Case study format is the preferred option for this paper: as a format for writing up the research. The case study format can incorporate qualitative or quantitative studies. Other formats are possible, such as in case of an economics study or advanced statistical research or some other specialized project upon approval of your seminar leader. Final presentations will take place in the third session and family members and tribal officials may attend.

THE SECOND SESSION IS ONLINE EXCEPT FOR APRIL 26. APRIL 26 CLASS WILL BE ON CAMPUS. FOR THE OTHER DAYS, YOU CAN CONTINUE YOUR RESEARCH AND SCHEDULE TEAM MEETINGS. ON APRIL 26 YOU WILL BRING THE FIRST DRAFT OF YOUR CAPSTONE PAPER TO CAMPUS FOR MEETINGS WITH YOUR FACULTY. FOR THE REST OF THE SESSION, YOU CAN SEND YOUR RESEARCH ONLINE AND RECEIVE FEEDBACK FROM FACULTY ONLINE RATHER THAN IN THE CLASSROOM. THE SECOND DRAFT OF THE CAPSTONE IS DUE AT THIS TIME. FACULTY WILL ALSO BE PRESENT ON CAMPUS SATURDAY FOR MEETINGS WITH CLASS MEMBERS.

CAPSTONE PRESENTATIONS: PRESENTATIONS OF YOUR CAPSTONE PAPER WILL BE ON MAY 30 AND JUNE 1. ATTENDANCE FOR ALL PRESENTATIONS IS REQUIRED FOR PRESENTATION SESSION III. ABSENCES

WILL BE NOTED IN EVALUATIONS YOU HAVE UNTIL 5PM JUNE 2 TO TURN IN YOUR CAPSTONE PAPER. YOU MAY STILL RECEIVE FACULTY FEEDBACK AND NEED TO MAKE ANY REQUIRED CHANGES TO YOUR PAPER IN ORDER TO RECEIVE CREDIT.

Description of Final Capstone Paper Requirements

1. Papers may vary based on group size as described in the Capstone Q and A attached as a part of the syllabus. Students may complete the capstone project as individuals or in groups of up to three.
2. Both members of the faculty team will read each students paper and sign off when it is approved. Your individual seminar faculty will provide initial assistance and the final evaluation.
3. Priority will be given to papers that are turned in on time. If extensions are granted for capstone or previous coursework, students need to understand that they may not receive credit until sometime in the fall quarter. They may also incur additional costs for added credit. Faculty members are not normally available in the summer, are not in pay status and may be working, retired or traveling elsewhere. As a result, reading of late papers is often delayed until the beginning of fall quarter and students will have to register for extra credits and may need to find a new faculty member to read the capstone.. No extension will be granted without a make-up/late assignment agreement via email approved by both student and the faculty by the first day of the second session.
4. All papers should be submitted both in hard copy and email for each member of the faculty team.
5. Papers should be in Microsoft Word in Ariel 12pt., properly annotated using APA, double-spaced and paginated.

DELIVERABLES: The partial draft and second draft have an (a) and a (b) level. The (a) option level takes into consideration some students may not be able to move as fast to meet the deadlines, so a lesser completion level is accepted. The (b) level allows those students who are working faster to move ahead. You may choose the level you think you can achieve. At the same time, we cannot encourage you enough to complete the work as soon as possible. All students will need to turn in final drafts in hard copy need to be turned into both faculty members no later than June 3. Presentations will be on may 12-13.

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1. First partial draft due first day of Session I: April 11, 2014. This draft should include the introduction with history and context, problem definition, hypothesis or question, literature review, and plan for completion. This is a partial draft that is largely based on your already completed proposal. .

- (a) For those students who are unsure, you can leave out the methodology and methodology/theory sections, but complete all other sections of the partial draft. You can add those sections in the second draft.
- (b) Those students who are moving ahead are welcome to complete the methodology section and the methodology/theory section.
1. Second draft of the capstone paper is due April 25 via email to your faculty seminar leader.
 - (a) This section should contain a more complete draft with methodology sections and at least an initial discussion of the data you have so far and how plan to use it.
 - (b) Those students who are moving ahead are welcome to submit a more complete draft and receive feedback on your initial/partial draft of the analysis section, expanded bibliography, etc.
 2. Final version: June 3 AT 5PM Hardcopy and email versions of final Capstone due to both faculty no later than June 3. Note: faculty may still require some revisions at this point: revisions must be completed before evaluations for Capstone credit to be awarded.

PARTIAL DRAFT CAPSTONE CASE STUDY PAPER due in class April 11, 2014.

- **Describe the history and context of your main issue/topic.** Provide as much detail as you can. Reflect on what you have learned in the MPA program and how this has shaped your interest in this topic and how your knowledge of public administration informs this work.
- **Introductory section with a problem/issue description and a more specific background of the setting.** You may want to discuss how unique the problem or topic is and how similar or dissimilar it is to other problems/issues in other places or contexts. Be sure to cover what kinds of assumptions and theories that are drawn from public administration that you are using as you designed this research. This section contains a narrative of your literature review. You should also state your hypothesis or research question and spatial-temporal domain clearly here. It's a good idea to make a special paragraph that identifies and explains your research question/hypothesis. Do make reference to Yin in this section: is this an exploratory or a descriptive study, etc.
- **Methodology section including a description of your strategy for data collection and the unit of analysis.** You will also need to explain how you will operationalize the variables you are studying: be sure to define the unit of analysis you are using. Are you comparing data about different organizations or programs, or synthesizing data gathered from survey research of particular individuals? You may not be doing quantitative work---but it is still necessary to discuss the major factors (variables) that are involved in the problem and how you intend to describe them and develop evidence or data around them. There is absolutely no requirement to conduct either survey or quantitative research in the capstone research paper. The methodology you chose needs to be appropriate for the question you are asking, feasible in the time frame, and functional in leading to useful recommendations /conclusions.

- **Methodology/theory framework.** Identify the mode of inquiry used and paradigm or philosophy employed. Present your assumptions as a researcher out right. Explain your role in the research. Is this quantitative or qualitative research? If you are using both quantitative and qualitative data, identify how and where you will use them. Do not mix them up: be sure to keep quantitative and qualitative data sections distinct. Do cover how validity, reliability, ethics and possible implications for those impacted by your research findings. Note the expected audience for the research.
- **Planning section. This is for the first draft only.** Outline timeframes, budget and responsible individuals. Identify any remaining obstacles or challenges and how you plan to make adjustments.
- **Initial bibliography of written resources**
- **Completed and approved Human Subjects Review**

ADDED SECTIONS FOR THE SECOND PARTIAL DRAFT DUE SECOND DAY OF SECOND SESSION VIA EMAIL TO FACULTY SEMINAR LEADER AND FINAL CAPSTONE PAPER DUE IN HARD COPY AND E-MAIL VERSIONS TO BOTH FACULTY MEMBERS NO LATER THAN JUNE 3 AT 5pm. Note: students choosing option (a) for the second draft may not be ready to fully approach the analysis section, but should do their best to describe how they are gathering data, what issues have arisen, and describe an initial plan for how they will use the data. Option (b) students should go ahead and move into the analysis and even recommendation/conclusion section as far as they can.

- Include everything from the first draft with all necessary corrections or updates and the following additional components.
- **Analysis section.** This section explains what you have done with the data and how you have interpreted it now that you have it. Essentially, you are presenting your data and explaining your search for meaning and patterns in the data. Charts, illustrations and tables are extremely useful in communicating your findings. You should also include adjustments or changes made in the process of the research such as noting what percentage of the total sample responded to the survey, or changes in people interviewed, unexpected responses in a focus group, etc. Do not hesitate to share changes or challenges: improving how we do research is itself a major outcome and will assist others in the future. Be sure to make it clear how you develop the evidence in a way that connects with your hypothesis. Do not try to “prove” the hypothesis. Let the evidence speak for itself: it may reveal new and previously unknown perspectives. Revealing alternatives is often more beneficial than presenting conclusions.
- **Recommendations/conclusions.** Begin to think about some of the **policy implications** of your research and findings. Make the connection between the research and its implications for Tribes. If the evidence suggests more than one alternative or “answer” do not hesitate to describe more than one choice. You can discuss the need for further research or prioritize alternatives based on the costs or

benefits. The best researchers do not set out to find “one truth.” Instead they help to achieve a better understanding of a problem or issue by embedding appropriate research methodology in a rich context. This creates a narrative that can reveal the impacts of policy choices in complex multicultural settings.

- **References.** List books, documents, people and other resources for information that you would use for your research. This should include at least 10 academic references from the field of public administration or a related field like economics law or political science and ten additional references including government documents, manuals, archival material books, journal articles and other resources. Information from the media or general dictionary/encyclopedic resources is also useful to include, but they will not count as academic or documentary references.

Final Capstone Presentations

- Develop a formal presentation. You may use PowerPoint, handouts, overheads or any media necessary to make an effective and professional presentation of your research. Do include charts and graphs or other visuals that clearly illustrate major points and the potential policy impacts of your research.

- FIRST SESSION APRIL 11-13

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SESSION I Friday 1-5	Assignments
▪ 1:00 Overview	▪ Partial capstone draft
▪ 1:45 Capstone Writing Wkshp	▪
▪ 3:00 Break	▪
▪ 3:15 Seminar or speaker	▪
▪ Graduation details	▪

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Saturday 8:30-5

8:30-10:30 Faculty review of drafts	Appointments with groups
10:30 Summative Class Discussion: Summative Review	
12:00 Lunch	
1:00 WORKSHOP	
3:00 Faculty available for questions and coaching	Individuals, groups continue to work on research.

Sunday 8:00-4

Continued individual and group work on capstone research paper	Arrange meetings with faculty
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SECOND SESSION April 25-27

Friday: library//online research	
Saturday: library/online research, group meetings, FACULTY MEETINGS ON CAMPUS	Second draft of Capstone due to faculty seminar leader
Sunday: Continue research	

SESSION III MAY 30-JUNE1

Presentations of the Capstone work will be on Friday and Saturday May 30 and June 1. You will still have until June 3 to complete your written Capstone or final project. Even if you are not completely through writing, the presentation can focus on the story of your research at that point in time. Attendance for both days is required for credit.