



Course Descriptions

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Executive Master in Public Leadership

Course Descriptions

32 Total Course Hours

- PA 280E Gateway to Executive Leadership (2 hours)
- PA 381E Strategic Communications (9 hours)
- Topic 1 Understanding & Shaping Opinions
 - Topic 2 Negotiation, Mediation and Multi-Party Dispute Resolution
 - Topic 3 Risk and Crisis Management
- PA 382E Executive Analytics (12 hours)
- Topic 1 Economics for Leadership
 - Topic 2 Statistical Reasoning for Executive Leadership
 - Topic 3 Enterprise Management (Budgeting & Finance)
 - Topic 4 Essential Management Concepts and Skills for Senior Managers
- PA 383E Executive Management (6 hours)
- Topic 1 Leadership Strategy and Decision-making
 - Topic 2 Leading Organizational Change
- PA 389E Research Capstone (3 hours)

Executive Master in Public Leadership Course Description

Course: PA 280E: Gateway to Executive Leadership

Instructor: EMPL Faculty

The EMPL program will begin with a four-day intensive gateway course for all students. This course is designed to accomplish four goals. First, it will build community among students, nurturing a set of personal connections that will facilitate intellectual collaboration and professional networking. Second, the gateway course will help prepare students for the reading, writing, and analytical expectations of the program. Third, students will take part in a multi-rater leadership assessment and begin work on a personal leadership development plan that will be interwoven and addressed throughout the EMPL course of study. Fourth, and perhaps most important, the gateway course will introduce key concepts of leadership that will underpin all student work in the EMPL program.

The gateway course will occur over four consecutive days in late May, before the summer semester begins. It will be a two-credit full-time course for those four days. Students must attend all sessions.

Course Activities/Assignments:

- Reading and discussing a case study in contemporary public leadership.
- Identifying the challenges facing executive level leaders in the public sector and the strategies, skills, and organizational acumen needed to successfully address these challenges.
- Participating in a multi-rater leadership skills assessment and development planning process focused on the learning that will be most helpful in advancing one's public leadership goals.
- Identifying the executive's role in creating and sustaining an organizational culture of ethical leadership.
- Preliminary planning for a final capstone student project (completed in the last semester of the EMPL).

Executive Master in Public Leadership Course Description

Course: PA 381E: Strategic Communications

Section Title: *Understanding & Shaping Opinions*

Instructor: Sherri Greenberg

Strategic communication is a vital part of a public leader's role. A core principle of strategic communication in any public entity is understanding and shaping opinions, with a variety of internal and external stakeholders. Internal stakeholders include staff at the leader's agency and staff across the organization, and all public boards or commissions that are pertinent to an agency's mission. External stakeholders include the public, media, interest groups and lobbyists. The goal of this course is to enable public leaders, using both traditional and new media tools, to implement strategies to understand and shape the opinions of these diverse stakeholders.

Course Activities/Assignments:

- Explore available techniques for assessing and understanding opinions including surveys and focus groups, using both traditional means and new technologies.
- Identify when to use the various tools and how to interpret data and results.
- Incorporate transparency and open data concepts in communication plan development.
- Analyze the roles of traditional media and the new media in understanding and shaping opinions.
- Develop a communication plan that incorporates social media, such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

Executive Master in Public Leadership Course Description

Course: PA 381E: Strategic Communications

Section Title: *Negotiation, Mediation and Multi-Party Dispute Resolution*

Instructor: David Eaton

This course enables participants to learn, integrate, and apply the knowledge and skills of negotiation, dispute resolution and multi-party mediation. Participants in the class will be able to: (a) assess when to use mediation; (b) advise clients about the process and potential of mediation; (c) assist clients effectively before, during, and after mediation; and (d) demonstrate the skills necessary to be an effective mediator.

The instructor uses diverse training methods to address different learning styles, including: (a) lectures; (b) group discussions; (c) mediation simulations; (d) role plays and mock negotiations; (e) videos of actual meditations; (f) other structured participatory activities.

The course approaches the study and practice of mediation from three perspectives: skill development, theory, and the law. Initial classes explore dispute resolution with particular emphasis on negotiation. The focus then shifts to the mediation process and the skills needed for mediators to assist parties in resolving issues as well as relevant regulations, trends, and future role of mediation. The role of the mediator is examined, including ethical responsibilities, explicit authority and limitations. Participants will also consider and experience mediation from the perspective of advocates representing clients in mediation.

The course design satisfies the requirements for a “Certificate of Completion” of the Texas Mediator Trainer Roundtable standards for a forty-hour “Basic Mediation” course, so a participant can be certified as a Mediator in Texas based on the mediator training requirements under Texas ADR Act.

Course Activities/Assignments:

- Observe at least three different types of simulated, videotaped, or actual mediation or negotiation sessions to evaluate behavior of disputants and mediators.
- A minimum of 25 percent of training hours shall be spent in participatory activities, defined as supervised and structured activities that require interaction among two or more people.
- Under the guidance of the instructor, mentors, and external evaluators, each participant will contribute to a minimum of two role-plays as a mediator and take part as a disputant or as an advocate in a minimum of two role-plays.

Executive Master in Public Leadership Course Description

Course: PA 381E: Strategic Communications

Section Title: *Risk and Crisis Management*

Instructors: Patrick Brockett and John Daly

Crises are inevitable. At some point, something will happen outside or within any organization that will spark a crisis. How that crisis is handled shapes the reputation of the organization and the careers of every leader of that organization. Handled well, reputations are enhanced; handled poorly, careers are ruined and organizations falter. Indeed, one of the major responsibilities of organizational leaders is effectively handling crises.

In this class, we focus on the issues leaders of organization must consider before, during, and after a crisis. We begin the class by defining crises, noting the sorts of crises organizations face, and the value, intrinsically and extrinsically, of good crisis management. We highlight the importance of preventing, anticipating, and planning for, crises. Then, using a stage model of crises we explore what leaders need must do to recognize crises early, handle them well, and recover from them promptly. We emphasize how what leaders say and do matters immensely during crises. Finally, we discuss the role of the media in crises and how leaders and organizations need to both understand and effectively manage the media throughout a crisis.

The goal of the course is give participants a deep understanding of crisis management and provide a variety of practical tools and skills participants can use when faced with crises. Instructionally, the class includes readings, exercises, lectures, case studies, as well as invited speakers who have successfully handled crises in the past.

Course Activities/Assignments:

- Completion of a crisis assessment of an organization.
- Develop a disaster recovery plan for an organization.
- Role-play a crisis manager facing the onslaught of media and other stakeholders while trying to successfully manage incoming information.
- Examine organizations that are culturally more crisis-prone.
- In-depth analysis of a specific crisis a government organization has faced in the past.

Executive Master in Public Leadership Course Description

Course: PA 382E: Executive Analytics

Section Title: *Economics for Leadership*

Instructor: EMPL Faculty

This course covers the fundamental principles of economics and integrates them in the context of managerial decision-making. The core concepts of demand and supply, market efficiency, and competition serve as building blocks for understanding the institutional context of market failures and the application of economic principles to policy problems such as the concentration of economic power and resources, social inequality, and protecting the environment. This course explicitly examines the role of government and the tools available to managers and policy decision makers to operate effectively in market and non-market settings. One module of the course focuses specifically on the application of economic principles to cost-benefit analysis. Most of the class will be conducted in a lecture/discussion format, complemented by small group activities and case discussion.

Executive Master in Public Leadership Course Description

Course: PA 382E: Executive Analytics

Section Title: *Statistical Reasoning for Executive Leadership*

Instructor: Chandler Stolp and Robert Wilson

This course provides a practical foundation for understanding the uses of statistical reasoning in management and policy analysis. Its purpose is not to train future statisticians, but rather to lend executives the skills to ask the right questions of empirical work that informs executive leadership and policy making. Practical applications are employed throughout the course to illustrate the use of statistical reasoning in a variety of settings, including impact assessment, employment discrimination, policy/program evaluation, workforce training, performance indicators, and more. Students will be asked to identify a dataset drawn from their own work experience to practice skills developed over the course of the semester and, ultimately, produce a term project report based on these data. A textbook will be required to structure the treatment of relevant themes, and will be supplemented by auxiliary readings and material developed specially for this course.

Course Activities/Assignments:

- Data, Descriptive Statistics, and Exploratory Data Analysis
- Summarizing Multivariate Data for Management Decision Making
- Probability, Probability Distributions, and Probability Modeling
- Normative Principles of Rational Decision Making
- Statistical Inference
- Causal Inference and Regression Analysis
- Extensions to Regression Analysis
- Forecasting
- Research Design and Program Evaluation

Executive Master in Public Leadership Course Description

Course: PA 382E: Executive Analytics

Section Title: *Enterprise Management (Budgeting & Finance)*

Instructor: EMPL Faculty

This course is an introduction to the theory and practice of public financial management at senior levels of government. Its objective is to develop executive capabilities in the analysis of financial operations and the management of public sector financial resources. The course will cover the principles of finance, economics, accounting and fiscal administration. A major part of the course will be devoted to understanding the basic financial reports of governments – their budgets and their annual reports. Other topics include taxes and other revenues, bonds and other forms of debt, investments, capital budgeting, performance evaluation and auditing.

Students will be expected to come to the course with a basic understanding of the accounting model and key underlying concepts. Those who have not previously had an introductory course, or commensurate practical experience in accounting, will be expected to take a self-paced computer-based course in the subject prior to the first class session. The EMPL program administrator will provide guidance on appropriate and available pre-course options.

Course Activities/Assignments:

- Identify unique features of government accounting and government financial statements
- Evaluation of revenues
- Consider present value analysis and its application to bonds and capital projects
- Management of debt, investments, pensions and other post employment benefits
- Program results assessment
- Cost management review
- Analysis of financial statements and performance-type budgets

Executive Master in Public Leadership Course Description

Course: PA 382E: Executive Analytics

Section Title: *Essential Management Concepts and Skills for Senior Managers*

Course Instructor: Kevin Bacon

This course is designed to develop the management capabilities expected of senior managers/leaders in the public sector. The course assumes students have already had basic managerial experiences and are preparing for more senior roles. The course will cover four broad topics that one can expect to face as a senior executive in the public sector (government or non-profit organization). These topics include:

1. *Measuring and managing organizational performance* in order to effectively lead an organization. This includes using and managing information systems to help control the organization and its work.
2. *Developing and executing strategies* designed to prepare and strengthen an organization in order to carry out its mission. This topic involves consideration of the various levers or tools executives use to affect change in the organization.
3. *Strategically managing organization talent* – finding the right people, putting them in the right roles, and developing their capabilities in order to carry out the mission.
4. *Managing complex systems* – increasingly the work of executives revolves around managing portfolios of projects, programs that rely on networks/agreements/contracts with other organizations (public, private, non-profit), and complex cross-functional business processes within your own organization.

The course will utilize different instruction methods, including: (a) lectures; (b) group discussions; (c) guest speakers/panels; (d) case studies; (e) writing assignments keyed to ‘real world’ management problems; and, (f) selected readings in management theory and practice.

Course Activities/Assignments:

- Examine student’s personal management experiences with the class and discuss them with guest speakers.
- Write a solution paper applying one or more concepts from the course to analyze an existing management problem within their current organization and present a course of action.

Executive Master in Public Leadership Course Description

Course: PA 383E: Executive Management

Section Title: *Leadership Strategy and Decision-making*

Instructor: Jeremi Suri

This course will introduce mid-career professionals to key concepts, insights, and experiences related to the strategic leadership of modern organizations. The course is designed to increase students' understanding of what it means to think strategically, lead an organization, and marry strategy with leadership. Course activities will center on readings, discussion, and short think-piece papers. Students will not learn a formula for strategic leadership. Students will, instead, gain an appreciation for the different kinds of strategic leadership, and their relevance for current and future professional needs.

Course Activities/Assignments:

- Weekly reading assignments of approximately 150 pages.
- Weekly three-paragraph response essays, posted on Blackboard, about the assigned readings.
- Two 10-page reflection papers on strategy and leadership. The first paper will examine concepts. The second paper will describe contemporary applications.

Executive Master in Public Leadership Course Description

Course: PA 383E: Executive Management

Section Title: *Leading Organizational Change*

Instructor: Barry Bales

The research on the success of organizational change efforts is not encouraging. Some sources indicate that as many as 70% of major organizational change initiatives fail to achieve some or all of their intended objectives. At the same time, some leading authors in the field propose that the function of leading organizational change is one of the defining, core responsibilities of leadership. Senior level leaders in government must achieve a better record than that!

The course will be organized to cover the following areas:

1. *Theories and models to help one think about organizational change.* Which aspects of these theories and models are similar, which are different, and how are these helpful – if indeed they are - in understanding change efforts in your organization?
2. *Understand how people experience change.* Why do people resist change and is what we perceive as resistance always resistance? What strategies are helpful for reducing resistance and getting buy-in from staff? How can one make it easier for people to get on board with change initiatives?
3. *Understanding organizational culture and readiness.* Changing culture is one the hardest challenges leaders face. Understand how cultures can support or thwart change efforts and use systems thinking principles in identifying the structures that most influence behavior in the organization.
4. *Assessing the implementation of change.* How do we measure progress in implementing change? Measurement strategies and tools will be introduced and used to assess change efforts in the theories, models, and practices discussed in class.

The course will utilize different instruction modes, including lectures, group discussions, case studies, and a computer-based simulation. There will also be a number of guest speakers/panels who will discuss their experiences and challenges in leading and implementing organizational change efforts.

Course Activities/Assignments:

- A minimum of two written assignments focused on the application of assigned readings
- Each student will identify a significant organizational change effort from their current organization with which they have some responsibility/accountability and write a paper proposing a strategy for more effectively and successfully leading organizational change.

Executive Master in Public Leadership Course Description

Course: PA 389E: Research Capstone

Instructor: EMPL Faculty

All EMPL students are expected to work closely with the academic director and other professors to identify a project that will build on their studies in the program and contribute to their leadership success in their current employment. The capstone course offers an opportunity for each student to work one-on-one with a faculty member in completing this project. Projects will include a research, writing, and presentation component.

Course Activities/Assignments:

- Regular and frequent meetings with faculty supervisor during the semester.
- Submission of a project proposal for approval.
- Completion of a draft of the final project in time for feedback and revisions before the end of the semester.
- Presentation of the project at a gathering of all EMPL students and faculty.