

## **PA Faculty Meeting Agenda**

**Friday, February 16, 2007**

**10 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

**WT 1.224**

- 1. MPA and Ph.D. Programs. Review.**
  - a. Mission Statements.**
  - b. Curricula. Review of Courses.**
  - c. Plans of Study. Ph.D. Cohorts.**
  - d. Size of F 07 Cohort. Doug Kiel.**
- 2. SACS Report. F 06 and the Future. Scott Robinson.**
- 3. Writing Seminar. Future Action. Don Arbuckle.**
- 4. Other Matters.**

*Lunch will be provided.*

PA 7325 Survey of Public Affairs  
Fall 2006 Course Assessment Outcomes

1. Assessments for the course included ten short essays on the assigned weekly readings, two book reviews completed as part of group projects, three peer-reviewed journal article reviews, and a 20-page research paper due at the end of the semester. All but two students performed at acceptable levels on the weekly assignments, all performed adequately on the two book reviews, all but one performed adequately on the journal reviews, and all but one performed adequately on the research paper.
2. For the next semester, my plan will be to scan the latest literature for new books to assign for the book reviews. The required style manual for the course will be Turabian's 7<sup>th</sup> edition rather than a modified version of APA. I will also allow more time during the last three weeks of the semester for the students to discuss their research papers in more detail with their classmates.

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**PA 4360 Ethics in Public Administration**  
**Fall 2006 Course Assessment Outcomes**

- 1) Assessments for the course included two take-home case write-ups due during the semester and a five-part portfolio due at the end of the semester. All but one student performed at an acceptable level on Case One, all students performed at an acceptable level on Case Two, and all except for two students performed at an acceptable level on the Portfolio.

In the Fall, different cases will be assigned to the students. In addition, the students will be required to use proper citation styles in their portfolios, something that was not required last year. Further, I am considering having them do the case write-ups in class, rather than as a take-home assignment.

To: Scott  
From: Stephanie  
Date: March 6, 2007  
Re: Fall 2006 Course Recap for SACS – PA 6320 – Organizational Theory

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1. Assessments for the master's component of the course included two take-home exams, one at the mid-term and the other at the end of the semester, an individual book review, group presentation, and weekly reaction journals. All students, except for one, performed at an acceptable level in each of these areas. For the doctoral students, the course included two take-home exams, one at the mid-term and the other at the end of the semester, six book reviews, and weekly reaction journals. All students performed at an acceptable level in each of these areas.

2. In the spring, I will change some of the book review selections for both the masters and Ph.D. students. In addition, I will modify the mid-term and final exams in order to cover a broader range of material.

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#### PA 6352 Evaluation Research Methods in the Social Sciences

##### Fall 2006 Course Assessment Outcomes

Course assessments comprised 5 individual take-home assignments, commentary on oral presentations, and a group report. Outcomes were as follows:

Assignment 1:	11	of	21	students	performed	at	a	satisfactory	level
Assignment 2:	15	“	“	“	“	“	“	“	“
Assignment 3:	19	“	“	“	“	“	“	“	“
Assignment 4:	21	“	“	“	“	“	“	“	“
Assignment 5:	19	“	“	“	“	“	“	“	“
Commentary :	21	“	“	“	“	“	“	“	“
Group Report:	21	“	“	“	“	“	“	“	“

2) Two things will be done in the next offering of this course. First is that model assignments, drawn from prior semesters, will be distributed and discussed in class two weeks before the due date. Second is that students will submit non-graded, preliminary assignments for review and class discussion one week before the due date. Addition of inter-semester learning and practice should help to improve learning outcomes.

**PA 5303-501 24 students**

A. % students performing at acceptable level for course assessment types:

- |  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| 1. Short writing assignments (4 assignments) | 70% acceptable  |
| 2. Journal article review (2 assignments)    | 75% acceptable  |
| 3. Research paper proposal                   | 100% acceptable |
| 4. Research paper presentation               | 79% acceptable  |
| 5. Research paper                            | 92% acceptable  |

B. Changes: The primary difficulty these student's faced was their significant (in some cases, breathtaking) lack of proficiency in writing. Next semester, the program will organize a Writing Workshop to provide help to students. In addition, the PA faculty will discuss solutions to this longer term problem; efforts will need to continue to help students improve their writing. This problem with writing shows up above in the relatively low acceptable rates for the short-writing assignments and journal article reviews. Further into the semester, with the help of the research paper proposal exercise, writing noticeably improved. In the future, more preparation for presentations will be offered. Finally, the reading list for this course is fine; it will be subject to continuous, incremental modifications.

**PA 7325 23 students**

A. % of students performing at acceptable level for course assessment types:

- |  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| 1. Short writing assignments (4 assignments) | 65% acceptable  |
| 2. Journal article reviews (2 assignments)   | 61% acceptable  |
| 3. Group book reports (3 assignments)        | 100% acceptable |
| 4. Research paper proposal                   | 100% acceptable |
| 5. Research paper presentation               | 100% acceptable |
| 6. Research paper                            | 90% acceptable  |

B. As with PA 5303 above, poor writing skills were the primary problem for students in this class. In presentation work they excelled, and with practice during the semester and the preparation of the research paper proposal, their writing clearly improved by the semester's end. They would benefit from a Writing Workshop, as described above, as well as other efforts the PA program may make to help them improve their writing. The reading list for this course was fine; additional reading will be added to supplement the basic works covered in the course.

March 14, 2007

Dr. Scott Robinson  
Professor  
University of Texas at Dallas  
School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences  
Department of Public Affairs  
17919 Waterview Parkway  
Dallas, Texas 75252-8011

Dear Dr. Robinson:

I have drafted my comments on the rating for my Fall 2006 PA classes 5320 Community Planning and 5321 Government Financial Management and Budgeting.

## **PA 5320 Community Planning**

The class was rated satisfactory by 80% of the class.

However, there were some areas where improvement could be made. There was a need identify additional ways to determine how well the students were picking up the material. They were given a mid term exam, a final exam and a research paper. I would estimate that 70% of the class had no troubles with the exams but for those that did have trouble. I am going to add another class project that involves making a real work presentation to the class using power point software to make a business case on community planning issue.

The research papers were passed by 70% of the students without any real trouble but for those that did I propose to explain in the syllabus that they need to advocate for their point of view, I will require a short description of their research topic and that an outline of the proposed paper be provided before beginning the paper. I believe these steps will improve the quality of the research papers and the scores.

## **PA 5321 Government Financial Management and Budgeting**

This class was rated satisfactory by 80% of the class.

However, there were some areas where improvement could be made. There needs to be additional methods used to determine how well the students were picking up the material. They were given a mid term exam, a final exam and a research paper. I would estimate the 70% of the class had no troubles with the exams but for those that did have trouble. I plan to add more quest speakers for my classes and I am going to include a computer lab session to include working on an actual web based budget module so the students can receive real hands experience developing and submitting a budget document.

The research papers were passed by 70% of the students without any real trouble but for those that did I propose to explain in the syllabus that they need to advocate for their point of view, that a short description of their research topic will be required and an outline of the proposed paper be provided before beginning the paper. I believe these steps will improve the quality of the research papers and the scores.

If you have questions or need additional information please contact me.

Ted Benavides  
Senior Lecturer  
University of Texas at Dallas  
School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences  
Department of Public Affairs  
17919 Waterview Parkway  
Dallas, Texas 75252

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### PA 7325 Survey of Public Affairs Fall 2006 Course Assessment Outcomes

Assessments for the course included ten short essays on the assigned weekly readings, two book reviews completed as part of group projects, three peer-reviewed journal article reviews, and a 20-page research paper due at the end of the semester. All but two students performed at acceptable levels on the weekly assignments, all performed adequately on the two book reviews, all but one performed adequately on the journal reviews, and all but one performed adequately on the research paper.

**Fall '06 Course Recap**  
**PA 3335 Organizational Behavior**  
**Instructor: Adrian M. Velazquez**

1) Assessments for the course included a scored, in-class practical assignment (Case One), two exams (midterm or Case Two and take-home final or Case Three), one individual presentation of a current event or a journal article review (students are free to choose) linked to topics of Organizational Behavior (Case Four), and one group presentation of a team case analysis (Case Five). All students performed at an acceptable level in Case One, all but four students performed at an acceptable level on Case Two, all but one student performed at an acceptable level on Case Three, all but three performed at an acceptable level on Case Four, and all except for one student performed at an acceptable level on Case Five.

2) During the Spring semester, the option on Case Four will be eliminated and only current events will be considered for the assignment. In Case Five, different cases will be assigned to the students and stricter guidelines will be required for their group reports.

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**L. Douglas Kiel**  
**Fall 2006**

**PA 6326 – Decision Tools for Managers**

Type of Assessment

Three required assessment tools were used in this course. These tools were: (1) a standard graduate level research paper – 12 pages in length; (2) a portfolio of applied management science exercises, and (3) a group presentation on a current academic topic in decision-making. The research paper was weighted as 50% of the grade with the remaining requirements each carrying 25% of the course grade. Approximately 75% of the students performed at a satisfactory level on each of the course requirements.

Anticipated Changes

I intent to increase the number of required journal articles for the course the next iteration of this course. I also intend to provide a more distinct set of required features for the group presentations. This will ensure a common set of required elements for the presentations. I also intend to expand the scope of the research paper to 20 pages.

**L. Douglas Kiel**  
**Fall 2006**

**PA 7305 Leadership of Public and Non-Profit Organizations**

Type of Assessments

This course required: (1) a personal leadership development plan (30% of the course grade); (2) a research paper (60 % of the course grade) and (3) a two-page synopsis of a presentation to the class (10% of the course grade). The personal leadership development plan includes formal leadership assessments performed in class.

Anticipated Changes

Professor Kiel is teaching this course again this spring of 2007. He has already instituted changes derived from his experience with the course during fall of 2006. First, students are now required to write a philosophical/critical essay on the topic of 'Leadership and Human Nature.' This allows the professor to obtain feedback early in the semester as to the writing skills and thought processes of the students. The scope of the personal leadership development plan has also increased. An additional assessment instrument, the Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) is now included in the self-assessment plan for each student. The required format for the plan includes improved detail to ensure students have a common framework for inclusion of data and for production of the plan.