

SAMPLE SYLLABUS - subject to change; provided as an example only for prospective students. For current students, the syllabus you are given in class by your instructor is the one which applies to your course, and which you should follow.

**Department of Public Administration
College of Public Service & Urban Affairs
Tennessee State University**

Course Number: PADM 7130

Title: Research Methods for Public Administrators

Course Credit: Three Credits

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Course Description: This course is structured in survey format in order to inform the public administration student about research methods in public administration. The prerequisite class for this course is PA 6130 or the equivalent thereof.

Course Learning Outcomes:

- Research & Technical Writing Skills
- Oral communication skills
- Utilization of case study evaluations and research for decision-making
- Research & Writing skills pertaining to a policy & rule techniques
- Techniques associated in program evaluation as a mgt. tool
- Ethical conduct and decision-making in organizations
- Use and Role of IT in Organizations
- Understanding of legal, ethical, political, economic, and social impacts of IT
- Understanding emerging trends in IT
- Security issues associated with IT

Topical Outline: The topics that will be discussed throughout the semester will include, but not limited too, research design construction, theory development, approaches to research design techniques (both qualitative and quantitative), and other topics necessary for applying and understanding research methods and techniques in public affairs.

Teaching Strategies: Lectures, class discussion, individual written and oral projects, weekly assignments, & exams

Required Text:

Babbie, Earl. 2007. The Practice of Social Research, 11th edition. CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Publishing. ISBN: 0-495-09325-4.

Kuhn, Thomas S. 1996. The Structure of Scientific Revolution, 3rd ed. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. ISBN: 0-226-45808-3.

Klemke, E.D., Robert Hillinger, David Rudge & A. David Kline. 1988. Introductory Readings In The Philosophy of Science. New York: Prometheus Books. ISBN: 0879754230.

Teddlie, Charles & Abbas Tashakkori. 2009. Foundations of Mixed Methods Research: Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches in the Social and Behavioral Sciences. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publication.

Yin, Robert K. 1994. Case Study Research Design and Methods. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publication. ISBN: 0-8039-5663-0.

Selected Readings from White & Adams, Research in Public Administration (provided by the instructor).

Course Requirements:

Final Exam	200 points
Class Participation and Discussion	100 points
Class Project (Conference Paper & Presentation)	<u>200 points</u>
Total	500 points

Grading Scale: Final Grades will be premised on cumulative points as follows: A = 500- 450; B = 449 - 390; C = 389 - 300; D = 299 - 220; F = below 220.

Individual Project Grading Scale: A = 100 – 90; B = 89 – 80; C = 79 – 70; D = 69 – 60; F = below 60.

Exams: Each student will be required to complete a final exam. The final exam will be in class and the student will have one class period to complete the exam. It will resemble a focused question on a preliminary exam for completion of the Ph.D. Each exam will consist of questions about important topics discussed throughout the semester.

Conference Paper: Each student will be required to write the equivalent of a conference paper as their class project. The conference paper will be in the form of a research design, similar to those presented by ABD students as dissertation proposals. The purpose of this exercise is to equip the student with the necessary skills for conducting possible research and presenting that research at professional conferences in the social sciences. Papers and presentations will be due at the end of the semester (date has not yet been determined).

Content of Conference Papers:

- **Abstract/Executive Summary**
 - A summary of the purpose and findings of the study.
- **Introduction**
 - The overture of the manuscript and why this research is important to public administration.
- **Literature Review (Due by the Midterm Exam Date)**
 - Discussion of the relevant literature pertaining to your topic and the literary gaps that exists warranting further research into this important issue.
 - The stated *Problem* addressed by the article
 - The *Purpose* of the article
 - The *Methods* used to gather the data in the Article (this may not be applicable in all cases since most of the articles are theoretical arguments)
 - The *Findings and Conclusions* of the Article
 - Your *Opinion* of the validity of the Article in helping us understand public organizations and why you tend to believe this way
 - Also, the theoretical foundation from the literature that justifies the importance of this research topic.
- **Hypotheses**
 - A section containing the hypotheses tested in the manuscript (written as null hypotheses).
- **Data**
 - Conceptual Definitions: What variables are you going to use in your manuscript and why.
 - Operational Definitions: Where you are going to collect the data you plan to use in your manuscript.
- **Research Methods**
 - The statistical method you are going to use to test the data and why you believe this technique is the most appropriate for your manuscript.
- **Anticipated Findings**
 - The anticipated findings of your research.
- **Limitations**
 - The anticipated limitations of your study.

- **Conclusion**
 - The practical applications that your research contributes to both the practitioner and academic in public administration, along with possibilities for future research on this topic.
- **References**
 - No less than 25 academic sources are to be used in conducting this research.

Minimum Requirements

- At least 20 - 25 pages in length (not counting the title page) but no more than 25 pages.

Notes for the Ph.D. student to remember:

- All sections in the paper should begin with an introductory paragraph that discusses what issues will be addressed in each section of the paper.
- The use of active voice in writing papers at the Ph.D. level of study is encouraged because it separates the doctoral student from the master and undergraduate student in writing style. Furthermore, it demonstrates to the instructor that the student has a skillful understanding of the English language. Plus, it makes your writing much more interesting to read!

Grading Criteria for Papers:

- 1) *Analysis:* A sufficient number of public policy implementation concepts are used to analyze the situation discussed in the paper;
- 2) *References:* A variety of pertinent and timely references were sought and obtained in preparing the paper;
- 3) *Organization:* The main points are stated clearly and arranged in a logical sequence;
- 4) *Coherence:* The development of ideas, arguments and discussion shows consistency and logical connection;
- 5) *Clarity:* The ideas, arguments and discussion shows consistency and logical connection;
- 6) *Conciseness:* The language is direct and to the point, using sufficient space to say exactly what is intended and be readily understood by the reader;
- 7) *Grammar:* The written is in standard American English, with proper sentence structure, syntax, punctuation and spelling;
- 8) *Drafting:* The writing shows evidence of being drafted and revised before submission of the final copy.
- 9) *Following Directions:* Identifying and addressing all components of the project the instructor outlines.
- 10) *Timeliness:* Simply turning the project in on the specified date given by the instructor.

Class Presentations:

Each student will be required to present their research design paper to the class, on a designated day, at the end of the semester. The student will present the paper

using PowerPoint and the presentation will be 30 minutes in length. The student will entertain any questions from the audience after the presentation. The following criteria are used to assess the performance of the student who is presenting in class:

- 1) Organization – There is a structured format in which the student displays throughout the presentation.
- 2) Planning – There is evidence of rehearsing and the presentation flows well and is properly paced according to time.
- 3) Visual Aids – Adequate use of visual aids to assist in explanations during the presentation.
- 4) Speaker Enthusiasm – Displayed adequate knowledge of the subject, and exhibited sufficient self-confidence during the presentation.
- 5) Voice Projection – Good articulation, proper delivery rate, no distracting gestures (e.g., chewing gum, too many “uhs”, etc).

Participation/Attendance:

Students are expected to be present in order to participate in class discussions. For every absence the instructor will deduct 10 points from the students participation and attendance grade. Excessive absences will lead to a substantial lowering of a student's grade. General criteria used to assess class participation include:

- 1) *Content Mastery*: Students must display an understanding of facts, concepts, and theories presented in the assigned readings and lectures. This ability is the basis for all higher-level skills and must be made evident by classroom comments and/or response to questions.
- 2) *Communication Skills*: Students must be able to inform others in an intelligent manner what she/he knows. Ideas must be communicated clearly and persuasively. Communication skills include listening to others and understanding what they have said, responding appropriately, asking questions in a clear manner, avoiding rambling discourses or class domination, using proper vocabulary pertinent to the discussion, building on the ideas of others, etc.
- 3) *Synthesis/Integration*: Students must illuminate the connections between the material under consideration and other bodies of knowledge. For example, one could take several ideas from the reading or class discussions and combine them to produce a new perspective on an issue, or one could take outside materials and combine them to create new insights. Students who probe the interdisciplinary roots of the theories presented or who are able to view the author or the materials from several viewpoints demonstrate this skill.
- 4) *Creativity*: Students must demonstrate that they have mastered the basic material and have gone on to produce their own insights. A simple repetition of ideas from the articles will not suffice, nor will simply commenting on what others have said. Students must go beyond the obvious by bringing their own beliefs and imagination to bear. Creativity may be displayed by showing further implications of the material, by applying it to a new field, or by finding new ways of articulating the materials, which produce significant insights.

- 5) *Valuing*: Students should be able to identify the value inherent in the material studied. The underlying assumptions of the author should be identified. Furthermore, students should be able to articulate their own positions by reference to basic underlying values. Students must not simply feel something is wrong or incorrect; they must be able to state why, based on some hierarchy of values. In either accepting or rejecting a position, the operative values must become explicit.
- 6) *General Enthusiasm and Interest in the Class*: This can be shown by regularity of attendance and thoughtful insights given throughout the semester in class discussions.

**** All papers (including organization design paper) should use the following format: Times New Roman, 12 point font, 1" margins from left to right and top to bottom, and double spaced. Paginate all papers you submit to me for a grade. Late projects will automatically be reduced one letter grade for each day they are late not each class period.*

Note: *Following explicit directions is an important aspect of graduate school training. Therefore, it is important that the student follow the stated guidelines in this syllabus, throughout the course of this class, because failure to do so will result in point reductions.*

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students with Disabilities – Information for the Syllabus

Contact Patricia Scudder, Director of Students with Disabilities – Disabled Student Services Office at 963-7400, preferably before the fourth class meeting, if you need accommodation. The College of Public Service & Urban Affairs, in conjunction with the Office of Disabled Student Services, makes reasonable accommodations for qualified students with medically documented disabilities. I need to be aware of your status if it will affect your class activities and assignments – *before* assignments are due.

**** Note this syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.*

Semester Reading & Assignment Schedule

Class One:

Introduction
Class Requirements

Class Two:

Research Design
Read All of Pan

Class Three:

Research Design continued...!

Class Four:

Readings in Philosophy of Science

Introduction
Part I: Science & Refutations
Part II: The Natural and Social Sciences
Part III: Explanations and Law

Class Five:

Readings in Philosophy of Science continued...!
Part IV: Theory & Observation
Part V: Confirmation & Acceptance
Part VI: Science & Values

Class Six:

Kuhn, Structure of Scientific Revolution

Class Seven:

Babbie Chapters 1 – 3

Class Eight:

Annotated Bibliographies Due

Class Nine:

Yin, Case Study Research Design and Methods

Class Ten:

Babbie, Chapters 4-9

Class Eleven:

Babbie, Chapters 10-13; 15, 16

Class Twelve:

Babbie, 14, 15 & Mixed Methods

Class Thirteen:

Presentations

Class Fourteen:

Presentations

Class Fifteen:

Final Exam