



Course Descriptions

Information Updated 2/22/16

Executive Master in Executive Leadership

Course Descriptions

32 Total Course Hours

- P A 280E Gateway to Executive Leadership (2 hours)
- PA 381E Strategic Communications (9 hours)
- Topic 1 Understanding & Shaping Opinions
 - Topic 2 Negotiation & Dispute Resolution
 - Topic 3 Risk & Crisis Management
- PA 382E Executive Analytics (6 hours)
- Topic 1 Data Analytics/Predictive Analytics
 - Topic 2 Enterprise Management – Budget and Finance
- PA 383E Executive Management (12 hours)
- Topic 1 Leadership Strategy & Decision-- -Making
 - Topic 2 Leading Organizational Change
 - Topic 3 Management Concepts & Skills – An Executive Toolkit
 - Topic 4 Management Concepts & Skills – Organizational Excellence and Executive Leadership
- PA 389E Research Capstone (3 hours)

Executive Master in Public Leadership Course Description

Course: PA 280E: Gateway to Executive Leadership

Instructor: Jeremi Suri

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: Sharon Jarvis

Strategic communication is a vital part of a public leader's role. A 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 to implement strategies to understand and shape the opinions of these diverse stakeholders.

The class is divided into three sections including:

- **Message Development** (covering principles from communication, marketing, social psychology, and sales and addressing best practices in audience analysis, language use, nonverbal persuasion, and narrative);
- **Message Delivery** (including role-play activities ranging from crafting email messages to speaking to staff, media, and public boards and commissions); and
- **Messages in Action** (framing public conversations employing traditional and social media, responding to difficult situations, and delivering bad news).

Class sessions will include discussion of the readings, case studies, exercises, lecture, role-play activities, and guest speakers with expertise in presenting to boards, communication campaigns, and social media.

Course Activities/Assignments:

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| • One-page, single-spaced papers (weeks 2 – 9) | 30% |
| • Class participation | 15% |
| • Communication skills (role-play activities) | 15% |
| • Strategic communication project | 40% |

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 to 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 to 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: Enterprise Management (Budget & Finance)

Instructor: John O'Brien

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 budget, finance, accounting, and fiscal administration. The course will cover the full range of fiscal management issues, from development of budgets to review of account data and financial reports. Other topics will include taxes and revenue collection, debt financing, investments, cash management, audit, pensions, cost analysis, and procurement.

Course Activities/Assignments:

- Regular reading assignments
- Short essays on reading assignments
- Introduction of topics, in-- -class discussion, case studies, and periodic guest speakers
- Issue papers analyzing and making recommendations on contemporary topics and projects

Executive Master in Public Leadership Course Description

Course: PA 382E: Executive Analytics

Section Title: Data Analytics/Predictive Analytics

Instructor: Cynthia Osbourne

Leaders use data to drive decision making. This course provides students with the skills and experience to understand how to use data to make informed decisions. The course will use real-world examples to teach students about statistical inference, research methods, and how to be sophisticated consumers of evidence. Students will also learn to present evidence to communicate with multiple audiences.

Executive Master in Public Leadership Course Description

Course: PA 382E: Executive Analytics

Section Title: *Management Concepts and Skills: Organizational Excellence and Executive Leadership*

Instructor: Craig Pedersen/Miha Vindis

This course will examine the factors that make excellent organizations and the role of executive leaders in such organizations. The instructors draw on sources in the public, private and nonprofit sectors to develop these concepts. Attention will be given to the attributes of excellent organizations and the roles and priorities of leaders in achieving and maintaining such organizations, including a range of leadership strategies and activities. Specific topics include: strategic people issues, working in teams, creating collaborations and alliances, political savvy, engaging in policy development and executing policy, ethics in organizations and scenario planning. This course is intended to be the first of two linked courses on elements of organizational management and should serve as a foundation in the development of a variety of program core competencies.

Course Activities/Assignments:

- Regular reading assignments
- Short postings on reading assignments
- Introduction of topics, in-class discussion, case studies, and periodic guest speakers
- Team Exercise

Executive Master in Public Leadership Course Description

Course: PA 382E: Executive Analytics

Section Title: *Management Concepts and Skills: An Executive Toolkit*

Course Instructor: Kevin Bacon

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

1. *Developing and executing strategies* designed to prepare and strengthen your organization in order to carry out its mission. This topic involves consideration of the various levers or tools executives use to execute the strategy of their organization.
2. *Measuring and managing organizational performance* in order to effectively lead the organization. This includes using and managing information systems to help control the organization and its work.
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 learning styles, 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. Students will be expected to share their own management experiences with the class and discuss them with our guest speakers.

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:

5. *Theories and models to help us 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?
6. *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 do we make it easier for people to get on board with change initiatives?
7. *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.
8. *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 learning approaches, 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.