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PSC 491.01: Research for Public Managers

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Political Science 491
RESEARCH FOR PUBLIC MANAGERS
Fall 2009

Prof. Jesse Munro
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Office: Corbin 252
Office Hours: M, W, F 9 am–11:30 am and
1 pm–2 pm or by appointment
Class Location: SS 258

Course Description:

This course introduces the student of public administration to the methods used by public managers in preparing for and conducting research. The course focuses on understanding and applying the various concepts involved in conducting research along with the practical skills and writing skills necessary in developing a research proposal. The course covers the tools of research needed for public managers; how to find and utilize these tools; determining whether research should be done in-house or out-of-house; how to develop a research proposal and a Request for Proposal. All of this is done within the context of what a public manager needs to know regarding research projects within his/her agency, a “how to” course.

Course Objectives:

1. To identify and acquire substantive knowledge and understanding of the traditions of research within public agencies.
2. To understand the research process within public administration in discovering, collecting, and interpreting information in resolving the problems of daily operations.

Required Textbooks:

Using Sources Effectively, Robert Harris, Pyrczak Publishing

Other Provided Readings

Course Requirements:

Student participation is an essential element in this course due to the discussions which will take place. During these discussions, students will learn from other students input and analysis. Students are required to read all assigned readings and be prepared to discuss them in class; complete eight (8) writing assignments and complete the Chapter Reviews contained within the textbook. Writing assignments 1, 2, and 3 are worth 50 points each; writing assignments 4, 5, 6, and 7 are worth 30 points each; and writing assignment 8 is worth 100 points. Rewrites of

writing assignments may be required by the instructor. The Chapter Reviews are worth 30 points each except for Chapter 1 which is worth 20 points. The total for the class is 540 points.

Sources for Writing Assignments: The availability of potential sources for student use in developing writing assignments will be discussed in class. Students are encouraged to utilize sources provided in and through the Mansfield Library.

Graduate Increment: Graduate students will meet with the instructor to determine their graduate increment.

PSCI 400: Students enrolled in this optional one-credit, co-requisite course will write a ten page essay on a course-related topic approved by the instructor. Students may rewrite the essay and submit it for a new grade. The important facets of writing must be discussed with the instructor prior to writing the essay (style, organization, sources, and method of citation and documentation). The essay is worth 100 points and will be graded based upon content (clarity and validity of argument) and writing (grammar, diction, syntax, and logical development).

Course Grading:

A = 502-540 points	A- = 486-501	B+ = 470-485
B = 448-469	B- = 432-447	C+ = 416-431
C = 394-417	C- = 378-393	D+ = 362-377
D = 340-361	D- = 324-339	F = 0-323

Course Schedule:

Monday	31 Aug 2009	Introduction to Research for Public Managers
Wednesday	02 Sept 2009	What is research? What constitutes research? What research is not!
Friday	04 Sept 2009	Why research for public managers?
Monday	07 Sept 2009	NO CLASS – Labor Day Holiday
Wednesday	09 Sept 2009	Ethics and Research Readings: <i>Exploring Research</i> , Neil Salkind, Pages 58-65; <i>Research Methods for Public Administrators</i> , Elizabethann O'Sullivan, Gary R. Russell, Pages 218-231
Friday	11 Sept 2009	Ethics and Research Internal Review Board – Ethics Test

Monday	14 Sept 2009	<p>Ethics and Research</p> <p>Reading: <i>Splitting the Difference</i>, Martin Benjamin, Pages 46-74</p> <p>Assignment: Begin Writing Assignment 1 – (Due Monday 21 Sept 2009)</p>
Wednesday	16 Sept 2009	<p>Using Sources Effectively</p> <p>Reading: <i>Using Sources Effectively</i>, Robert A. Harris, Chapter 1, Pages 1-7</p> <p>Assignment: Review Questions, Page 7; Chapter 1 Review Quiz, Page 8; Self-Assessments, Pages 10-12</p>
Friday	18 Sept 2009	<p>Plagiarism</p> <p>Reading: <i>Using Sources Effectively</i>, Robert A. Harris, Chapter 2, Pages 13-26</p> <p>Assignment: Review Questions, Pages 26-27; Chapter 2 Review Quiz, Pages 28-29</p>
Monday	21 Sept 2009	<p>Selecting Sources</p> <p>Reading: <i>Using Sources Effectively</i>, Robert A. Harris, Chapter 3, Pages 31-43</p> <p>Assignment: Review Questions Pages 43-44; Chapter 3 Review Quiz, 45-46</p> <p>Reminder: <i>Writing Assignment 1 - Due Today!</i></p>
Wednesday	23 Sept 2009	<p>Working with Sources</p> <p>Reading: <i>Using Sources Effectively</i>, Robert A. Harris, Chapter 4, Pages 47-62</p> <p>Assignment: Review Questions, Chapter Review Quiz, Pages 64-66</p>
Friday	25 Sept 2009	<p>Putting It Together</p> <p>Reading: <i>Using Sources Effectively</i>, Robert A. Harris, Chapter 5, Pages 67-81</p> <p>Assignment: Review Questions, Pages 81-82; Chapter 5 Review Quiz, pages 83-85</p>
Monday	28 Sept 2009	<p>Effective Use</p> <p>Reading: <i>Using Sources Effectively</i>, Robert A. Harris, Chapter 6, Pages 87-96</p> <p>Assignment: Review Questions 96-97; Chapter 6 Review Quiz, Pages 98-99; Appendix A, Pages 101-112</p>

Wednesday	30 Sept 2009	Tools of Research
Friday	02 Oct 2009	Tools of Research Assignment: Begin Writing Assignment 2 – (Due Friday 09 October 2009)
Monday	05 Oct 2009	Government Documents and Journals Meet at Mansfield Library UM – Room 283
Wednesday	07 Oct 2009	Government Documents and Journals Meet at Mansfield Library UM – Room 283
Friday	09 Oct 2009	Government Documents and Journals Meet at Mansfield Library UM – Room 283 Assignment: Begin Writing Assignment 3 – (Due Friday 16 October 2009) Reminder: <i>Writing Assignment 2 – Due Today!</i>
Monday	12 Oct 2009	Introduction to the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Guest Speaker: Charles Harris
Wednesday	14 Oct 2009	Understanding the Difference Between Social Science Research and Applied Research Reading: <i>Research for Public Administrators</i> , Elizabethann O'Sullivan, Gary R. Rassel, Pages 57-76; <i>Understanding Research Methods</i> , Mildred L. Pattern, Pages 23-24; Class Handout
Friday	16 Oct 2009	Understanding the Difference Between Social Science Research and Applied Research Reading: Class Handout Reminder: <i>Writing Assignment 3 - Due Today!</i>
Monday	19 Oct 2009	Research Design / Proposal / RFP
Wednesday	21 Oct 2009	When to Conduct Research – Identifying the Need, Or the Problem Reading: <i>Practical Research</i> , Paul D. Leedy, Jeanne Ellis Ormrod, Pages 47-49; <i>Research Methods for Social Sciences</i> , Chava Frankfort-Nachmias, David Nachmias, Pages 46-47; <i>Political Science Research Methods</i> , Janet Buttolph Johnson, H.T. Reynolds, Pages 60-65 Assignment: Begin Writing Assignment 4 – (Due

Friday 23 October 2009)

Friday	23 Oct 2009	Statement of the Problem Reminder: <i>Writing Assignment 4 – Due Today!</i>
Monday	26 Oct 2009	Internal Review Board / Approvals / Processes
Wednesday	28 Oct 2009	Literature Reviews / Annotated Bibliography Review: Tools of Research Reading: Class Handout
Friday	30 Oct 2009	Literature Reviews / Annotated Bibliography Assignment: Begin Writing Assignment 5 – (Due Friday 06 November 2009)
Monday	02 Nov 2009	Developing a Hypothesis or Research Question Reading: Class Handout
Wednesday	04 Nov 2009	Developing a Hypothesis or Research Question Reading: Class Handout
Friday	06 Nov 2009	Developing a Hypothesis or Research Question Assignment: Begin Writing Assignment 6 (Due Friday 13 November 2009) Reminder: <i>Writing Assignment 5 – Due Today!</i>
Monday	09 Nov 2009	Methodology – Available Options Reading: Class Handout
Wednesday	11 Nov 2009	No Class – Veterans Day Holiday
Friday	13 Nov 2009	Methodology – Sample Populations Reading: <i>Exploring Research</i> , Neil K. Salkind, Pages 85-96 Reminder: <i>Writing Assignment 6 - Due Today!</i>
Monday	16 Nov 2009	Data Collection Reading: <i>Conducting a Survey</i> , Lawrence T. Orcher, Pages 59-72 Assignment: Begin Writing Assignment 7 – (Due Friday 20 November 2009)
Wednesday	18 Nov 2009	Data Collection / Developing a Survey Instrument

Friday	20 Nov 2009	Data Collection / Developing a Survey Instrument Reminder: <i>Writing Assignment 7 – Due Today!</i>
Monday	23 Nov 2009	Completing a Survey
Wednesday	25 Nov 2009	No Class – Thanksgiving Holiday
Friday	27 Nov 2009	No Class – Thanksgiving Holiday
Monday	30 Nov 2009	Data Analysis – SPSS – Formulating Data
Wednesday	02 Dec 2009	Data Analysis - SPSS
Friday	04 Dec 2009	Data Analysis – Review Assignment: Begin Writing Assignment 8 – Due 14 December 2009)
Monday	07 Dec 2009	Grants for Research
Wednesday	09 Dec 2009	RFP Requirements for Contracting Research Services
Friday	11 Dec 2009	Final Discussion and Review
Monday	14 Dec 2009	Final – Writing Assignment – 1:10 pm – 3:10 pm Reminder: <i>Writing Assignment 8 – Due Today!</i>