Portfolio

All Master of Public Administration (MPA) students admitted to the program in the Fall 2012 semester or later at Columbus State University are required to prepare a professional portfolio in order to fulfill degree requirements. The portfolio will be evaluated during the Capstone course (MPAC 7766), which is taken in the final semester of study.

Portfolio Purpose

- To showcase the development of student skills, competencies, and knowledge acquired over the course of study.
- To document development, practice, and mastery of student competencies within the MPA curriculum.
- To demonstrate to prospective employers students’ professional and academic experiences.
- To provide students and faculty an opportunity to assess the Public Administration Program.

Portfolio Evaluation

Portfolios are evaluated based on the student's demonstrated mastery of the established program Universal Competencies and Learning Outcomes. The mastery of these concepts will be demonstrated through the submission of student work (artifacts) from the student’s tenure in the program. The first six artifacts will be designated by the Public Administration (PA) faculty in each of the six primary core classes. These assignments will demonstrate the student’s mastery of the Universal Competencies (See Appendix A for a detailed explanation of the Universal Competencies). The next six artifacts will be chosen by the student based on the artifact’s ability to demonstrate the student’s mastery of the Learning Outcomes. These student chosen artifacts can be chosen from work in either the Core or Elective courses. The student selected artifacts must be different from the faculty selected artifacts.
Portfolio Composition

Universal Competencies: Assignments chosen by Faculty

There are five Universal Competencies:

1. The ability to lead and manage in public governance.
2. The ability to participate in and contribute to the public policy process.
3. The ability to analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions.
4. The ability to articulate and apply a public service perspective.
5. The ability to communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry.

The six Faculty Assignments designated to cover these universal competencies, broken down by course, will be:

1. MPAC 7106 - Survey of Public Administration (Journal)
2. MPAC 7116 - Public Personnel Administration (Case Study)
3. MPAC 7126 - Public Budgeting/Financial Administration (Budget Simulation)
4. MPAC 7136 - Research Methods for Administration (Research Project)
5. MPAC 7146 - Organization Theory and Behavior (Case Study)
6. MPAC 7156 - Legal Environment of Administration (Paper)

Learning Outcomes: Assignments chosen by Student

The student will pick six assignments which demonstrate their mastery of these eight Learning Outcomes:

1. Understanding and Explaining the Public Policy Process and Organizational Environment
2. Development and Practice of Soft Skills, Teamwork Building, and Ethical Decision Making in Public Organizations
3. Formulation, Interpretation, and Evaluation of Public Budgeting and Finance
4. Application and Proper Dissemination of Quantitative and Qualitative Techniques of Analysis
5. Application of Ethical Management Practices and Decision Making of Public Service Organizations
6. Proper Assessment and Application of Legal Constraints regarding equity and equality as it pertains to public service as well the ability to disseminate those standards in regards to variations in race, ethnicity, gender, class, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, age, physicality, etc.
7. Problem-solving and Critical Thinking
8. Effective Oral and Written Communication
Portfolio Requirements

Faculty will assign projects in each of the required Core courses that have the potential to demonstrate the five universal competencies. Faculty assignments should, at the end of the student’s tenure at Columbus State University, equal a total of six artifacts which may include, but are not limited to, case studies, journal entries, memos, power point presentations, reports, research proposals, and/or research papers. There will not be an artifact from the final Core class, MPAC 7766 Capstone.

Additionally, the student will select and submit no less than six artifacts (different from the faculty required submissions) which demonstrate their mastery of the Learning Outcomes. Student submissions can come from their work in either Core or Elective courses and may include, but are not limited to, case studies, journal entries, memos, power point presentations, reports, research proposals, and/or research papers.

Portfolio Structure

The Portfolio must include a cover page, a table of contents, a one-page executive summary, statement of purpose, an artifact with caption from each core course that demonstrates the Universal Competencies (chosen by the faculty), an artifact with caption that demonstrates the Learning Outcomes (chosen by student), a five-page personal essay that demonstrates the student’s public service philosophy and which must reference each of the five Universal Competencies, and a current resume. Portfolios are to be submitted electronically during the Capstone class in a PDF format.

Each Portfolio Must Contain the Following Sections and Materials and structured in this format:

- Cover Page
- Table of Contents
- Executive Summary
- Statement of Purpose
- Six (6) Artifacts of Universal Competencies (Faculty Assignments)
- Six (6) Artifacts of Learning Outcomes (Student Selections)
- Personal Public Administration Philosophy (personal essay)
- Current Resume

Cover Page
The cover page must include the student’s name and date of submission.

Table of Contents
The table of contents follows the cover page. The table of contents should contain a listing of all of the documents listed below and include correlating page numbers. Each of the twelve student artifacts should be listed separately on the table of contents.
Executive Summary
The executive summary should provide a brief (one page) description of the portfolio, including the organizational scheme, as well as a brief statement about the student’s decision process for inclusion of materials.

Statement of Purpose
The statement of purpose is the document submitted by the student when applying for admission to the Public Administration Program at Columbus State University.

Artifacts of Universal Competencies (Faculty Assignments)
The portfolio should contain six artifacts that cover each of the five Universal Competencies.

List each artifact separately in the table of contents with the class number, semester & year the class was taken, and submission type (i.e. Case Study, Journal, Paper, etc.).

For each individual artifact a caption is required. A caption is a standardized attachment to an artifact that introduces and provides summary information about the artifact and how it demonstrates the Universal Competencies. Captions should be approximately one page in length, be consistent in format, and appear on a sheet prior to the artifact it introduces. It must include: the project type, date of project, course number, a paragraph relating the artifact to the Universal Competencies and a paragraph of self-reflection detailing what was learned and stipulating whether the artifact was an individual effort or group project. Individual contributions must be highlighted in group projects.

When the assignment is originally graded and returned by the faculty member, the student should make any recommended changes or corrections to the artifact prior to submitting it in the portfolio.

Artifacts of Learning Outcomes (Student Selections)
The portfolio should contain six artifacts that cover each of the eight Learning Outcomes.

List each artifact separately in the table of contents with the class number, semester & year the class was taken, and submission type (i.e. Case Study, Journal, Paper, etc.).

For each individual artifact a caption is required. A caption is a standardized attachment to an artifact that introduces and provides summary information about the artifact and how it demonstrates the Learning Outcomes. Captions should be approximately one page in length, be consistent in format, and appear on a sheet prior to the artifact it introduces. Each caption must include: the project type, date of project, course number, a paragraph relating the artifact to the Learning Outcomes, a paragraph describing why the artifact was selected, and a paragraph of self-reflection detailing what was learned and stipulating whether the artifact was an individual effort or group project. Individual contributions must be highlighted in group projects.
When the assignment is originally graded and returned by the faculty member, the student should make any recommended changes or corrections to the artifact prior to submitting it in the portfolio.

**Personal Public Administration Philosophy (Personal Essay)**
This is a self-reflective piece focusing on individual student motivations for seeking or continuing a career in public service as well as a description of professional growth experienced throughout the Public Administration Program focusing on individual philosophical and managerial approaches. The self-reflective essay should be five (5) pages in length and incorporate the universal core competencies.

**Current Resume**
There is no official format required for the resume submission, but it is expected to be submitted as a standard employment resume.
# Portfolio Checklist

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<tr>
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<th>Yes</th>
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**Universal Competencies:**

- **To Lead and Manage in Public Governance**
- **To Participate in and Contribute to the Public Policy Process**
- **To Analyze, Synthesize, Think Critically, Solve Problems, and Make Decisions**
- **To Articulate and Apply a Public Service Perspective**
- **To Communicate and Interact Productively with a Diverse and Changing Workforce and Citizenry**

**Artifacts of Learning Outcomes (Student Selections)**

*Be sure to identify the Learning Outcomes demonstrated via captions for each assignment submitted. List each artifact separately in the table of contents with the class number/semester & year/submission type.*

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**Portfolio Grading**

Portfolios will be graded by a three-person portfolio committee composed of Public Administration core faculty. Students must earn a minimum grade of “B” on their Portfolio to pass. The portfolio comprises 50% of their final Capstone grade. Students must earn a minimum grade of “C” in the Capstone to pass. It is not possible to pass the Capstone Class if the student does not meet the minimum expectations in both the Capstone course work and the Portfolio. Failure to pass the Capstone will result in an inability to graduate and the need to retake the course.

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<th>Grade</th>
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<td>Meets expectations in all areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Fails to meet expectations in at least one area</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
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Appendix A

Explanation of Universal Core Competencies

To Lead and Manage in Public Governance
Competencies related to leading and managing in public governance are encompassed in our core curriculum and emphasized throughout the MPA program and conveyed through our mission statement in the form of “leadership skills for effective, efficient, and responsive public service.”

Special attention is given to incorporating and practicing the following leadership knowledge, skills and abilities:

- a sound theory and practical base knowledge of organizational theory and public personnel administration
- focus on leading and managing individuals and their productivity in an efficient and ethical manner
- adhering to and understanding the ecology of administration and the organizational environment in which decisions are made
- accounting for and understanding both internal and external factors acting on public managers

Students are taught to evaluate and adjust leadership styles based on current the population served in order to promote a firm understanding of diversity, organizational structure, employee motivation, problem solving skills, and innovation. Cultivating the ability to understand, evaluate, and implement changes to the organization in order to meet the demands of the public and government is crucial as it contributes to understanding the relationship between policy formulation and implementation.

To Participate in and Contribute to the Public Policy Process
An integral component of the MPA mission is the providing of a “professional education” which will provide students with the practical knowledge and skills needed to apply that knowledge in the professional job setting. A portion of the professional education is conveying the knowledge to not only understand the intricacies of the policy process but also how to participate in and contribute to the public policy process.

Students are given a foundation of the policy process in which all of the following are detailed:

- problem definition (including the politics involved)
- agenda setting
- policy formulation
- policy implementation
- policy evaluation

Once the foundational knowledge base is established, students are given assignments in which that knowledge is transformed into the skills necessary to operate and participate in the public policy process. Case studies allow “real life” application of public policy
implementation and evaluation with an emphasis on decision making within the public arena.

**To Analyze, Synthesize, Think Critically, Solve Problems, and Make Decisions**
A key element of the MPA mission statement is that of providing leadership skills and as such the ability to analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions. These skills are necessary for today’s public service employees. The context in which decisions are made in the public sphere differs from other arenas and students of public administration must develop the skills necessary to quantify and qualify problems as well as issues related to public policy and administration.

Students will acquire the abilities and skills to:
- collect and analyze data using the appropriate methodology
- be able to interpret and present their findings
- understand the politics of public policy making in terms of decision making
- identify alternative solutions/opportunities
- take into account legal and financial constraints both internal and external
- evaluate and suggest viable alternatives

**To Articulate and Apply a Public Service Perspective**
For effective, efficient, and responsive public service, students of public administration must understand the unique challenges the public sector presents. Operating in the public sector requires the ability to work in an arena of competing interests while being cognizant of the needs of the general community. It is a balancing act of doing more with less due to budgetary constraints. Public servants are required to negotiate a constantly changing field to meet the demands of the citizens and communities in which they serve, all the while functioning in a transparent manner to keep and hold the public trust. Public managers/administrators must understand the needs of the communities/citizens but also must understand the political institutions and actors involved in the policy making process.

**To Communicate and Interact Productively with a Diverse and Changing Workforce and Citizenry**
To prepare individuals for a life of success, leadership, and responsibility through community awareness, engagement, and service to others, the mission of the MPA program promotes the notion of “responsive” public service. To be responsive students must develop communication skills which allow for effective and efficient communication with diverse populations. Thus, the ability to tailor communication effectively in both writing and speech to diverse audiences is a required competency. Flexibility and adaptability are important as they pertain meeting the various needs of not only the workforce but also of the current population. Leadership skills associated with diversity sensitivity are necessary due to differing values, beliefs, and behaviors of the changing workforce.