Research Applications in Public Administration (MPAD 6188)

SYLLABUS

Instructor:	Joanne G. Carman, Ph.D.
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Office Hours:	By appointment
Class Schedule:	Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m. to 9:15 p.m., Online

MPAD 6188: Research Applications in Public Administration (3 credits)

- This course involves preparing a major paper on a topic of significance in public or nonprofit administration. Topics must be approved by the instructor, and paper drafts will be revised by the student following evaluation by the instructor. Each paper must be well grounded in the appropriate professional literature and must demonstrate competence in professional communication skills.

Graduation

- Students planning to graduate in May must apply for graduation by February 24th

- Students need to have a GPA of 3.00 to graduate. Students must be enrolled in the semester or summer term in which he/she expects to graduate.

- The last day to withdraw from a single class is March 25th

- Be sure to check your UNCC email regularly for notices distributed on the student list-serve, and additional information about the program requirements are provided our website: http://mpa.uncc.edu/

Required Course Materials

- American Psychological Association (2020). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association. Washington, D.C. (7th Edition).

- SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) or STATA. You may purchase your own license for the software, or you can choose to access it through UNCC vi Apporto. See: https://servicecatalog.uncc.edu/service/software-distribution/apporto

Additional Required Readings

- Students will need to access additional readings and materials on Canvas or the library, depending upon their research topic and data analysis plan.

Course Objectives

Objective	NASPAA Competency	Activity
Identify a public service or policy problem	2) To participate and contribute to the policy process	Introduction and Abstract
Employ analytic tools for collecting, analyzing, presenting, and interpreting data, including appropriate statistical concepts and techniques Exercise ethical responsibility when conducting research and making decisions	3) To analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions 4) To articulate and apply a public service perspective	Literature Review Data and Methods Methods Findings Discussion Conclusions
Communicate effectively in writing.	5) To communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry	Final Paper
Communicate effectively in speech.	5) To communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry	Presentation

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- The purpose of this capstone course is for students to write and present an individual research project using the skills they developed in the MPA Program. Successful projects will demonstrate that the student has learned to:

    - Think critically, Think creatively
    - Reflect on learning and practice
    - Write well and communicate effectively
    - Develop scholarly research and professional skills
    - Bridge academic and real-world understanding

Grades

- As noted in the UNCC Graduate Handbook, letters are used to designate the quality of student academic achievement: A Commendable (4.0); B Satisfactory (3.0); C Marginal (2.0); U Unsatisfactory (0.0). Grades will be assigned as follows: 90.00 to 100 = A; 80.00 to 89.99 = B; 70.00 to 79.99 = C; below 70.00 = U. *Please note: I will not round your grade up or down.*

Resources for Students

- UNC Charlotte offers a number of services and supports to its students, including: the Center for Graduate Life, the Writing Resources Center, a Counseling Center, a Career Center, and many others. Students are encouraged to utilize these resources, as needed, and may access additional information about these services and supports on the university website (www.uncc.edu). Of particular interest and importance:

    - The Center for Graduate Life offers an array of very useful workshops and resources for graduate students. See: http://gradlife.uncc.edu/

    - The Writing Resources Center (WRC) offers a variety of free services and materials to help students to become more effective writers, including: one-on-one writing tutorials; in-class presentations; online research assistance; peer revision groups; online writing tutorials; and a print library of writing resources. Students are strongly encouraged to utilize the Writing Resources Center, as needed. See: http://wrc.uncc.edu/

- The Library offers a variety of services for students, including assistance with research, reference, inter-library loan services and presentation support. The library also has a librarian dedicated to helping students in the Social Sciences: Amanda Binder, 704-687-1771, abinder3@uncc.edu.

- The University Career Center for Work, Service and Internships also provides a variety of services to help students prepare for their careers and participate in experiential learning. See: http://career.uncc.edu/

- The Counseling Center offers individual counseling, group counseling, couples counseling, and consultative services at no charge to students. Students come to counseling to get help for a variety of concerns, including anxiety, symptoms of depression, and relationship issues. The Counseling Center also offers outreach programs including prevention, awareness, and education about mental health treatment:
    - http://counselingcenter.uncc.edu/counseling-and-consultation-services

- UNC Charlotte is committed to access to education. If you have a disability and need academic accommodations, please provide a letter of accommodation from Disability Services early in the semester. For more information on accommodations, contact the Office of Disability Services at 704-687-0040.

Format

- Given nature of this course, the students will meet as group online, in small groups online, as well as individually by phone or online with the instructor. Each student is expected to come to each group meeting prepared, having done the assignments, and ready to engage fully in class discussions and participate in class activities. Each student is expected to come to each individualized meeting prepared -- with a list of agenda items, questions or concerns, and timetable for deliverables. Canceling, rescheduling, missing, and being late for individualized meetings will be considered in the overall evaluation of your performance.

Assignments

Each student will create a folder in Google Drive for the class (labeled as LastName MPAD 6188) and share it with the instructor. All elements related to the production of the paper are to be stored in the Google Drive (e.g., current data set, code sheet, literature, and sources, etc.). A subfolder labeled "Submissions" will be created and the drafts of the paper elements which are to be graded will be posted there, unless we make other arrangements. Points will be deducted if the students fail to maintain this folder properly.

♦ **Research Paper Components – Drafts (45%)**

The purpose of this course is for students to conduct **independent, directed research**. To that end, students will be required to turn in drafts of each of the paper components. The drafts will be graded, with comments and feedback being provided each step of the way. Students are expected to turn in the draft components as scheduled, and revisions are to be made as needed. **Please note: Writing this paper is an iterative process**. The drafts of the paper components, tables and/or figures, and your presentation will need to be revised multiple times. Be sure to plan for this.

1. Research Plan and Data (Submit for Approval)

    The research plan will identify:

    a. What is the research question (or questions)?
    b. What are the preliminary hypotheses?
    c. A list of the variables that will be in your study (dependent, independent, and control), indicate how each variable is coded, how they match to your hypotheses
    d. The summary statistics of your data (no missing data).
    e. What theoretical perspective(s) will you use to frame your study?
    f. How or why is it relevant to public administration, public policy, or nonprofit management?
    g. A preliminary reference list (at least 10 scholarly sources) that you will draw from.

2. Literature Review (10%)

   The literature review will "set up" your empirical study. Here, you will review the literature that relates to your research question, your hypotheses, and your study's variables. The literature review will include a) a synthesis and analysis of previous research; b) your hypotheses that you will test which will come from your review of the literature (correctly specified); and c) any notable gaps in the literature to highlight why you are conducting the study. You need to cite at least 35 peer reviewed sources in your paper; most should be in the literature review. See the Literature Review Checklist and be sure to include a Reference page with your submission.

3. Data and Methods (10%)

   This section will describe a) the source of your data, the methods used to collect the data, and response rate; b) your sample and your response rate; b) your dependent, independent, and control variables (you will explain exactly how each variable is operationalized and coded, as well as present the reliability information for any scales you create; c) a table with the descriptive statistics for your study variables; d) a table with the bivariate correlations among your independent and control variables; e) other pertinent information about how your data are coded (use appendices as needed).

4. Findings (5%)

   This section will include the narrative where you summarize your findings and it includes the tables and/or figures that you will use to present your analysis and findings.

5. Discussion & Conclusions (10%)

   The discussion section should include a discussion of: a) the major findings; b) contributions of the study, placing your study in the context of existing research; c) strengths and limitations; d) implications for theory and practice; and e) recommendations for future research. Be sure to include a Reference page with your submission.

   The conclusion section should provide a summary of the key takeaways that were learned from the study.

6. Abstract and Introduction (5%)

   The abstract and introduction should follow the directions in the APA style guide. The abstract should be 150 words or less and include: a) the issue studied; b) the context; c) essential features of your study and the methods; d) basic findings; e) implications.

   The introduction to your paper will include: a) a strong opening paragraph; b) a compelling description of the problem your study is trying to address (e.g., size and scope of the problem, why should we care?); c) the research question(s); and d) a description of the organization of the paper. Be sure to include a Reference page with your submission.

7. Draft of Paper (Not Graded)

   Students will assemble the revised elements of the paper into a draft, ensuring that comments and suggested edits from the instructor are incorporated, and edit for spelling, grammar, clarity, flow, and APA style. The paper should be 25 to 35 pages in length. Be sure to include the final Reference page with your submission.

8. Draft Presentation (Not Graded)

   Each student will prepare a presentation for in-class peer review. Consider layout, color scheme, and all of the information needed to provide a thoughtful and compelling presentation.

9. Revised Presentation (5%)

   The final digital version of the presentation should be submitted electronically.

♦ **Presentation (20%)**

♦ **Research Paper – Final Version (30%)**

♦ **Participation, Effort, Reflection Assignment (5%) – If you miss the deadlines and/or repeatedly have to redo sections, do not expect to receive these points.**

Communication

By virtue of registering for this course, all students will have access to the Internet and an email account. Please check your UNCC email account regularly, as well as the Canvas website. During the semester, if you have questions or concerns about anything, please do not hesitate to contact me – just send me an email, give me a phone call, and I will get back to you as soon as I can. However, due to FERPA (the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), you need to make an appointment for us to meet in person if you would like to discuss or inquire about your grades or feedback on your progress. Finally, in the event that you will not be attending class, please send me an email or leave me a text message beforehand so that I don't keep the class waiting for you to arrive.

COURSE SCHEDULE

	Class Plans*	What is Due?**	Date
Week 1	Introduction, Paper Elements, Expectations	---------	January 27
Week 2	Project Planning	Research Proposal and Data Due	February 2
Week 3		Spring Recess	February 9
Week 4	Review Project Elements	Data and Methods Section	February 16
Week 5	Review Project Elements	--	February 23
Week 6	Trouble Shooting	Literature Review Draft	March 2
Week 7	Trouble Shooting	Findings Section	March 9
Week 8	Trouble Shooting	Resubmissions	March 16
Week 9	Trouble Shooting	Introduction and Abstract Draft	March 23
Week 10	Trouble Shooting	Discussion and Conclusion Draft	March 30
Week 11	Trouble Shooting	Presentations Draft	April 6
Week 12	Trouble Shooting	Paper Draft	April 13
Week 13	Trouble Shooting	Last Opportunity for Resubmissions	April 20
Week 14	Round 1 - Presentations	Round 1 – Presentations	April 27
Week 15	Round 2 - Presentations	Round 2 – Presentations	May 4
Week 16	Exam Week	Final Paper and Reflection Assignment Due	May 11

Important Dates

January 13, 2021	Payment Due Date/Cancellation for non-payment * Payment Info
January 18, 2021	Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day -University Closed
January 20, 2021	First day of classes
January 23, 2021	Saturday classes begin
January 27, 2021	Last day to add, drop a course with no grade* @ 11:59 pm
January 27, 2021	Last day to change Grade Type (P/NC or Audit)
January 27, 2021	Last day to submit a grade replacement request * Policy Info
January 28, 2021	2nd Cancellation for non-payment Payment Info
February 2, 2021	Census date for Spring Enrollment* Additional Info
February 8 to 13, 2021	Spring Recess - No Classes
February 19, 2021	Unsatisfactory web grading access available
February 24, 2021	Deadline for all students to apply for May 2021 graduation *
February 24, 2021	Master's Thesis Proposal Defense Deadline
March 12, 2021	Unsatisfactory grades due for Spring 2021 by noon
March 15, 2021	Fall 2021 Schedule of Classes available on the web
March 15, 2021	Student registration appointment times available on web
March 19, 2021	Unsatisfactory Grade notices emailed to students
March 22, 2021	Dissertation Formatting Review Deadline
March 25, 2021	Last day to withdraw from course(s) @ 11:59 pm;
April 5, 2021	Registration for Summer and Fall 2021 begins* Registration Info
April 16, 2021	Faculty Final web grading access available
April 19, 2021	Doctoral Dissertation Defense Deadline
April 28, 2021	Doctoral Dissertation Submission Deadline
April 30, 2021	Day of Remembrance - No Classes***
April 30, 2021	Thesis Formatting Review Deadline
May 1, 2021	Optional Reschedule Date for Possible Interruptions
May 3, 2021	Master's Thesis Defense Deadline
May 5, 2021	Last day of classes
May 6, 2021	Reading Day
May 7 to 8, 2021	Final Examinations
May 8, 2021	Final Examinations for Saturday classes
May 10 to 13, 2021	Final Examinations Continued
May 10, 2021	Master's Thesis Submission Deadline
May 14, 2021	Commencement
May 15, 2021	Commencement
May 17, 2021	Academic Year ends
May 17, 2021	Grades due at Noon
May 19, 2021	Spring 2021 Probation/Suspension notifications sent to students

<h1 style="text-align:center">UNCC Policies and Procedures</h1>

Classroom Expectations
This syllabus contains the policies and expectations I have established for MPAD 6188. Please read the entire syllabus carefully before continuing in this course. These policies and expectations are intended to create a productive learning atmosphere for all students. Unless you are prepared to abide by these policies and expectations, you risk losing the opportunity to participate further in the course.

Changes to the Syllabus
The standards and requirements set forth in this syllabus may be modified at any time by the course instructor. Notice of such changes will be posted on the Canvas website.

Classroom Conduct
I will conduct this class in an atmosphere of mutual respect. I encourage your active participation in class discussions. Each of us may have strongly differing opinions on the various topics of class discussions. The conflict of ideas is encouraged and welcome. The orderly questioning of the ideas of others, including mine, is similarly welcome. However, I will exercise my responsibility to manage the discussions so that ideas and argument can proceed in an orderly fashion. You should expect that if your conduct during class discussions seriously disrupts the atmosphere of mutual respect I expect in this class, you will not be permitted to participate further.

Non-discrimination in the Classroom
All students and the instructor are expected to engage with each other respectfully.   Unwelcome conduct directed toward another person based upon that person's actual or perceived race, actual or perceived gender, color, religion, age, national origin, ethnicity, disability, or veteran status, or for any other reason, may constitute a violation of University Policy 406, The Code of Student Responsibility. Any student suspected of engaging in such conduct will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct.

Preferred Gender Pronoun
This course affirms people of all gender expressions and gender identities. If you prefer to be called a different name than what is indicated on the class roster, please let me know. Feel free to correct me on your preferred gender pronoun. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Academic Integrity Violations, Including Plagiarism
All students are required to read and abide by the Code of Student Academic Integrity. Violations of the Code of Student Academic Integrity, including plagiarism, will result in disciplinary action as provided in the Code. Definitions and examples of plagiarism are set forth in the Code. The Code is available from the Dean of Students Office or online.

University policy on Withdrawals
Students are expected to complete all courses for which they are registered at the close of the add/drop period. If you are concerned about your ability to succeed in this course, it is important to make an appointment to speak with me as soon as possible. The University policy on withdrawal allows students only a limited number of opportunities available to withdraw from courses. It is important for you to understand the financial and academic consequences that may result from course withdrawal.

Students Rights and Responsibilities in Obtaining Disability Accommodations
Students in this course seeking accommodations to disabilities must first consult with the Office of Disability Services and follow the instructions of that office for obtaining accommodations.

Title IX reporting expectations re: incidents of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking

UNC Charlotte is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these incidents, know that you are not alone.
UNC Charlotte has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with civil protective orders, and more.

Please be aware that all UNC Charlotte employees, including faculty members, are expected to relay any information or reports of sexual misconduct they receive to the Title IX Coordinator. This means that if you tell me about a situation involving sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, I am expected to report the information to the Title IX Coordinator. Although I am expected to report the situation, you will still have options about how your case will be handled, including whether or not you wish to pursue a formal complaint. Our goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and have access to the resources you need.

If you wish to speak to someone confidentially, you can contact the following on-campus resources, who are not required to report the incident to the Title IX Coordinator: (1) University Counseling Center (counselingcenter.uncc.edu, 7-0311); or (2) Student Health Center (studenthealth.uncc.edu, 7-7400). Additional information about your options is also available at titleix.uncc.edu under the "Students" tab.

Mental Health Services
It is common for college students to experience challenges that may interfere with academic success such as academic stress, sleep problems, juggling responsibilities, life events, relationship concerns, or feelings of anxiety, hopelessness, or depression. If you or a friend is struggling, we strongly encourage you to seek support. Helpful, effective resources are available on campus at no additional cost.
- Visit the Counseling and Psychological Services website at caps.uncc.edu for information about the broad range of confidential on-campus mental health services, online health assessments, hours, and additional information.
- Call CAPS at (704) 687-0311 if interested in scheduling an appointment with a counselor. After-hours crisis support is also available through this phone number.

Copyright
My lectures and course materials, including presentations, tests, exams, outlines, and similar materials, are protected by copyright. I am the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials I create. I encourage you to take notes and make copies of course materials for your own educational use. However, you may not, nor may you knowingly allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly without my express written consent. This includes providing materials to commercial course material suppliers such as CourseHero and other similar services. Students who publicly distribute or display or help others publicly distribute or display copies or modified copies of an instructor's course materials may be in violation of University Policy 406, The Code of Student Responsibility. Similarly, you own copyright in your original papers and exam essays. If I am interested in posting your answers or papers on the course web site, I will request your written permission.

Sexual Harassment

All students are required to abide by the UNC Charlotte Sexual Harassment Policy and the policy on Responsible Use of University Computing and Electronic Communication Resources. Sexual harassment, as defined in the UNC Charlotte Sexual Harassment Policy, is prohibited, even when carried out through computers or other electronic communications systems, including course-based chat rooms or message boards.

Recording in the Classroom
Electronic video, image capture, and/or audio recording is not permitted during class, whether conducted in person or online, unless the student obtains permission from the instructor. If permission is granted, any distribution of the recording is prohibited. Students with specific electronic recording accommodations authorized by the Office of Disability Services do not require instructor permission; however, the instructor must be notified of any such accommodation prior to recording. Any distribution of such recordings is prohibited.

FERPA Notification
In establishing University Policy 402, Student Education Records, UNC Charlotte adheres to a policy of compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, also known as FERPA, a federal law that affords students the following rights with respect to their education records. For details, see the FERPA Annual Notification posted on the Office of Legal Affairs website. All questions concerning this FERPA Annual Notification may be directed to the attention of the Office of the Registrar.

Food Insecurity
Food insecurity is defined by the USDA as "a lack of access to enough food for an active, healthy life." Food insecure categories include: reduced caloric intake, reduced food quality, lack of variety in diet, disrupted eating patterns, and hunger. Research shows that college students experience food insecurity at higher rates than the American household rate, and that food insecurity can negatively impact academic performance and persistence. In recognition of this problem, UNC Charlotte offers assistance to students facing food insecurity through an on- campus food pantry. The Jamil Niner Student Pantry (JNSP) is located on the east edge of campus at 1224 John Kirk Road. It has regular hours which may change from semester to semester; please see the website at https://ninerpantry.uncc.edu/ for schedule and details on its services, as well as resources about hunger and food insecurity among college students.

Absences and COVID-19

Students are encouraged to work directly with their instructors regarding their absence(s). For absences related to COVID-19, please adhere to the following:

- **Complete your Niner Health Check** each morning.
- **Do not come to class if you are sick**. Please protect your health and the health of others by staying home. Contact your healthcare provider if you believe you are ill.
- **If you are sick**: If you test positive or are evaluated by a healthcare provider for symptoms of COVID-19, indicate so on your Niner Health Check to alert the University. Submit a copy of your Niner Health Check notification email to your instructors. Upon learning that you have tested positive or have been diagnosed for symptoms of COVID-19, either from your reporting or from Student health Center testing or diagnosis, representatives from Emergency Management and/or the Student Health Center will follow up with you, and your instructors will be notified of the need for accommodations, as necessary.
- **If you have been exposed** to COVID-19 positive individuals and/or have been notified to self-quarantine due to exposure, indicate so on your Niner Health Check to alert the University. Representatives from Emergency Management and/or the Student Health Center will follow up with

you as necessary. Submit a copy of your Niner Health Check notification email to your instructors. If you need any additional support verifying your absence after you have communicated with your professors, contact Student Assistance and Support Services.

To return to class after being absent due to a period of **self-quarantine**, students should submit a copy of their Niner Health Check clearance email to their instructor(s). To return to class after being absent due to a COVID-19 **diagnosis**, students should submit an online request form to Student Assistance and Support Services (SASS). Supporting documentation can be attached directly to the request form and should be from a student's health care provider or the Student Health Center, clearly indicating the dates of absences and the date the student is able to return to class. Instructors will be notified of such absences.

If you are absent from class as a result of a COVID-19 diagnosis or quarantine, as instructor I will work with you to develop a plan so you can continue to make progress in the course The final decision for approval of all absences and missed work is determined by the instructor.