Florida International University
College of Arts and Sciences
Department of Public Administration

PAD 3802: Introduction to Urban and Regional Studies
Summer 2014

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Catalog Course Description
This is a fully online course. This course will provide student an integrated approach to the problems and prospects of metropolitan areas with emphasis on economic, political, social, and administrative facets of the urban setting.

Learning Outcomes
- Describe the various ways that U.S. cities have changed over the past 150 years.
- Define federalism and describe how it impacts U.S. cities.
- Describe the aspects of U.S. urban political structure.
- Explain the nature of urban policy making and the actors that play a role in it.
- Differentiate between urban planning and development, and summarize the issues behind the politics and management of the two.
- Outline the different approaches and tools discussed for decision making and analysis.
- Summarize urban service delivery management.
- Conduct field research to explore the aspects of local government service delivery.
- Compare and contrast among the theories of management and leadership, and apply them appropriately to given examples.
- List the functions of human resources management, and account for the issues involved.
- Explain how a city is financed, the budget process, and the management of both.
- Research a local government and through analysis, synthesis and application of learned materials be able to compose how the component parts of that organization relate back to course lessons.
- Appraise the challenges of managing the urban future and offer some possible solutions.

Textbooks
Expectations of this Course

This is an online course, and hence most of the course work will be conducted online. Expectations for performance in an online course are the same as for a traditional classroom course. In addition, online courses require a high degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills that can make them more demanding for some students. **Students are expected to:**

- Review the how to get started information located in the course content
- Introduce yourself to the class during the first week by posting a self-introduction in the appropriate discussion forum
- Take the practice quiz to ensure that your computer is compatible with Blackboard
- Interact online with instructor/s and peers
- Review and follow the course calendar
- Submit assignments by the corresponding deadline

Assignments

**Self-introduction:** Each student will be required to introduce yourself to the class in the appropriate discussion forum. A short biography, pictures, and your professions and future career goals are examples that can be provided in the self-introduction. If you set up your self-introduction in the first week of the class, you will be rewarded with 2 bonus points that will count toward your final grade.

**Quizzes:** Throughout the course, there will be 10 quizzes; each has 10 multiple choice and/or true or false questions. The quizzes will comprise 40 percent of your final grade, or four percent per quiz. Quizzes will be open on Monday of that week at 12:05 am and are due on Sunday of the same week at 11:55 pm. Students must complete the quizzes independently. Interaction with others constitutes cheating. In order to mitigate any issues with your computer and online assessments, it is very important that you take the “Online Learning Practice Quiz” from each computer you will be using to take your graded quizzes and exams. It is your responsibility to make sure your computer is compatible with Blackboard and that it meets the minimum hardware requirements ([http://online.fiu.edu/futurestudents/whatsrequired](http://online.fiu.edu/futurestudents/whatsrequired)).

**Discussions and participation:** Students are expected to actively participate in online discussion topics provided by the instructor and in topics which are posted by other students and relevant to the class. Simple answers, such as but not limited to, “yes,” “I agree,” or “I don’t know,” are not discussions. Weekly discussions are due on Sunday of the week at 11:55pm. Discussions in week 1-11 will be graded while those in week 12 will not be graded, but your inputs and suggestions will be much appreciated.

**Research Paper:** Each student is required to submit a research paper based on a local government (city or county) of your choice; it could be the one you lives or works in or of any particular interest. Students will discuss the pertinent features of the selected government they relate to the topics learned and discussed in class. The paper should be double-spaced, 10-12 pages in length excluding title and reference pages, and in APA style. It is due on July 29 at 11:55pm. Students are encouraged to plan and start early and to conduct research through a variety of research
means. Students are expected to have at least three reference sources in addition to the textbook. Example topics are provided as follows but students can have the liberty of choosing other topics covered in the class.

- The form of government and structure, to include how officials are elected into office.
- Any significant issues with regards to citizen influence on the local politics (referendums, petitions, recalls, movements, etc.).
- Particulars about the local planning and development activities or master plans.
- Details on analytical tools used in a significant program(s) or project(s) and the results.
- Extent of services offered to the citizens and the organizational bureaucracy used to deliver them.
- Leadership and management characteristics.
- Issues revolving around human resources.
- Budgetary challenges and approaches to maintaining service levels.
- Impact of homeland security initiatives.

**Syllabus Modification**

This syllabus is intended to give the student guidance in what may be covered during the semester and will be followed as closely as possible. However, the professor reserves the right, with proper notice, to modify, supplement and make changes as the course needs arise.

**Grading**

- Self-introduction: 2%, bonus points if in the first week
- Ten Quizzes: 40%, 4% each
- Blackboard discussions: 33%, 3% each, week 1-11
- Research paper: 27%

The lowest unrounded grade for an A is 90, A- 88, B+ 85, B 83, B- 80, C+ 77, C 73, C- 70.

**Class Policies**

- All the materials related to this course will be posted online through Blackboard Learn, the FIU course management system. E-mails registered with Blackboard Learn will be used exclusively in this course to communicate with students.
- Please contact the instructor immediately if personal circumstances arise that may interfere with class participation and/or the completion of assignments.
- All assignments have to be turned in via Turnitin in Blackboard. Turnitin is a plagiarism detection service.
- Extensions will only be given in exceptional circumstances. Time pressure is not an exceptional circumstance.
- Neither make-up assignments nor a grade of “Incomplete” will be given.
- Late work is not accepted. No exception.

**Classroom Accommodations**
In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Florida International University will honor requests for reasonable accommodations made by individuals with disabilities. Students who are requesting support services are required to submit documentation to verify eligibility under the ADA of 1990 and register with FIU Disability Resource Center to receive reasonable accommodations. Please contact FIU Disability Resource Center for complete guidelines for the type of documentation required. Please also make an appointment with me as soon as possible, if you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated.

**Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct**

Florida International University Code of Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct Policy will be strictly observed, which can be found in the Student Handbook or via [http://honors.fiu.edu/downloads/handbook.pdf](http://honors.fiu.edu/downloads/handbook.pdf). It is strongly advised that students should familiarize themselves with the Code and Policy. Plagiarism is:

> “the deliberate use and appropriation of another’s works without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student’s own. Any student who fails to give credit for the ideas, expressions or materials taken from another source, including internet sources, is guilty of plagiarism.”

Any student violating the FIU Code of Academic Integrity will receive a failing grade for the course and will be reported to the University for review and appropriate action. If a student is unclear about whether a particular situation may constitute a violation of academic conduct standards, the student should meet with the instructor to discuss the situation. In order to guard against plagiarism and to treat students equitably, written work may be checked against existing published materials or available digital databases through various plagiarism detection services.

The following rules should be observed to make sure that the distinction between one's own words, ideas or work, and those of others is justly maintained.

1. **Put in quotations** everything that comes directly from the text of another’s work, especially when taking notes.
2. Alternatively, you can **paraphrase** another person’s work, but be sure you are not just rearranging or replacing a few words. A good strategy is to (a) read over what you want to paraphrase carefully, (b) cover up the text with your hand, (c) write out the idea in your own words without peeking, and (d) check your paraphrase against the original text to be sure you have not accidentally used the same phrases or words, and that the information is accurate.
3. Whether you quote, paraphrase or otherwise borrow another’s work, always **cite or indicate the source** of the information, and **provide references** following one of the many accepted styles or formats.
4. Common knowledge such as George Washington’s date of birth or the meaning of OLS regression need not be quoted, cited, or referenced. However, borrowing another’s original or creative presentation of common knowledge should follow the above mentioned rules. When in doubt, follow the rules.
It should be kept in mind that, although it is not as egregious an offense as copying someone else's work, the extensive copying of a paper that one has prepared for one course for subsequent use and submission in another course is totally inappropriate. Especially at the graduate level, students may wish to prepare more than one paper in the same area. However, these must be substantially different papers which, while they may be in the same general area, represent a substantively different focus and do not significantly overlap in written text.

Course Outline and Assignments
This course outline is tentative and subject to changes. Changes will be announced at class.

Week 1, May 12 – May 18
Assignments:
- Get familiar with FIU blackboard system
- Review class syllabus, course content and deadlines
- APA citation format video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9pbUoNa5tyY)
- Get familiar with FIU library and online library resources

Discussion board:
- Self-introduction (two bonus points)
- Please locate the following article via FIU online library databases and resources, and post the PDF file of the article

- Reply to and comment on two of your classmates’ posts

Week 2, May 19 – May 25
Assignments:
- Read textbook Chapter 1

Quiz 1
- Chapter 1

Discussion board:
- Please locate the following article via FIU online library databases and resources, and post the PDF file of the article

- Provide a brief synopsis of the journal article (Li and Feeney, 2004)
• Reply to and comment on two of your classmates’ posts

**Week 3, May 26 – June 1**

**Assignments:**
- Read textbook Chapter 2
- Federalism video ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TJo_C5acEJg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TJo_C5acEJg))

**Quiz 2**
- Chapter 2

**Discussion board:**
- The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) ([Pub.L. 111–5](http://www.citymayors.com/government/interlocal.html)), commonly referred to as the Stimulus or the Recovery Act, was intended to combat economic recession and create jobs. Please provide two specific local jurisdictions, local agencies, or local programs that have benefits from the Recovery Act.
- Reply to and comment on two of your classmates’ posts

**Week 4, June 2 – June 8**

**Assignments:**
- Read textbook Chapter 3
- Miami-Dade County Governmental Structure

**Quiz 3**
- Chapter 3

**Discussion board:**
- In 2011, Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Alvarez was removed from office in the largest recall of a local politician in the U.S. history. Research the event and discuss what led to the recall effort.
- Reply to and comment on two of your classmates’ posts

**Week 5, June 9 – June 15**

**Assignments:**
- Read textbook Chapter 4
- Miami-Dade County Commission Meeting Agenda

**Quiz 4**
• Chapter 4

Discussion board:
• What are the five stages of policymaking? Does actual policy making generally follow this orderly sequence? Support your response with at least one example from a local government and provide the link to your source.
• Reply to and comment on two of your classmates’ posts

Week 6, June 16 – June 22
Assignments:
• Read textbook Chapter 5

Quiz 5
• Chapter 5

Discussion board:
• Locate and summarize a city’s economic development plan. Provide a link to or post the plan.
• Reply to and comment on two of your classmates’ posts

Week 7, June 23 – June 29
Assignments:
• Read textbook Chapter 6
• Miami-Dade County Strategic Plan

Quiz 6
• Chapter 6

Discussion board:
• Identify an issue/problem in a local government and apply the eight step analysis process to devise some possible solutions and/or actions that could be applied.
• Reply to and comment on two of your classmates’ posts

Week 8, June 30 – July 6
Assignments:
• Read textbook Chapter 7
• Miami-Dade 311 service center (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nUOb4IQR9ac)

Quiz 7
• Chapter 7

**Discussion board:**

• What have local governments done in the past years to maintain adequate levels of urban service delivery despite falling revenue and shrinking budgets? Please provide at least two references.

• Reply to and comment on two of your classmates’ posts

**Week 9, July 7 – July 13**

**Assignments:**

• Read textbook Chapter 8

**Quiz 8**

• Chapter 8

**Discussion board:**

• It has often been said that, "Managers do things right, while leaders do the right things." However, in reality there is seldom this dichotomy, and you actually need to possess a good skill set in both to be successful as a manager/supervisor. What is the difference between leadership and management? Is one more important than the other? Please support your position.

• Reply to and comment on two of your classmates’ posts

**Week 10, July 14 – July 20**

**Assignments:**

• Read textbook Chapter 9

• OPM’s guiding principles for Civil Service Transformation

**Quiz 9**

• Chapter 9

**Discussion board:**

• Civil service and merit systems have become synonymous with government employment. The system was intended to correct the abuses of political patronage during the 1800s, but it is not without its drawbacks. What are some of the pros and cons of the merit system? What are some current examples and/or suggestions for modernizing it?

• Reply to and comment on two of your classmates’ posts

**Week 11, July 21 – July 27**
Assignments:
- Read textbook Chapter 10
- Public Sector Budgeting: Building Consensus
  (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t8cdxTQFNwA)

Quiz 10
- Chapter 10

Discussion board:
- Locate the budget for a local government. What are its revenue sources? Which revenue source is responsible for the largest income percentage of this budget, and is this the best and/or most equitable method of revenue collection? Is this local government, or others, "thinking outside the box" and generating revenue in new and/or different ways? Provide a link to or upload the budget.
- Reply to and comment on two of your classmates’ posts

Week 12, July 28 – August 1
Assignments:
- Final paper is due on July 29 at 11:55pm

Discussion board: This week’s discussions will not be graded but are much appreciated.
- In this course, what was of most value to you as a public administration student? If there is anything you would change about the course, what would that be?
- Reply to and comment on two of your classmates’ posts