

PUBLIC POLICY ADMINISTRATION MASTER'S PROGRAM FT. LEONARD WOOD EXIT PROJECT PAPER GUIDELINES

Brief Overview:

The exit project paper is viewed as the capstone of the MPPA program. In this project, students integrate concepts, skills, and methods learned in their coursework into a written paper.

Topic Choice:

The exit project should identify some problem, policy or issue within the field of public policy or public administration. Topics are most likely to be of an applied nature, though theoretical questions are not necessarily unsuitable. All applied topics should contain a statement of the problem and what if any policy is currently addressing it. Samples of prior FLW students exit projects shall be circulated for review.

Purpose of the Exit Project:

The purpose of the project is to provide evidence to the faculty that the degree candidate has mastered the skills (empirical policy analysis: quantitative and/or qualitative; economic theory and application; application of emphasis area theory to a problem, issue or situation; and research skills) learned in the MPPA coursework and can apply them to the analysis of a practical research policy problem, issue or concern.

Scope of the Exit Project:

The completed exit project should reflect the quality and effort associated with a well-executed professional staff paper. It is not a Master's thesis. In the project paper, each student must set forth a well-defined policy question: either a problem that needs addressing by policy alternatives or an analysis of an existing policy addressing a policy problem or issue. In addition, each paper must cite prior/related literature, present alternatives and critical evidence necessary to assist in making a decision, provide policy analysis of any existing policy or analytical thinking regarding alternative policies for the problem to be addressed, set forth results of this analysis, make a policy recommendation and provide adequate justification for your choice.

The project advisor shall be the assistant director of the Fort Leonard Wood program. **Exit project papers are to be approximately 25-30 pages but**

under no circumstances should an exit project exceed 40 pages. Quality is more important than quantity in an exit project paper. Each student shall consult with the exit project advisor regarding the appropriateness of subject matter and standard of analysis. Students should expect to turn in several drafts of their exit project to the exit project advisor for comments and then make the necessary changes prior to the APPROVED version of the project being accepted by the advisor. After completion the project advisor will submit the project paper to one or two other MPPA faculty members for review.

Completion of the Exit Project:

All students shall be registered in the fall semester for PPA 499 Exit Project. The students should contact the MPPA administrative assistant at University of MO. St. Louis at 314-516-5145 for additional assistance, if needed.

Failure to finish the exit project in the fall semester will result in graduation at a later date and require an additional fee to be paid in the semester of graduation. The MPPA program has a six-year deadline within which to finish all work for graduation. The military may have additional penalties for non-completion of work within a prescribed timeframe, you should check with the appropriate military personnel regarding those requirements or expectations.

Exit Project Assessment:

The exit project committee of the advisor and one or two other faculty members determines acceptability of the exit project. The other faculty members reviewing the “approved” draft may submit further recommendations for a revised final draft of the exit project. No exit project shall be given to the full committee until the advisor is satisfied that a final acceptable draft has been submitted. There are three possible outcomes: 1) Accepted, 2) Rejected, or 3) Accepted subject to final revisions.

If the exit project is rejected the graduate student shall be advised to re-do the Exit Project, thereby postponing graduation. Upon completion of an accepted exit project the advisor will assign a grade.