

Master's of Public Administration and of Public Policy: An Analysis of Academic Programs and Professional Competencies in Canada

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UDK 35.07(71)
35.088.6(71)

Izvorni znanstveni rad / original scientific paper

Primljeno / received: 7. 8. 2011.

Prihvaćeno / accepted: 15. 11. 2011.

Canadian Master's of Public Administration and Master's of Public Policy academic programs were reviewed by examining both general curricula but also – using a new web tool called the Public Policy and Governance Portal – the

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detailed content (concepts) taught in those courses and their match with »competencies« as defined by several international public administration standards setting organizations. In total, 22 academic units and 33 distinct programs were examined. Data on certificate and diploma programs and their various concentrations are provided. Several trends are identified: most programs offer concentrations; a recent trend has been »hybrid« degrees (often combining administration or management with some aspect of international relations); a general reliance on internships; a set of core courses for most programs consisting of governance, macroeconomics, theory of public administration; research methods; public policy; quantitative methods. Most Canadian programs fall short in offering (or requiring) courses in »policy analysis theory and techniques« and »implementation strategy and design«.

Key words: public administration, public policy, academic programs, degrees, practice, standards, curriculum, competencies

1. Introduction

This paper has two objectives.¹ The first is to provide a new, detailed mapping of the content of Canadian public administration and public policy Master's programs (MPA/MPP programs). There have been several attempts to do this in the past (École nationale d'administration publique, 1993; Dufour, 2000; Gow and Sutherland, 2004; Pal, 2008) but in all cases the methodology consisted essentially of a review of calendar descriptions of program requirements and course titles. No attempt was made to actually examine the content of the courses to see if similar titles implied similar content. The new approach (discussed below) builds on

¹ The authors would like to thank Ben Eisen, MPP 2009, the editor of the Public Policy and Governance Portal, Daniel Oettl, MPP 2011, who acted as secretary to the CAPP Accreditation Board, Nataliia Banankeych, an assistant at Carleton's Centre for Governance and Public Management, faculties from across the country teaching in key programs, and the dozens of MPA and MPP students who have analyzed their course notes to identify concepts and references to be added to the PPG Portal.

a database of both detailed course content and an even more microscopic analysis of the concepts that make up that content. This has been made possible through the Public Policy and Governance Portal, a project led by the School of Public Policy and Governance at the University of Toronto on behalf of the Canadian Association of Programs in Public Administration (CAPPA). For the first time, it allows, with reasonable confidence, a mapping of close to the complete universe of concepts and definitions constituting the academic field of »public policy and public administration« across the country (and by implication, despite differences in national traditions, a good part of what is taught internationally). Based on cooperative contributions from faculty and students from most MPA/MPP programs in Canada, it provides data on what might be termed the »intellectual molecular« level of the discipline. We have also included a discussion of leading Master's programs in international affairs – this is also a first – since these programs train students for careers in one branch of public administration, that of international affairs and foreign policy.

The second objective is to examine the »alignment« between the content of what is being taught academically, and those subjects, topics, and concepts deemed to be most professionally useful by recent graduates and by practitioners. We intend to examine the merits and the mechanisms of better aligning the content of the curricula – which, given the generally high standards of graduate programs in Canadian universities, can be assumed to be *academically respectable* – with what policy and administration practitioners say would be most *professionally useful*.

Canada has a wide disparity in MPA/MPP programs. While there is a modest common core, the variations outweigh the similarities. There are at least three reasons for this. The most obvious reason is that education is a provincial jurisdiction, and one that is jealously guarded. There is no equivalent in Canada to a Bologna process that would create national standards, equivalencies and fluid transfers of students among programs. This means that quality assurance processes vary provincially. A second reason is that the attempts to coordinate the field through a national association – CAPPA – have met with varied results. CAPPA itself is relatively weak (low resources, meeting only once or twice a year), certainly in comparison with its American sister institution, the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA). A third reason is that many hold the view that more diversity is better. While most faculty and programs would probably accept the principle that there must be some common core to any MPA/MPP program, for reasons of regional diversity (different markets), and academic entrepreneurship, there is also

a premium on differentiation and diversity. So, in addition to focusing on different regional markets (e.g., Dalhousie on Atlantic Canada, University of Victoria on British Columbia), and different levels of government (federal, provincial, local, and now global and international), programs are increasingly diversifying in terms of policy areas, environmental and science policy being two good examples.

2. A Diverse Universe of Programs

What does the universe of Canadian MPA/MPP look like from 40,000 metres up? Exhibits 1 and 2 illustrate the universe of Master's Programs in public administration, public management, and public policy in Canada.² The programs are listed in approximate order of size, as measured by the number of students graduated annually. We divide programs into two groups. Exhibit 1 lists 14 academic units offering »unspecialized« MPA/MPP programs, that is, an MPA or MPP as a distinct degree (along perhaps with other programs). Exhibit 2 lists 8 academic units offering programs that could be called »specialized« and/or »hybrid« programs – public administration or public policy and something else, and Master's in political science with a concentration in public administration. Exhibits 1 and 2 contain 22 academic units that offer Master's programs (in some designation) in public administration. The four public administration MA programs are Ryerson, Carleton, and the two at the University of Ottawa.

² The list of programs came initially from the CAPPa membership list for 2007-08, <http://www.cappa.ca/about/membership.html>, accessed February 22, 2008, with revisions submitted by the programs themselves in January 2011 and a review of program web sites in February 2011. Several CAPPa members offer only undergraduate degrees (Athabasca University, Laurentian University, Memorial University, Mount Royal College, Ontario Public Service, UQAM, University of Toronto – Scarborough's Department of Management, University of Toronto Department of Political Science). The Humber Business School offers a postgraduate program, but not an MPA; rather, it is a three-semester Ontario Graduate Certificate program. The University of British Columbia's Institute of Asian Research is a CAPPa member, and offers a somewhat unusual program entitled Masters of Arts, Asia Pacific Policy Studies, that can also be done jointly with a law or a business degree. It was decided to keep the program in the sample, since while it has a unique focus (regional studies), it is by no means any longer unusual. As well, we have not included schools or programs in international affairs (the two best known are the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs at Carleton University and the Munk Centre at the University of Toronto).

Exhibit 1: Degree Emphasis for Canadian Master's Programs in Public Administration, Public Policy and Public Management (MPA/MPP Programs)

University	Location	Degree	Concentration	Degrees Awarded per Year ¹
ENAP	Université du Québec	MPA	MPA (Managers): Public management; International management; Municipal management MPA (Analysts): International administration; Organizational analysis and development; Program evaluation; Human Resource Management; Urban Management Analysis; Government Communication	Years 2008–2009 Montreal campus: 199 Saguenay: 11 Trois-rivières: 10 Gatineau: 69 Quebec City: 134
Carleton	School of Public Policy and Administration (Faculty of Public Affairs)	MA (Public Administration)	Public Management; Policy Analysis; Innovation, Science and Environment; International and Development	65–70
Queen's	School of Policy Studies	MPA, PMPA, MPA / LLB	Health Policy; Social Policy; Defence Management; Global Governance; The Third Sector	92
Toronto	School of Public Policy and Governance	MPP	Social and Economic Policy; Global Public Policy	39
Ottawa	Graduate School of Public and International Affairs	MA (Public and International Affairs)	Public Policy; International Affairs; Development Studies	40
Ottawa	School of Political Studies	MA (Public Administration)	Public Management; Public Policy	10
Ryerson	Department Public Administration and Governance (Faculty of Arts)	MA (Public Policy and Administration)		46

University	Location	Degree	Concentration	Degrees Awarded per Year ¹
Simon Fraser	School of Public Policy	MPP	Public Policy	30
Dalhousie	School of Public Administration (Faculty of Management)	MPA, MPA (M), MPA / LLB, MPA / MLIS, MPA / MREM		49
U. of Regina U. of Saskatchewan	Johnson Shoyama School of Public Policy	MPA	Public Management, Public Policy; International Trade (distance)	U. of Regina: 35–45 U. of Saskatchewan 9
Victoria	School of Public Administration	MPA		N/A
Laval	Department of Political Science	MPA	Analysis and evaluation; Public Management; Public finance; Research	N/A
Manitoba & Winnipeg	Department of Politics (Winnipeg) and Department of Political Studies (Manitoba)	MPA	Government organization; political, economic, social and other contexts Specialty Streams: – MBA-MP Business-Government Relations – Defence Administration	U. of Manitoba 11 U. of Winnipeg N/A
Moncton	Department of Public Administration	MPA, MPA / LLB	Public Health	N/A

¹ These figures are based on reports from the programs in March–April 2011, requested by e-mail and personal contact.

Exhibit 2: Degree Emphasis for Canadian Master's Programs in Public Administration, Public Policy and Public Management (Hybrid and Specialist Programs)

University	Location	Degree	Concentration	Degrees Awarded per Year
York	School of Public Affairs (Glendon)	MPIA		N/A
York	School of Public Policy and Administration (Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies – Atkinson)	MPPAL	MPPAL, Public Management and Finance, Law and Ethics, Public Policy and Analysis	40
Western	Department of Political Science (Local Government Program)	MPA		25–30
Brock	Department of Political Science	MA (Political Science)	Canadian Politics; Comparative Politics; International Relations; Political Theory/Philosophy; Public Administration and Public Policy	N/A
British Columbia	Institute of Asian Research	MAPPS, MAPPS / LLB, MAPPS / MBA, MAPPS/ Planning	Infrastructure Policy; Governance and Human Rights; Gender and Development; Economic & Social Change	8
Concordia	Department of Political Science	MPPPA	Public Policy and Administration	N/A
Guelph / McMaster	Departments of Political Science	MPPA (Collaborative)		10
York	Schulich School of Business	MPA, MPA / MBA	Public Management (Built-in specialization)	No graduates

Exhibits 1 and 2 indicate that there is rich field of MPA/MPP programs in Canada. Looking only at academic units in Exhibit 1 that offer the unspecialized degree, we can see that they also offer, in total, 7 other programs that combine the MPA with management (business), law, or executive education. Turning to the hybrids, we have six (6) academic units offering 12 distinct programs (York has three hybrids, in addition to a traditional MPA) with concentrations in public administration. Once again, some of these institutions offer joint programs with law or business

(York's program in the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies is a Master's in Policy, Administration, and Law). If we stand back from both lists, it seems that Canada has a total universe of 33 CAPPa-member Master's programs in public administration, management and/or public policy. This is certainly an underestimation of the total number of programs in the country for several reasons. First, the calculation is only for CAPPa members. Unfortunately, resources did not permit canvassing non-CAPPa member programs (though we do explore two international relations programs below), but casual observation suggests that there are quite a number of new programs being developed that combine administration, management or governance with focused areas such as health, bio-science, human resource management, or Aboriginal affairs. Second, beyond formal Master's programs, many schools also offer diplomas and certificates. These are typically shorter than a full Master's program, and usually more focused, but they do provide mid-career applicants with professional training as well as a credential. These are outlined in Exhibit 3.

Exhibit 3: Certificates and/or Diplomas with their Concentrations

University	Degree	Concentration
Université du Québec	Specialized Graduate Diploma for Managers 24 credits	Public Management International Management Municipal Management International Administration
	Specialized Graduate Diploma for Analysts 24 credits	Urban Management Analysis Organizational Analysis and Development Program Evaluation Human-resource Management
	Short graduate programs for managers 15 credits	Human Resources Management Management of Health and Social Services Governance and Crisis Management
	Public Management for Federal Public Servants in Québec 15 credits	Public Management Public Management (in English) Public Programs Evaluation Financial Management of Public Sector International Management Municipal Management Systems and Information Technology

University of Ottawa	Graduate Certificate 15 credits	Government Communication Program Evaluation Public Ethics Public Management and Governance
	Graduate Diploma 9 or 12 credits	Health Services and Policy Research
University of Saskatchewan / University of Regina	Graduate Certificate 9 credits	Public Management Health Systems Management Public Policy Analysis Economic Analysis for Public Policy
University of Victoria	Graduate Professional Certificates five-course, part-time programs	Library Sector Leadership Cultural Sector Leadership Evaluation
York University (Atkinson)	Certificate 42 credits	Public Sector Management
University of Western Ontario	Graduate Diploma with internship	Public Administration Non-profit Management & Leadership Democratic Administration Public Management
University of Moncton	Graduate Certificate 12 credits	Health Services Management Public Management
	Graduate Diploma 30 credits	Public Administration Health Services Management
York University (Glendon)	MPIA Dual Degree with l'Université de Strasbourg	York's bilingual Master's Degree in Public and International Affairs and the Local and Regional European Administration Master's Degree of the Institut d'Études Politiques of the Université de Strasbourg
Concordia School of Community and Public Affairs	Graduate Diploma in 30-credit program	Community Economic Development
Carleton University	Certificate 6 credits	Nunavut Public Service Studies Public Service Studies
	Professional Development Training 7 Course Modules	Evaluation

Exhibits 1 and 2 also show the programs' institutional location, either as a stand-alone school or as department, or embedded in an academic unit not devoted to public administration (e.g., a political science department or a business school). Location matters (Cleary, 1990; Gow and Sutherland, 2004) – stand-alone programs tend to be more demanding in terms of core curriculum, and core curriculum is more uniform across those institutions. The stand-alone units, in alphabetical order, are: Carleton's School of Public Policy and Administration, Dalhousie's School of Public Administration, ENAP (as an entire school devoted to public administration in Quebec), Moncton's Department of Public Administration, Ottawa's School of Political Studies, Ottawa's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, Queen's School of Policy Studies, Saskatchewan/Regina's Johnson-Shoyama School of Policy Studies, Ryerson's Department of Politics and Public Administration, Toronto's School of Public Policy and Governance, Victoria's School of Public Administration, and York's School of Public Policy and Administration (Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies) and School of Public Affairs (Glendon). The remaining institutions tend to be departments of politics, political studies/science, (Laval, Manitoba/Winnipeg, Western, Brock, Concordia, and Guelph/McMaster). York's MPA is located in the Schulich School of Business.

We can make two final observations based on these tables. First, 11 of the 14 MA (Public Administration) or MPA programs offer concentrations. These are not simply alternative capstone courses (Guelph/McMaster, for example, gives students a capstone choice of either public sector management or organizational theory), but actual field designations. This is true of the hybrid programs as well. There seem to be two approaches to designating concentrations. One is to simply list one of public administration/management or public policy (e.g., Ottawa, Saskatchewan/Regina's Johnson-Shoyama School), and the other, more common one, is to provide several more specific management fields (e.g., ENAP's human resource management; Laval's public finance), or policy fields (e.g., Queen's health or social policy; Carleton's innovation, science and environment). A second, cautious observation is that the newer programs tend to tilt slightly more towards public policy than purely public administration/management. Simon Fraser and Toronto both introduced MPP programs; Ryerson's is a degree in public policy and administration; and York's Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies includes policy and law (and students in the MPPAL can also earn certificates in either Justice System Administration or Democratic Administration as part of their degrees), while Glendon combines policy and international affairs. The University of Ottawa's

Graduate School of Public and International Affairs launched in 2008 an MA in Public and International Affairs. The website states: »The degree awarded is the Master of Arts (MA) in Public and International Affairs with three fields of concentration: public policy; international affairs; and development studies.«³ Carleton's program, while retaining the MA (Public Administration) designation, in practice has a stronger emphasis on public policy than management or administration per se.

The degree requirements of these programs are listed in Annex 1. In terms of length of program, combined or joint degrees typically take longer (between three and four years). Full-time MPA/MPP study in most programs seems to require about two years (e.g., Carleton, Toronto, Simon Fraser, Dalhousie and Victoria), though there is more variation in the hybrid programs, with political science based programs being typically shorter (Gow and Sutherland, 2004), though the Queen's MPA is a one-year program, and the York MPPAL is notable for offering a part-time degree that may be completed in two years. Part-time study seems to take an average of four to eight years, with possibly an average of four to five. It is difficult to say much about credit requirements, since institutional definitions of what constitutes a credit vary so widely. As reflects a professional degree, most programs do not demand a thesis, but will offer it as an option, along with a major research paper or research essay. As we noted above, the majority of students in these programs will graduate and pursue professional careers, so there is less emphasis on preparing them to do extended research projects. This is a fair reflection of the logic of these degrees – they aim primarily at professional development. ENAP, for example, originally aimed its program at candidates with a few years of experience in the public service, and only later developed programs for university graduates.

Annex 1 also highlights the importance of internships or cooperative education courses – clear evidence of the professional dimension of these programs. It was not possible to tell in all circumstances, but most of these would be paid internships that provide both job experience and income for students, not to mention possible contacts and potential future employment opportunities. Most of these were optional, but programs like Simon Fraser's MPP and the University of Toronto's MPP make them mandatory. Mandatory internships are usually designated as courses, and so typically have a research paper/report requirement.

³ University of Ottawa, http://www.socialsciences.uottawa.ca/api/eng/graduate_program.asp. Accessed June 1, 2011.

Internships and cooperative education courses are formal parts of programs, but most programs also have informal, voluntary and valuable learning experiences. We have provided a rough categorization in Annex 2. They include professional development opportunities, mentorships, student-led conferences, study abroad, student-led journals, applied projects (through partnerships with various government agencies), and »other«. Too much of a focus on the formal curriculum misses these under-the-radar (to external observers) activities that support the curriculum and provide opportunities for students to stretch their educational experience. The Canada School has also supported »champions« for each of the major MPA schools, and they add another somewhat invisible curricular element, engaging with Directors, speaking at events, providing a link between the practitioner and academic world.

It was not possible to do a careful and detailed analysis of elective courses. Longer programs (outside of the joint degree programs) typically had a greater number of electives. Carleton, for example, requires 7.5 credits, or 15 half courses, of which 3.5 credits or 7 courses are core. Students are also required to take 4 courses in order to achieve a concentration, so the de facto »core« is 11 courses, leaving four electives, or a ratio of 26% of the total course load. If we look just at MA (Public Administration) and MPA programs, the proportions (calculated either on the basis of credits or of courses – Western and University of Ottawa could not be calculated) are as follows: Dalhousie 38%, ENAP 72%, Laval 58%, Manitoba 43%, Moncton 55%, Queens 50%, Johnson-Shoyama 50% (course based option), Victoria 18%, York (Schulich) 30%. The modal category for the »non-core« seems to be somewhere close to half the course/credit load, with the lowest proportion of options at Victoria and the highest at ENAP. These figures have to be treated cautiously, however, since some programs have credits for thesis or extended papers, and this would skew the results.

Annex 3 looks at each program's compulsory courses and tries, by title and in some cases, time permitting, by content, to classify into the same categories as Gow and Sutherland had used. This allows us to gain a crude sense of basic requirements across programs. Unlike Gow and Sutherland, we have included hybrid programs here, so unsurprisingly, the range of variation is even greater than what they noted. On the other hand, academic programs tend to evolve relatively rarely and usually incrementally, so it is also not surprising that not that much has changed since Gow and Sutherland. Again, this is to some extent an artifact of the conceit of academic programming at the graduate level. »Core« courses are, within each institution, generally agreed to be central to the discipline (ironically,

even if other institutions have decided on a different core). Consequently, the core or compulsory courses will change quite slowly, and cannot act as a shock absorber for new developments in the real world of public administration. The usual tactic in the face of these developments is to mount more optional and elective courses. So it should not be surprising that few programs – despite a tsunami of concern around accountability and ethics – actually have those subjects in their core. Another important point to note is that programs that might appear »lite« on compulsory courses are not necessarily letting their students off the hook. Ryerson, for example, has a flexible program built around grouped electives, and so in the end students will have taken many of the courses that would otherwise be designated as compulsory in other programs.

Gow and Sutherland's basic conclusions about Canadian programs still hold true. Looking at only the unspecialized MPA/MPP programs in Exhibit 1, there is a small core that is common to most or at least close to half of the programs: governance (13), macroeconomics (10), theory of public administration (9), research methods (8), public policy (7), and quantitative methods (7). The »core core« consists of the first four courses that are required in over half of the programs. If we look at both traditional MPAs and hybrid programs, the picture is similar. Most programs emphasize context (governance of the political system) and theories of public administration and public policy. A slightly smaller majority demand courses in macroeconomics and microeconomics, or at least some element of economic literacy. Research methods are also important for most programs, though fewer demand quantitative skills. After that core, the drop-off is quite significant, particularly in connection with core areas of management and administration. Finance, law, program evaluation, strategic management, leadership (professional development) are not among the core courses of most programs, though they may figure more prominently in specific programs (e.g., York's MPPAL has a core course on administrative law).

This brief synopsis of Canadian programs shows how varied they are, and supports the point made at the outset that there is very little in the way of a »common core«. In a federal state where education is a provincial jurisdiction, it would be expected that programs would differ regionally, but they also differ quite significantly within provinces. Obviously, in designing their programs, academic units have looked to international examples and consulted practitioners (both federal and provincial governments have made greater efforts to bridge the divide in recent years). Nonetheless, the variety of programs suggests that efforts to organize programs in terms of international standards (discussed below) have been relatively weak.

In addition to these programs, there are several leading Master's programs in international affairs. They are not members of CAPP, and so fall through the net to some extent, but they are professional degrees in the sense that they see themselves having a key objective in preparing and training people who will go into the foreign service or international agencies. Interestingly, as we saw above, an increasing number of traditional MPA programs are including a strong emphasis on international issues and globalization, so the two fields, which at one time were quite distinct and different, are beginning to overlap. For the purposes of this article, we approached Carleton's Norman Paterson School of International Affairs and the University of Toronto's Munk School. Programs of this type have their own international professional association – the Association of Professional Schools of International Affairs – and little or no contact with CAPP. The Norman Paterson School, as an example of curriculum, allows students to complete the program either with a thesis, a research essay, or course work. Most students do the course option, which requires five credits. Of those credits, the core requirement is a one-semester course in Policy and Methods, and a one-semester course in economics. The program has seven clusters or concentrations: international trade policy, global political economy, conflict analysis and conflict resolution, intelligence and national security, international institutions and global governance, international dimensions of development, and human security and development. Students must choose a cluster and must take a 0.5 credit from that cluster, but otherwise are free to complete their requirements by selecting more courses from a cluster or across clusters. This program mirrors MPA programs in offering concentrations (clusters) with a much smaller number of required courses (for example, the Carleton MPA program has a core set of courses that are about one-half of the entire program).

3. Competencies in Public Administration and Public Policy

The Skills-Rules-Knowledge taxonomy developed by Rasmussen and Vicente (Rasmussen, 1983; Rasmussen and Vicente, 1989) to distinguish three types of psychological processes in information processing is a useful starting point for categorizing the different competencies we try to teach in our public administration and public policy programs. Skill-based behaviour, like riding a bicycle, requires little conscious control to perform an action once an intention is formed. Rule-based behaviour uses rules and

procedures to select a course of action in a familiar work situation; sets of instructions acquired through experience or from others can be effective without an understanding of the underlying principles. Knowledge-based behaviour needs more advanced reasoning and success requires knowledge of the fundamental principles by which the system operates.

In addition, we should take account of value-based behaviour and the role that ethical and moral frameworks play in public administration and public policy. This is reflected in the UN/IASIA Report on Standards of Excellence for Public Administration Education and Training (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration Task Force on Standards of Excellence for Public Administration Education and Training, 2008), which notes the importance of »other criteria that ... refer to more general aspects of the program and contribute to the more overarching goals that are critical to the well being of any society«. A number of components are listed under public sector ethos, public sector skills, and public sector nature.

At the Master's level, we teach some rules, like categorizing capital expenditures in budgets, which do not require a full understanding of the origins of those rules. We try to teach some skills, like writing briefing notes, which can become more automatic over time. We also expose students to attitudes and values that are at the heart of good public policy and public administration. Nevertheless, most of the competencies we teach are aimed at improving knowledge-based action and involve the acquisition of concepts, techniques, and facts.

Competencies specified in the NASPAA, EAPAA and UN/IASIA Standards. There has been a good deal of work over the last decade in standards-setting bodies to describe the operation and content of high quality public administration and public policy programs. In October 2009, NASPAA adopted the 2009 Accreditation Standards for Master's degree programs and provided a First Draft of Self Study Instructions, which includes examples of competencies under each of five domain-level competencies (NASPAA Commission on Peer Review and Accreditation).

The European Association for Public Administration Accreditation (EAPAA) issued its accreditation criteria in September 2006. The curriculum content is rather broadly specified.⁴

⁴ The core curriculum provides a thorough teaching of the basic concepts, theories, methods and history (classics) of Public Administration on the level of the programme (bachelor or Master). The curriculum components are designed to produce professionals capable

In May 2008, the UN/IASIA Task Force on Standards of Excellence for Public Administration Education and Training issued its Final Report. This can be found on the web site of the United Nations Public Administration Programme (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration Task Force on Standards of Excellence for Public Administration Education and Training, 2008).

UN/IASIA and NASPAA use the term competencies in slightly different ways. The former uses the term as things to be learned, along with values, knowledge and skills, as in »The program or training curriculum shall enhance the student's competencies, values, knowledge, and skills to act ethically, equitably, effectively and with efficiency.« In the NASPAA Standards, the term is used to describe the broad categories of learning expected from programs in five domains and in the sub-domains under them.

To bridge these two usages, we will refer to first level and second level competencies. The first level corresponds to the highest grouping in the respective typologies, as illustrated in Exhibit 4. The component elements of these can be considered as a second level, as illustrated in Exhibit 5.

Exhibit 4: First Level Competencies (or Curriculum Components)

UN/IASIA 1 st Level Curriculum Components	NASPAA 1 st Level Competencies
The management of public service organizations	The ability to lead and manage in public governance
Improvement of public sector processes	The ability to participate in and contribute to the policy process
The application of quantitative and qualitative techniques of analysis	The ability to analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions
Leadership in the public sector	The ability to articulate and apply a public service perspective
Understanding public policy and the organizational environment	The ability to communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry

of intelligent, creative analysis and communication, and action in the public sector. Courses taken to fulfil the core curriculum components provide research methods, concepts and theories from the disciplines of economics, law, political science, sociology, public finances, informatisation, and public management, as well as the relationship between these fields.

Exhibit 5: Second Level Competencies (or Curriculum Components)

Examples of UN/IASIA 2 nd Level Components under »The application of quantitative and qualitative techniques of analysis«	Examples of NASPAA 2 nd Level Competencies under »The ability to analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions«
Policy and program formulation, analysis, implementation and evaluation	Employ analytical tools for collecting, analyzing, presenting, and interpreting data, including appropriate statistical concepts and techniques
Decision-making and problem-solving	Understand and apply theories of decision-making and models
Strategic planning	Plan strategy
Institutional and developmental economics	Identify and employ alternative sources of funding, including grants, taxes, and fees
	Articulate and apply methods for measuring and improving human performance
	Understand and apply the legal context of public affairs, administration, and policy

4. Gathering and Sharing Curriculum Content Using the PPG Portal

The Public Policy and Governance (PPG) Portal uses Web 2.0 technology⁵ to enable faculty members, students and practitioners in public policy and public administration to share course materials, concept definitions and other resource materials in an organized fashion. The project has been endorsed by all members of the CAPP and funded largely by the Government of Canada.⁶ The PPG Portal is secure and accessible only to members. Membership is open to all faculty, students, and graduates

⁵ Web 2.0 implies interactive information sharing and collaboration. The PPG Portal is a password protected extranet portal based on Microsoft Office Sharepoint Server architecture. Individual users may create their own content pages and determine the level of access (view, submit, comment, change, etc.) provided to other users.

⁶ The PPG Portal is supported by a \$205,000 contribution (January 1, 2008 to March 31, 2010) from the Innovation in Public Management Research Fund of the Canada School of Public Service and a \$300,000 grant (April 1, 2008 to March 31, 2011) from the Knowledge Impact in Society program of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.

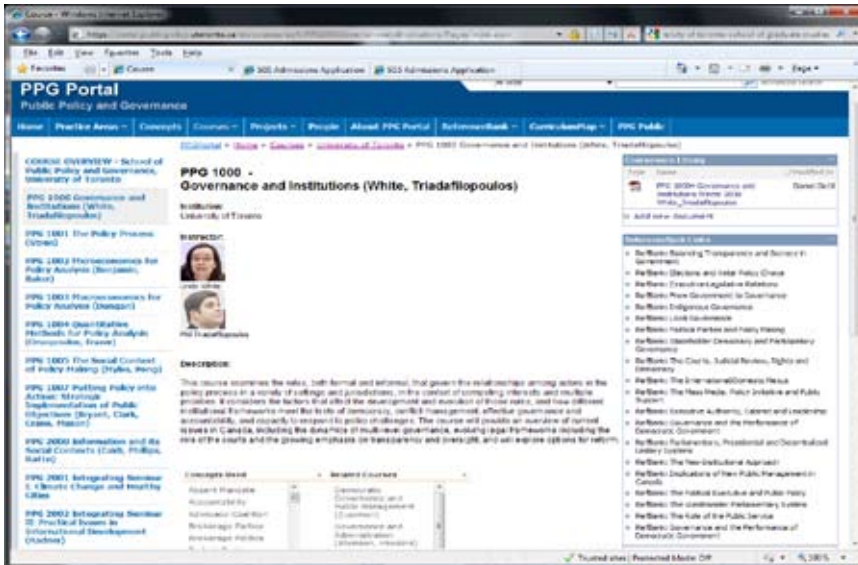
of CAPPA Master's programs and to practitioners in Canadian institutions.⁷

Practice area sites on the portal. The PPG Portal contains a number of practice area sites to collect and share information of interest to students and practitioners. These sites typically contain document libraries with files of policy documents and PowerPoint presentations, and links to other resources including government and think tank sites. The practice area sites also contain links to the course sites and concept sites described below. The Governments of Canada and Ontario have provided assistance in identifying government resource materials, including concept definitions and reference documents, in a number of practice areas in which graduates of Master's programs often find employment. These include: Evaluation and Performance Measurement, Internal Audit Policy and Practice, Financial Management, Information Management and Human Resources Management. In addition, practice areas sites are being developed for a number of policy areas of interest to students, including Aboriginal Policy and Governance, Higher Education Policy and Governance, Non-profit Sector Policy and Governance, Urban Policy and Municipal Governance, Citizen-focused Services, and Regulatory Policy. The CCAF (Canadian Comprehensive Audit Foundation) has contributed a large repository of documents and links in a practice area site on the portal called Governance, Oversight, Innovation and Control.

Course sites on the portal. For most of the programs listed in Exhibit 1 »course sites« have been created on the PPG Portal for the courses listed on the program's web site. These course sites provide the course name, the course description on the program web site, and, if available, the most recent course instructor. Where we have been provided with a syllabus, a PDF file of the syllabus is placed on the courseware library portion of the course site. A typical course site is shown in Exhibit 6.

⁷ The PPG Portal has two social networking functions that will not be dealt with in this article: 1) it is a *secure extranet platform for collaborative projects in public management* providing its members with the ability to create password-protected project sites accessible only to project participants, where each project site has file sharing, calendaring, contact listing, project management, and document editing tools; and 2) it is a *secure extranet platform for communities of practice in public management*, providing members in a particular community of practice with the ability to create password-protected web sites with social networking tools to support on-line interaction among community members. The PPG Portal is one of few systems in Canada that provides convenient (username and password) access to a secure on-line space where professionals from different institutions can collaborate.

Exhibit 6: A typical course site showing course description, syllabus, concepts used, related courses, and topics (with links to ReferenceBank)



Practices regarding the sharing of syllabi differ among programs. The gold standard is that applied by the Johnson-Shoyama School, where the PDF file of the syllabus for every course is posted on the school's public web site. At the other extreme, there are still institutions where faculty are not expected to post course syllabi. While there are issues of intellectual property, we are encouraged to see a growing commitment to transparency and sharing within the CAPPa community and we hope that within a very few years all courses in Canadian MPA/MPP programs will have syllabi that can be shared with other faculty and practitioners on a community site like the PPG Portal and possibly, soon after that, with the wider community. There are currently about 200 course sites on the portal.

5. Dissecting and Reconstituting Curriculum Content

Listing courses and syllabi, where possible, was a first objective of the portal exercise. The next, and more important step, was to try to dissect and accurately portray what was being taught across courses in terms of

content. For example, it is one thing to simply list five courses that broadly speaking all teach »policy analysis«. It is quite another to reverse the lens and ask the question, what is the content of »policy analysis« as it is taught in these five courses? The methodology that was used was to first identify »topics« and then, within those topics, the more detailed »concepts« that constitute them. Cost-benefit analysis, for example, is a topic, whereas »discount rate« is a concept within the topic. Once we had a universe of topics and concepts, the next step was to ask if they could be reconstituted into broader, generic subjects to provide a better mapping of what is taught in the field.

Topics and bibliographic references on the portal. Most course syllabi identify a main topic to be taught in each of the 12 or 13 classes in a one-semester course, and identify bibliographic references (typically journal articles or book chapters) that students are expected to read for that topic. These topics and their references have been entered into a database (called ReferenceBank) by using RefWorks software to organize bibliographic references by topic into RefWorks folders. RefWorks can generate bibliographies of selected references in any of several standard formats. There are currently about 300 topics and 3,400 bibliographic references in ReferenceBank.

Concept sites on the portal. Students, employed as research assistants for this project, have identified the concepts used in many of the courses and have generated concept sites that include a concise concept definition with a source reference. In some cases the concept site contains extensive elaboration with more bibliographic references and links to other resources. Some of the concepts on the portal come from policy documents from the practice area sites. There are currently about 2,000 concept sites on the portal.

Reconstituting content into generic subjects. From the database of disaggregated curriculum content – topics (including bibliographic references) and concepts – we identified common »generic subjects« of a breadth and depth that would correspond roughly to a one-semester course at the Master's level. These generic subjects are listed under four domains in Exhibit 7. Each of the topics and concepts were assigned to the generic subject with which they were most closely associated.

We have intentionally used language in describing these generic subjects that is similar to that used by NASPAA and UN/IASIA in describing the first and second level competencies (see Annexes 4 and 5). Generic subjects were categorized under »domains«. The schema is outlined in

Exhibit 7. It follows, and is inspired by, aspects of the domains outlined by the UN/IASIA and NASPAA (discussed above), for example, the UN/IASIA 1st level of »techniques of analysis« roughly matches our »tools and skills«.

Exhibit 7: Generic Subjects

Tools and Skills	Governance Context	Governance Functions	Policy Sectors
Policy Analysis Theory and Techniques	Democratic Institutions	Regulation and Compliance	Macroeconomics
Economic Analysis of Public Policy	Public Management and Process	Evaluation and Performance Measurement	International Development
Quantitative Methods	Social and Political Context	Accountability, Oversight and Audit	Cities and Urban Policy
Implementation Strategy and Design	International and Global Context	Budgeting and Accounting	Aboriginal Peoples and Policy
Collaboration and Leadership	Ethics of Public Management	Information Mgt. and Technology	Health Economics and Policy
Communication and Presentation	Organization Behaviour	Human Resources Management	Environment and Climate
Research and Data Analysis	Advocacy and Civil Society		Policy for Children
			Higher Education Policy
			Natural Resources
			Regional and Community Development

The logic of the domains is that of a professional program: graduates are typically hired to work in one of the *Governance Functions* or in one of the *Policy Sectors* and are expected to apply professional *Tools and Skills*, taking account of the *Governance Context*. Generic subjects are intended to contain mutually exclusive collections: each topic and concept in the PPG Portal is assigned to the generic subject to which it is most closely related. Although generic subjects typically have an amount of content comparable to a half-year graduate course, actual courses in Canadian Master's programs tend to draw on topics and concepts from more than one generic subject.

This synthesis can be viewed on the portal on three linked sites:

- CurriculumMap: This portal site, illustrated in Exhibit 8 below, displays generic subjects under four domains. Each of the generic subject folders provides: a link to the generic subject site, links to the courses dealing with the generic subject, links to the collections of topics and references in ReferenceBank that are associated with the generic subject, links to selected topics that have their own sites, and links to the concepts primarily associated with the generic subject.
- TopicMap (which uses ReferenceBank to display topics): This site, illustrated in Exhibit 9 below, displays the topics assigned to the generic subjects. Topics that are used in more than one generic subject are assigned to the subject that is most closely associated with that topic. Because topics links are actually links to RefShare folders within ReferenceBank, clicking on the topic link will display the bibliographic references associated with the topic.
- ConceptMap: This site displays the concepts assigned to the generic subjects. Concepts that are used in more than one generic subject are assigned to the subject that is most closely associated with that concept.

Exhibit 8: CurriculumMap, with links to TopicMap and ConceptMap

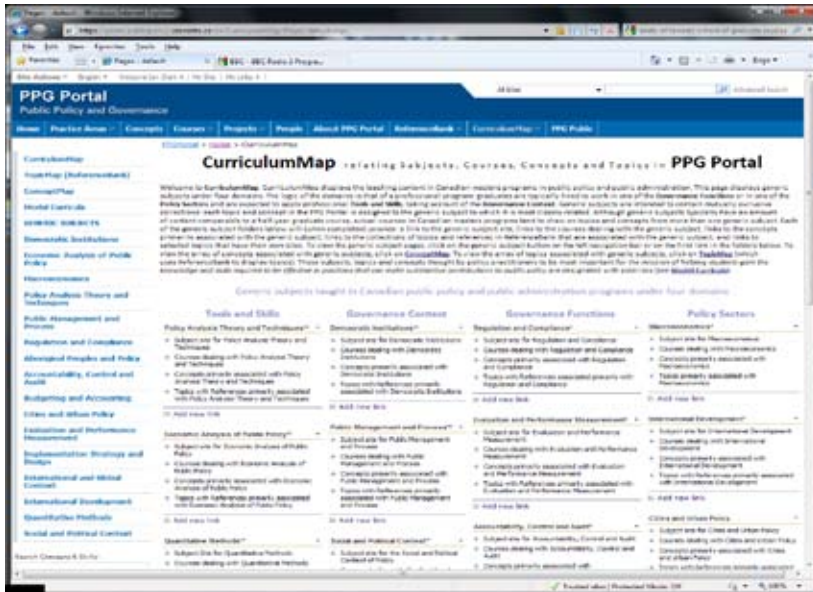
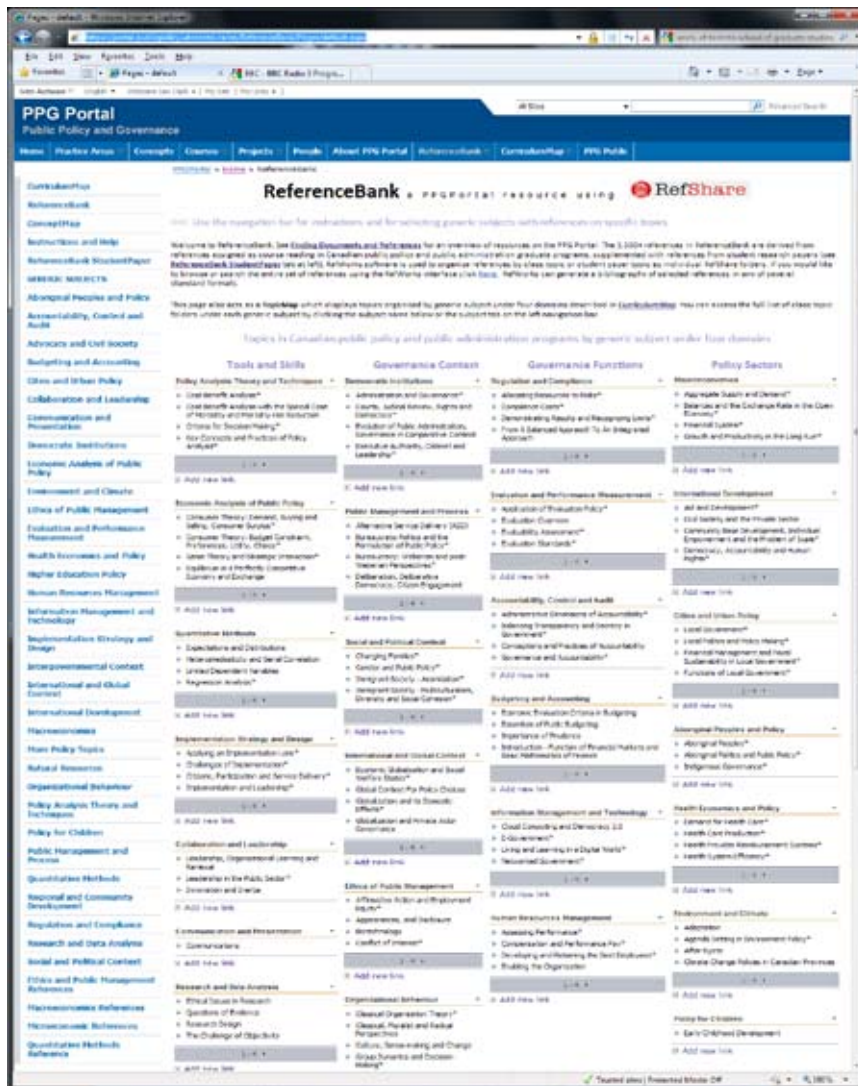


Exhibit 9: TopicMap (also acting as the interface to ReferenceBank)



CROATIAN AND COMPARATIVE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

6. Conclusion

Previous analysis of programs by Gow and Sutherland and by Pal examined program content in terms of courses, and made some attempt to analyze what categories those courses fell into in order to get some sense

of what areas of public administration each program emphasized. However, these studies simply did not have the resources to actually examine the content of those courses. The portal, for the first time, has drilled down to several levels of content – syllabi, topics, and concepts. By then reconstituting that universe of content into domains and generic subjects, we have a much more accurate mapping of what is actually being taught. Just as importantly, the mapping allows a more nuanced appreciation of the different emphases of MPA/MPP programs. There are some fascinating differences in the way different programs deal with these generic subjects.

In the »Tools and Skills« domain, most programs have a course with a title similar to »economic analysis and public policy« although both Carleton and Toronto have »microeconomics« in the title and have a parallel course on macroeconomics. We think that it is better to think of macroeconomics as a »Policy Sector« subject, and to focus the microeconomics topics and concepts on economic principles that are particularly relevant to general policy analysis. Few programs have courses that deal explicitly with »policy analysis theory and techniques«. The closest is Johnson-Shoyama's »Public Policy and Methodology«. Carleton's »Policy Analysis and Contemporary Governance« deals with some of the subject matter but the emphasis is on non-quantitative, political science and public administration topics. Most programs have some variant of »quantitative methods« and many also offer a course in the more advanced »research and data analysis«. Programs differ substantially in how they deal with the »implementation strategy and design« subject matter. Some treat this as an implementation course as in Toronto's »Putting Policy into Action: Strategic Implementation of Public Objectives« and others deal with it from the strategic planning perspective, as in Dalhousie's »Strategic Management in the Public Sector«. There are few explicit courses on »communication and presentation« or »collaboration and leadership«. Notable exceptions are Victoria's »Writing in the Public Sector« and »Public Sector Leadership: Teams, Self and Organization« and Johnson-Shoyama's »Leadership, Ethics and Democracy in the Public Service«.

In the »Governance Context« domain, most programs have two or three courses that cover the territory of »democratic institutions«, »public management and process«, and »social and political context«, with interesting differences in emphasis. Carleton, for example, has a core course on »State and Society« which is quite deliberately philosophical and historically sweeping – students are exposed to Weber, Polanyi, and Schumpeter, as well as a good dose of the Marxist tradition in analyzing capitalism.

For many faculty in the program, this course is a distinguishing feature of Carleton's MPA, for several reasons. The program prides itself on being something more than a professional degree, simply »training« future government functionaries. It sees itself as having strong academic tonalities, and a course like this is clearly distinct from run-of-the-mill public finance or microeconomics. It also introduces students to possibly the widest »governance context« one can imagine – the DNA of the economic system within which we live.

One of the other distinguishing features among the programs is the emphasis put on »international and global context«. Some programs at Carleton's and the University of Toronto offer concentrations in international or global public policy. Others, like the University of Ottawa and York have the term »international« in the degree title. As we noted above, there are of course stand-alone programs in international affairs and diplomacy that train student for careers in those fields, primarily in the Department of Foreign Affairs, but also in the NGO sector and occasionally in the private sector. The new emphasis in public administration programs on the international dimension is a simple recognition of the facts of governance life. The traditional hard-and-fast barriers between »domestic« and »foreign« policy simply no longer exist, and any competent public servant needs to have a sense of the international environment and how it affects public policy making (Pal and Ireland 2009).

This paper has provided an analysis of Canadian MPA/MPP programs with two different lenses. The first is a review at the programmatic level. The second is a detailed conceptual breakdown of what is actually taught in courses that make up those programs, mapped against professional competencies as defined by leading international accreditation institutions. The Portal in particular represents a major innovation in terms of understanding the »content« of programs, and provides rich material for bridging the divide between academic standards and professional utility.

Annex 1: Degree Requirements

University	Duration		Credits/ Courses	Comprehensive Examinations	Thesis	Internship
	Full- Time	Part- Time				
MPA/MPP programs						
Carleton	2 years	5 – 8 years	7.5 credits	–	✓ optional Research essay (1.0 credit) OR Thesis (2.0 credits)	✓ optional Co- op option (+ 1 course) is available for full time students
Dalhousie	1 and 2 years	7 years	18 credits	–	–	–
	MPA (M)					
	3 – 4 years	–	14 credits	Minimum of 5 years of management experience.	–	–
	MPA/LLB					
	4 year	–	L.L.B com- ponent = 9 classes + 39 credit hours + MPA com- ponent = 14.5 credits	–	–	✓ Paid intern- ship option (after the first year of Public Admin. Classes)
	MPA / MLIS					
	3 years	–	27 credits (15 MPA and 12 MLIS)	–	optional	✓
MPA/MREM						
3 years	–	22 courses	–	–	✓ optional	
ENAP	2 years	4 years	45 credits	–	✓ optional	✓ optional, but required for Management stream
Laval	2 years	4 years	45 credits	–	✓ (for Re- search and Methodol- ogy stream only)	✓

University	Duration		Credits/ Courses	Comprehensive Examinations	Thesis	Internship
	Full- Time	Part- Time				
Manitoba & Winnipeg	1 – 2 years	6 years	48 or 24 credits* + 5 credits for MB-MPA stream	✓ written and oral	✓ optional	✓ optional (full time)
Moncton	2 years	–	60 credits	–	–	✓
	MPA / L.L.B					
	4 years	–	123 credits	–	–	–
Ottawa (MA, Public Administration)	1 – 2 years	2 – 3 years	15 courses + internship and research Or 12 courses + thesis Or 18 courses + research		Research paper OR Thesis	✓ optional + research report
Ottawa (MA, Public and International Affairs)	2 years	–	45 credits	–	Research paper	✓ optional + research report
Queens's	1 year	–	12 half-course credits	–		✓ option (2 credits)
	PMPA					
	2 – 3 years	–	10 half course credits	–	–	✓ option (2 credits)
	MPA / L.L.B (JD)					
	4 years	–	12 half course credits + L.L.B require	–	–	✓
Johnson/Shoyama Saskatchewan/Regina	1 or 2 years (Public Policy)	max 5 years	10 courses	–	✓	–
	MIT					
	–	online	27 credits	–	–	–

University	Duration		Credits/ Courses	Comprehensive Examinations	Thesis	Internship
	Full- Time	Part- Time				
Ryerson	12 – 18 months (Max 24 months)	20 – 28 months (Max 36 months)	10 courses		Thesis + 2 courses OR Major re- search paper + 4 courses	–
Simon Fraser	4 se- mesters plus one intern- ship semes- ter		14 courses (70 credits)		Capstone project – ma- jor individual thesis length (mandatory)	✓ Mandatory work study paper requi- red
Toronto	2 years		15 courses			✓ + research paper
Victoria	2 years	Online MPA	19.5 to 21 credits		✓ Advanced Manage- ment or Policy Report OR ✓ Thesis	Co-op (on-Cam- pus students only)
Western	1 year	3 years	15 courses	–	✓ research paper	
York (Schulich)	MPA & MPA / MBA					
	16 – 24 months	40 – 72 months	60 credits			–
Hybrid programs						
Brock	12 months (3 terms)	–	11 courses	–	Thesis + 4 half credits and 1 sem- inar course OR Research paper + 6 half credits and 2 sem- inar courses	–

University	Duration		Credits/ Courses	Comprehensive Examinations	Thesis	Internship
	Full- Time	Part- Time				
B.C.	MAPPS					
	12 – 18 months	18 – 24 months	36 credits	–	✓ optional	✓ optional
	MAPPS / LLB					
	3 years	–	116 credits (86 = LLB 30 = MAPPS)	–	✓ optional	✓ optional
	MAPPS / MBA					
	2 years	–	75 credits (45 = MBA 30 = MAPPS)	–	✓ optional	✓ optional
	MAPPS/Planning					
	3 years	–	78 credits (48 = MA/ Planning 30 = MAPPS)	–	✓ optional	✓ optional
Concordia	2 years	3 years	45 credits	–	Extended re- search essay (6 credits) OR Thesis proposal (3 credits) + Thesis (21 credits)	Internship op- tion (+ research paper) (15 credits)
Guelph / McMaster	1 year		10 courses	✓	Major re- search paper	–

University	Duration		Credits/ Courses	Comprehensive Examinations	Thesis	Internship
	Full- Time	Part- Time				
York	MPPAL (School of Public Policy and Administration – Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies))					
	–	2 years	27 credits	–	Optional Major Research Paper (3.0 Credits) or Student takes an additional 3.0 Credit Course	–
	MPIA (Glendon)					
	2 years	–	45 credits or 36 credits with a re-search paper	–	✓ research paper	✓

Annex 2: Illustrations of Activities Supportive to Degree

University	Prof Dev	Mentors	Conferences	International Study	Student Journals	Applied Projects	Other
Dalhousie	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Queen's				✓			
Carleton	✓	✓			✓		
Ryerson	✓		✓			✓	
Johnson-Shoyama	✓						
Victoria	✓		✓	✓		✓	
Toronto	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Public Good Initiative (pro bono consulting)

Annex 3: Compulsory Courses

University	Governance Political System	Theory of PA and PP	Policy Process Decision Mak- ing	Macro Econ.	Micro Econ.
MPA or MA in PA Programs					
Carleton	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dalhousie (MPA)		✓	✓	✓	✓
MPA (M)	✓✓		✓	✓# Managerial economics ✓# Public economics	
ENAP	✓	✓			
Laval All streams	✓ ✓ (Mgment)	✓ (Mgment)	✓ (Policy)	✓ (Public Finance)	✓ (Public Finance)
Manitoba & Winnipeg	✓✓	✓✓✓✓ (Theories and practice in PA (3 courses) and Seminar in public policy issues)	✓✓ (Seminar in policy process; Canadian policy process)		
Moncton	✓			✓# (Economics in the Public Sector)	
Ottawa	✓	✓			
Queen's (MPA & PMPA)	✓	✓		✓# (Principles of economics)	
Johnson/Shoyama Saskatchewan/ Regina	✓	✓		✓# (Economics for public policy analysis)	
Victoria	✓			✓# (Public sector economics)	

Western	✓	✓	✓	✓# (Economics and public policy)	
York MPA (Schulich)	✓✓		✓		
Hybrid Programs					
Brock		✓			
B.C. (MAPPS)					
Concordia		✓			
Guelph / McMaster		✓	✓		
Ryerson	✓		✓		
Simon Fraser	✓	✓		✓	✓#
Toronto	✓		✓	✓	✓#
York MPPAL (Atkinson)			✓		
York MPIA (Glendon)	✓	✓	✓	✓# (Economics in public policy)	

Annex 3, Continued

University	Research Methods	Quantitative Methods	Organization Theory	Human resource Management	Middle Mgmt	Prof. Devt
Carleton	✓	✓				
Dalhousie (MPA)	✓	✓	✓	✓		
MPA (M)	✓			✓		
ENAP	✓(analysis stream only)		✓	✓		
Laval All streams	✓ ✓✓ (Research)	✓ ✓ (Research)		✓ (Mgmt)		
Manitoba & Winnipeg	✓					
Moncton						
Ottawa	✓					
Queen's		✓	✓			

Saskatchewan/ Regina							
Victoria		✓					
Western	✓			✓	✓		
York MPA (Schulich)		✓		✓			
<i>Hybrid Programs</i>							
Brock	✓						
B.C. (MAPPS)	✓						
Concordia	✓						
Guelph / Mc- Master		✓					
Ryerson	✓						
Simon Fraser		✓					
Toronto		✓					
York MPPAL (Atkinson)	✓						
York MPIA (Glendon)	✓						

Annex 3, Cont'd

University	Public Finance	Fin. Mgt & Acctbly	Admin. Law	Program Evaluation	Strategic Mgt	Comm.	Other
Carleton							– Public management
Dalhousie (MPA)	✓						– Ethics, PS and governance – Modern comptroller-ship
Dalhousie MPA (M)		✓		✓	✓		– Intergov. Relations – Directed readings – Managing the information resources – Business and Government – Policy formulation – Managing ppl in diverse organizations
ENAP	✓ (Mngt stream only)	–	–	–	✓		– Local gov

University	Public Finance	Fin. Mgt & Acctblty	Admin. Law	Program Evaluation	Strategic Mgt	Comm.	Other
Laval All Streams	✓ ✓ (Policy and Public Finance)	–	✓	✓ (Policy)			– Ethics (all concentrations)
Manitoba & Winnipeg	–	–	–	–	–	–	– State in the economy – State and the economy – Admin. theory
Moncton	–	–	✓	–	–	–	– Public mngt – Environment
Ottawa	–	–	–	–	–	–	– Theories in public mngt
Queen's	–	–	–	✓*	–	–	– Mngt in the PS – Eco of social policy* – Eco policy* – Eco analysis*
Saskatchewan/ Regina	✓						– Research and writing
Victoria	–	✓	✓	–	–	–	– Research design – Writing in PS – Leadership
Western	–	✓	–	✓	✓	–	– Local gov management – Municipal law – Issues in local gov – Issues in local govt
York MPA (Schulich)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	–	– Public Law – Business & Gov. – Judicial admin – Ethical policy – Prov & muni system – Inter business – Public admin & law
<i>Hybrid programs</i>							
Brock	–	–	–	–	–	–	– Great works in pol – Cnd pol – Comparative pol. – Int. relations – Pol. phil

University	Public Finance	Fin. Mgt & Acctbly	Admin. Law	Program Evaluation	Strategic Mgt	Comm.	Other
B.C. (MAPPS)	–	–	–	–	–	–	– 18 credits in selected thematic stream
Concordia	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Guelph / McMaster	–	–	–	–	–	–	– Comparative public policy* – Public sector mngt – Pol research – theories and approaches
Ryerson	–	–	–	–	–	–	– The state and eco
Simon Fraser	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Toronto	–	–	–	–	–	–	– Social context for policy making – Globalization, international and public policy – Int and social context – Strategic importance of public org. – Current issues in pp and practice
York MPPAL (Atkinson)	✓	–	✓	✓	–	–	– Ethics, privacy and ATI – Equity policy, law and planning – Leadership and HR – Public Mngt
York MPIA (Glendon)	–	–	–	–	–	–	– Public Mngt – Intern. Context of p-mkg

*Blue indicates an option between courses

#Red indicates a general economics course (e.g. economics, economics and public policy,, public sector economics, etc)

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MASTER'S OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND OF PUBLIC POLICY: AN ANALYSIS OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES IN CANADA

Summary

We review Canadian Master's of Public Administration and Master's of Public Policy (MPA/MPP) academic programs by examining both general curricula but also – using a new web tool called the Public Policy and Governance (PPG) Portal – the detailed content (concepts) taught in those courses and their match with »competencies« as defined by several international public administration standards setting organizations. In total, we examined 22 academic units across the country, which in total offered 33 distinct programs (some units offered more than one program). We also provide data on certificate and diploma programs and their various concentrations. Despite the variety in programming (jurisdiction over education in Canada is at the sub-national or provincial level, with a relatively high degree of autonomy for individual universities, unlike the more national-state dominated systems in the European tradition), we note several trends: most programs offer concentrations; a recent trend has been »hybrid« degrees (often combining administration or management with some aspect of international relations); a general reliance on internships; a set of core courses for most programs consisting of governance, macroeconomics, theory of public administration; research methods; public policy; quantitative methods. Using the PPG Portal, we were able to match detailed content of courses and curricula with the competencies template. We find that most Canadian programs fall short in offering (or requiring) courses in »policy analysis theory and techniques« and »implementation strategy and design«. We close with a call for better dialogue between academics and practitioners specifically in the Canadian case, but more generally, since MPA and MPP programs are professional degrees that prepare candidates for work in the public sector. The academic »supply« should at least be cognizant of the practitioner »demand«. We think that the PPG portal and the design and data-gathering that produced it provide a possible model for inquiries in other countries on the fit between academic programs and practical needs.

Key words: public administration; public policy; academic programs; degrees; practice; standards; curriculum; competencies

DIPLOMSKI STUDIJI JAVNE UPRAVE I JAVNIH POLITIKA:
ANALIZA SVEUČILIŠNIH PROGRAMA I STRUČNIH
KOMPETENCIJA U KANADI

Sažetak

Analiziraju se kanadski sveučilišni programi diplomskih studija javne uprave i diplomskih studija javnih politika pregledom općih programa studija, ali i korištenjem novog web alata nazvanog Portal za javne politike i upravu, koji detaljno analizira sadržaj (koncepte) koji se predaju na takvim studijima te ih automatski povezuje s kompetencijama koje se stječu. Njih je pak definiralo nekoliko međunarodnih organizacija koje se bave postavljanjem standarda na području javne uprave. Ukupno su pregledane 22 sveučilišne institucije iz cijele države, s ukupno 33 različita programa (neke institucije nude više programa). Daju se i podaci o potvrđama i diplomama o završenoj naobrazbi i različitim modulima koji postoje. Iako su programi raznoliki (obrazovanje u Kanadi spada u nadležnost federalnih jedinica – provincija, a sveučilišta imaju relativno visok stupanj autonomije, za razliku od europske tradicije u kojoj visokim školstvom dominiraju središnje vlasti), primjetno je nekoliko trendova: većina programa nudi module; najnoviji su trend »hibridne« diplome (u kojima se često kombiniraju uprava i menadžment s nekim vidom međunarodnih odnosa); opće oslanjanje na stažiranje u odgovarajućim institucijama; većina programa ima skup temeljnih predmeta koji se sastoji od upravljanja, makroekonomije, teorije javne uprave, metoda istraživanja, javnih politika te kvantitativnih metoda. Korištenjem Portala za javne politike uspjelo se usporediti detaljan sadržaj predmeta i programa s kompetencijama koje bi se trebale steći završetkom studija. Pronađeno je da je većina kanadskih programa podbacila u ponudi (ili traženju) predmeta vezanih za »teoriju i tehnike analize javnih politika« i »strategiju i oblikovanje provedbe«. Poziva se na bolju suradnju između akademske zajednice i praktičara, posebno u kanadskim prilikama, ali i općenito, budući da su diplomski studiji javne uprave i javnih politika profesionalni studiji koji pripremaju kandidate za zanimanje u javnom sektoru. Sveučilišna »ponuda« trebala bi biti barem minimalno uzeti u obzir »potražnju« prakse. Smatra se da Portal za javne politike i upravu, kao i oblikovanje i sakupljanje podataka koji su omogućili njegovo postojanje, mogu biti jedan od modela za istraživanja o istim temama i u drugim zemljama.

Ključne riječi: javna uprava, javne politike, sveučilišni programi, diplome, praksa, standardi, kurikulum, kompetencije