EXECUTIVE MPA COURSE (EXEC-GP)

EXEC-GP 100 EMPA Co-Curricular Series (0 Credits)
Typically offered occasionally
To complement coursework and advisement from Wagner faculty and staff, EMPA students engage in co-curricular programming throughout their first year of study. These mandatory sessions—roughly every other Saturday before the afternoon class period—provide opportunities to enhance your skills, reflect on your professional identity, learn from leaders in the public and non-profit sectors, and obtain important program and career advisement. This year-long series is open only to EMPA students. It will provide structured and open time for you to network and collaborate with members of your cohort and our guest speakers, which will include EMPA alumni. The EMPA Co-Curricular Series carries no academic credit, is not graded, and will not appear on your transcript, but your attendance and participation is required.
Grading: Class does not print on the transcript
Repeatable for additional credit: No

EXEC-GP 101 EMPA Co-Curricular Series (0 Credits)
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Repeatable for additional credit: No

EXEC-GP 1194 Strategic Leadership (3 Credits)
Typically offered occasionally
Only open to students in the Executive MPA Program. Strategic Leadership is an intensive leadership course designed to equip mid-career students with the tools, perspectives, and frameworks for executing high-impact strategy within mission-driven organizations. Course topics are organized around four themes: 1) cultivating purposeful leadership, 2) analyzing conditions to build a theory of change, 3) mobilizing commitment to change, and 4) achieving change. Within this four-part model we will explore conceptual frameworks for understanding high impact organizations and the role of strategic leadership, analytical tools for developing and assessing strategy, approaches to working with stakeholders to mobilize commitment, and methods for leading change.
Grading: Grad Wagner Graded
Repeatable for additional credit: No

EXEC-GP 2106 Community Organizing (3 Credits)
Community Organizing will provide an overview and introduction to the fundamentals of organizing to win, implement, monitor and sustain change in the private and public sectors. We will compare, contrast different forms of participatory community organizing and explore the linkages between community organizing and social movement building in the 21st century. We will probe the moral values and priorities imbedded in different organizing approaches and cultivate or hone participants' concrete skills in active listening, leadership development, strategic analysis, campaign design, research, coalition-building, mobilization, design and use of non-violent direct action, communication (including use of symbols and art), assessment, role of funders, monitoring and sustaining change. While the principal focus will be organizing in the US, we will examine approaches taken by people's organizations in Sri Lanka and Haiti and how these approaches can be adapted in the US context as well as how strategic international support for organizing can effect change in these countries elsewhere in the world. Through readings, class activities, speakers, reflections, and a final organizing project, students will emerge with an enlarged vocabulary and set of models for organizing, the skills to catalyze and build organizations, and the ability design campaigns for the purpose of achieve and sustain change.
Grading: Grad Wagner Graded
Repeatable for additional credit: No

EXEC-GP 2113 Building Effective Teams - Advanced Strategies (3 Credits)
This four-day course aims to develop your ability to build, lead, and participate in high-performing teams. We will draw from research in psychology, management, strategy, behavioral economics, and sociology to discuss best practices for designing, launching, participating, and coaching in-person and online teams. We will also focus on the benefits and challenges of making difficult decisions in challenging environments; working across demographic, functional, and cognitive differences; creating structures that support creativity, collaboration, psychological safety, and voice; understanding conflict; and using the congruence model for problem-solving. This course will be of most value to those who have some work experience.
Grading: Grad Wagner Graded
Repeatable for additional credit: No

EXEC-GP 2135 Human Resources: Leading Talent Development (3 Credits)
This course is designed for public and non-profit leaders and managers rather than human resource professionals, and provides a broad overview of human resources and talent management dynamics and responsibilities. Topics will include basic human resources functions such as recruitment, job design, professional development, employee engagement, performance appraisal and providing feedback. It will also explore current issues within human resources management, such as aligning people, processes, and technologies to deliver organizational value, identity and inclusion in the workplace, the role of organized labor, or other topics. The course will include practical application through case discussions and reflection on student's prior management experience. While it will focus on values-based organizations, public, non-profit and for-profit sectors will be considered and analyzed.
Grading: Grad Wagner Graded
Repeatable for additional credit: No

EXEC-GP 2141 Financial Decision Making and Management (3 Credits)
The goal of this course to is help Executive MPA students learn financial tools to apply to decision-making within mission-driven and governmental organizations. Designed for the experienced mid-career general manager of a nonprofit, governmental, or healthcare organization, the course is intended to meet these leaders where they are by guiding them in developing a range of financial analysis skills through a combination of class discussions and analyses of case studies of specific organizations. The goal is to place financial analysis and decision-making in the context of the complete range of tools used by social sector: this work will demonstrate especially the complex relationships between finance, impact, strategy, and governance. Where appropriate, we will also integrate best practice tools from other disciplines including performance measurement and the alignment of financial and social returns.
Grading: Grad Wagner Graded
Repeatable for additional credit: No

EXEC-GP 2170 Performance Measurement & Management (3 Credits)
Typically offered occasionally
All public and not-for-profit organizations must assemble and report information on their performance. The need for performance measures goes beyond legal and regulatory requirements. To provide services effectively and efficiently, managers need information to make decisions. This course focuses on what performance measures are needed, how they should be created and what forms of communication are most effective.
Grading: Grad Wagner Graded
Repeatable for additional credit: No

EXEC-GP 2174 The Intersection of Operations, Policy, and Leadership (3 Credits)
Typically offered occasionally
Policy, operations, and leadership are inextricably linked. This course aims to expose students to policy formation in a highly political environment, to operations management of systems shaped by state and local policy, and to the requirements and pressures faced by leaders wrestling with difficult problems. The course aims to build a toolbox of specific skills to assess stakeholder environments; to support analysis and decision making in a wide variety of contexts; and to appreciate the role of leadership, consensus building, and conflict management in driving policy outcomes. We will use as a backdrop a unifying Multimedia Interactive Case Study (MICS) built around the New York City family homeless shelter system. This course is an intensive engagement that incorporates perspectives from academic theorists, journalists, City, State and Federal government officials, service providers, advocacy organizations, and public interest law.
Grading: Grad Wagner Graded
Repeatable for additional credit: No

EXEC-GP 2201 Institutions, Governance, and Public Sector Reform (3 Credits)
Typically offered occasionally
Only open to Executive MPA students. This course exposes students to contemporary thinking about institutions, governance and the reinvention of the public sector. We focus on specific reforms intended to improve government performance and promote good governance as rapid economic, political and social changes-both global and local-- evolve in different countries at various stages of development. Major topics include establishing and enhancing rule of law, property rights, and regulatory regimes; developing more effective organizational structures, civil service systems and anti-corruption mechanisms; and creating and enhancing frameworks and policies for public sector fiscal management, decentralization, public-private partnership and citizen engagement. As we work through the topics, we consider competing theoretical perspectives and empirical evidence. An underlying theme is the need to go beyond the mainstream tendency to use pre-packaged tools and narrow frameworks in pursuit of single "right" answers. Rather, the course uses diverse case material to challenges students to use rigorous and creative analysis to seek levers of change that matter and are feasible in particular contexts.
Grading: Grad Wagner Graded
Repeatable for additional credit: No

EXEC-GP 2413 Strategic Philanthropy (3 Credits)
Typically offered occasionally
This course will explore the fault lines within the field of philanthropy and prepare students to effectively leverage resources for their organizations. The course will examine different approaches to grantmaking including: social entrepreneurship, effective altruism, venture philanthropy, social justice grantmaking, and strategic philanthropy. Students will learn the differences across these conceptual frameworks and understand how they influence the ways in which foundations establish goals, develop strategies, evaluate grantees, and determine grant awards. By exploring both the conceptual and pragmatic dimensions of across grantmaking frameworks, students will understand the tensions and debates within the philanthropic sector and be well prepared to identify those foundations most likely to support their work. Coursework will include case studies, individual foundation research, and opportunities for students to become familiar with the research by and about the philanthropic sector. Classes will combine lectures, guest speakers, and class debates to understand and analyze different approaches to grantmaking, identify how they shape foundation priorities, and learn how to effectively position their work within the philanthropic sector.
Grading: Grad Wagner Graded
Repeatable for additional credit: No

EXEC-GP 2430 Cross-Sector Collaborations (3 Credits)
Typically offered occasionally
Cross-sector collaborations are a response to the increasing recognition that many of the pressing challenges of our time are complex and requires a systems approach. Such challenges must involve multiple stakeholders, guided by principles of inclusion and equity, and draw on a full range of resources to achieve results that cannot be achieved by working in silos, including stakeholders' expertise, experience and insights, relationships and networks, and financial contributions. Cross sector collaborations can catalyze adoption of innovations and policies and strengthen resilience when confronted by the unknown and unpredictable. While promising and extolled in principle, cross-sector collaborations can be difficult in practice due to structural and institutional barriers, as well as distinct assumptions, works styles, and disciplinary backgrounds of those engaged. This course encourages students to understand the value and challenges of cross-sector collaborations and to gain insight on the skills and approaches required. The course is structured around student engagement and learning on collaboration cases that span geographic context and levels of action: domestic, national and global contexts. Through frameworks, practitioner testimonials and applied practice, students learn relevant frameworks for collaboration, explore assumptions from each sector, clarify and challenge their own assumptions and preconceptions about sectors, and identify their own strengths and gaps to become competent collaborators.
Grading: Grad Wagner Graded
Repeatable for additional credit: No

EXEC-GP 3190 EMPA Seminar: Leadership Confronted (3 Credits)
Typically offered occasionally
Restricted to students in the Executive MPA Program. This course is designed to create an "action learning" community in which students will integrate their professional experiences, and other graduate course work, with a final exploration of leadership concepts, theory and applied practice. The course is designed to strengthen students' abilities to lead, as a colleague who can support leadership behavior in peers, and as one who can promote leadership behavior in supervisors and subordinates. Specifically, as a result of their work in this course, students are expected to become: • conversant with a broad survey of theoretical concepts and assumptions about leadership and leadership behavior; • better navigators of the internal and external factors influencing successful leading; • demonstrably more expert in using a variety of skills such as appreciative inquiry, positive deviance, narrative inquiry and action research, to frame and describe personal leadership challenges as a step towards increasing successful leading; • deft in consulting with others, and receiving and providing constructive feedback; and, • more insightful about personal leadership competencies, paradoxes and challenges. Growing out of this increased awareness, students will develop an action plan for continued development of personal leadership capabilities. This course has been carefully designed to provide you with an opportunity to synthesize and apply leadership theory. This is an academic seminar with a significant component of experiential learning.
Grading: Grad Wagner Graded
Repeatable for additional credit: No

EXEC-GP 4101 Conflict Management and Negotiation (1.5 Credits)
Typically offered occasionally
The public/nonprofit administrator, whether primarily concerned with management, policy or finance, is called upon to manage or becomes involved in a wide variety of conflicts. Conflict is ubiquitous - within and between organizations and agencies, between levels of government, between interest groups and government, between interest groups, between citizens and agencies, etc. The increasing complexity and interrelatedness of the issues that the public sector is called upon to address, and the increasing sophistication and engagement of groups representing both public and private interests, compounds the challenge. In this environment, it is essential for public and nonprofit administrators to know how to manage conflict effectively. Effective conflict management involves analyzing a conflict, understanding the dynamics between the parties, and determining the appropriate method of conflict resolution. In the absence of confidence and skill in conflict management, most public officials resort, often counterproductively, to the use of power, manipulation, and control. Possessing confidence and skill, one can exercise other options. Through readings, discussions, and simulations you will develop an understanding of conflict dynamics and the art and science of negotiation and will be introduced to the role that can be played by conflict resolution techniques such as mediation. The course will emphasize the theoretical as well as the practical, the reflective as well as the applied.
Grading: Grad Wagner Graded
Repeatable for additional credit: No

EXEC-GP 4126 Leading Values-Based Culture in Nonprofit Organizations (1.5 Credits)
Culture -- the system of shared assumptions, values, meanings, and beliefs, which informs the behavior of individuals -- is perhaps the most salient variable mechanism that influences organizational performance (Schein, 2017). Successful leadership of nonprofit organizations largely depends on how closely institutional practices align with professed public values. Strong organizational culture fosters innovation, supports collaboration, and advances impact. Presuming a basic grounding in the structures and roles of nonprofit organizations, this course explores the values that lie behind them, drawing on the instructor's extensive experience in supporting cross-sector global and mission-driven organizations, advancing DEIB strategies, and managing partnership and funder relationships. Expect a course on exploring organizational culture and how it informs and influences the vision, mission, internal systems and structures, budget, employee performance and satisfaction, external brand identity and, ultimately, the organization's success.
Grading: Grad Wagner Graded
Repeatable for additional credit: No

EXEC-GP 4129 Race, Identity and Inclusion (1.5 Credits)
Typically offered occasionally
This course brings together a wide range of thinking and scholarship about race and identity to encourage learning about what race is, why it matters, and racial dynamics in organizations and how best to address them. (In this description, "race" is used as a shorthand for the interconnected complex of race, ethnicity, culture and color, understanding that we will be careful to distinguish among them in the course itself.) While recognizing the importance of intersectionality and other markers of difference such as gender and class, the course focuses on race for two reasons: 1) it is generally the most charged dimension of diversity in the United States, the most difficult to discuss and, therefore, the topic we most often avoid, and 2) it has the greatest impact on life chances and opportunities: race is often the best predictor of income, wealth, education, health, employment and other important measures of well-being. Because the impact of race is highly contextual, we will focus on the United States, although our lens will broaden at different points. The course will roughly divide into two parts. The first part will address the phenomenon of race more broadly, while the second half will look more closely at organizations. It will begin with theoretical understandings of what race is and how it is distinguished from ethnicity, culture and color. Then we will explore the dynamics of racism, discrimination and stereotypes, followed by research on the impact of race on individuals and groups. The intricate connections to gender and class will be our next topics. In the second half, we will address how race influences, and is influenced by, organizational dynamics. This will include classes on discrimination and racism in organizations, traditional approaches to "managing" diversity, alternative approaches that emphasize self-awareness, learning and mutuality, and particular concerns related to public service contexts like health care and philanthropy.
Grading: Grad Wagner Graded
Repeatable for additional credit: No

EXEC-GP 4137 Communications and Branding for Nonprofits (1.5 Credits)
Typically offered occasionally
An organization's brand can help it raise money, create change, and recruit participants as it effectively communicates its mission. But a brand is more than just a logo or a memorized elevator pitch, it is the way both internal and external audiences perceive your organization—and shaping this perception is as essential to the success of nonprofit and public organizations as it is to for-profit organizations. And since many nonprofits have limited staff and financial resources available for communications activities, it is even more important that these resources be deployed as strategically as possible. This course will offer an overview of branding and communications concepts, helping students approach branding in a way that builds commitment to their organization's mission, increases trust, creates ambassadors, and strengthens impact. Students will gain a basic familiarity with a variety of branding principles and develop strategic communication recommendations for an organization they are familiar with.
Grading: Grad Wagner Graded
Repeatable for additional credit: No

EXEC-GP 4151 Inclusive Leadership (1.5 Credits)
In today's world, being an impactful and effective leader requires us to move beyond a focus on goals and metrics, and towards creating environments where everyone feels valued, seen and recognized, and where diverse talents and skills come together to deliver exceptional outcomes. There is a strong alignment between the skills needed to be an adaptive leader, able to lead teams and organizations effectively through difficult and changing times, and those that are associated with an inclusive leadership mindset. During this class we will consider the key components and skillsets underlying an inclusive leadership approach, we will review a range of materials and viewpoints, we will dive into both the business case imperative, and reflect upon the importance of purpose in creating inclusive workplaces and settings. This class will take an immersive look at some of the complexities of our varied identities, backgrounds, cultures and the intersections of these, and we will consider our own growth as leaders and reflect upon our personal leadership story. We will look at how our institutions, structures and merit-reward expectations can contain interlocking systems of power and consider how to recognize when imbalance exists and how to create rebalancing strategies for greater inclusion. During this class students will: gain new perspectives and insights on common assumptions and biases; reflect upon how they can grow as allies and role models; build an awareness of others' experiences; improve leadership communication abilities; and move along a path towards building the skills necessary to become and grow as a highly engaged, impactful and inclusive leader.
Grading: Grad Wagner Graded
Repeatable for additional credit: No

EXEC-GP 4154 Management Consulting for Public Service Organizations (1.5 Credits)
Management consultants work in all corners of the public and nonprofit sectors on every imaginable topic—from organizational strategy to technology implementation, education to migration. But what is management consulting? Why do so many public service organizations rely on it? What skills and experience do you need to be a management consultant? And how much good can management consulting really do for the public and nonprofit sectors? Management Consulting for Public Service Organizations will answer and invite debate on all of these questions. You will learn how to deliver what clients really want and how to improve the chances your recommendations are adopted. Through our readings and discussions we will explore scholarly and practitioner thinking on strategy, problem solving, innovation and the costs and benefits consulting has in the public and nonprofit sectors. As in consulting, your assignments will be both collaborative and reflective and your final deliverables will be evaluated by current and former management consultants and nonprofit consulting clients. You will leave this course more clear on what a public service-facing management consultant does, having practiced some of the skills they use, and with insight into how you can add the most value to the organizations and sectors you care about.
Grading: Grad Wagner Graded
Repeatable for additional credit: No