When You Should Take the Professional Applications Course Modules: There are two professional applications course modules in the departmental curriculum. Students should plan on taking the Professional Applications modules during the first fall and spring semester they are enrolled in the program. If you are not taking 507 and 508 in the “normal” fall then spring semester order, you should speak to the course instructor.

Public Service Core Competencies in the MPA Degree
This course is organized around 5 public service core competencies that cut across the core and advanced curriculum of the MPA. These 5 public service core competencies have been promulgated by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) and are used broadly to define the curriculum in all accredited MPA and MPP programs in the United States. This section of 508 especially emphasizes managing diversity and uses systems thinking tools to explore linkages and interactions across and between the other four public service core competencies:

- To lead and manage in public governance
- To participate in and contribute to the policy process
- To analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions
- To articulate and apply a public service perspective
- To communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry

Class Component #1: A Portfolio of Public Service Competencies
During your MPA program while working on class assignments and exams, team projects, and related written products, you have been creating an informal portfolio of products that demonstrate your skills and abilities around the five public service competencies. This class will ask you to more formally organize the portfolio of products that you have been creating over the past year and
to more formally reflect on how these portfolio products contribute to your personal career objectives. This course objective will require reflection and organization on your part, but not the creation of new products themselves. You have already done the hard work—the objective in this class is to be more reflective and formal about what you have already done.

We will use the discipline and concept of “Mastery” as presented by Senge in *The Fifth Discipline* to introduce the concept of public service core competencies for organizing your thinking about your career objectives and your learning objectives for the remainder of your MPA program.

Your overall portfolio for the entire MPA is due in your last semester in the program as part of the 509 requirement. Work in this class gets you part way toward your overall MPA portfolio requirement

**Class Component #2: Self-Assessment of Professional Development.**
The Self-Assessment of Professional Development is closely linked to the portfolio requirement. This self-assessment will result in several products that will become part of your portfolio as well as part of the graded assignment material for this class.

**Class Component #3: Group Work on the ReThink Health Public Policy and Management Challenge.**
The core classes that you have already completed have given you a suite of tools and concepts for solving complex managerial and policy problems. This class provides a challenge experience for applying those competencies, tools, and concepts to an important public policy and management problem. Working in teams of five to six students each, your assignment will be to redesign the delivery of health care in the “Anytown” region. Anytown is a statistically constructed region that has the general demographic, health delivery and health outcomes of the US in general (it is a small regional replica of the United States). Your team will work with field experts in health care delivery drawn from around the Capital District and will interact with the ReThink Health Dynamics simulation module that has been developed by the Ripple Foundation to support regional health care reform across the United States. The overall challenge is organized into three rounds of increasing complexity. *This challenge is extremely difficult. Health care reform is one of the most intractable public policy and management problems in the United States. Of course a team of five MPA students cannot “solve” this problem in one semester. The purpose of the challenge is to demonstrate how far you can get with your MPA training to date.*

**Class Component #4: Departmental Town Hall Meeting**
The final experience of this class is a departmental town hall meeting, providing an opportunity for all first year MPA students and the whole faculty to meet together. This event will be based in part on the portfolio for public service competencies that you are assembling this semester and is designed to serve as a bookend to the advising workshops during welcome week. Throughout, the course is designed to solidify a class identity for the entering class of 2013, creating a cohort of connections and friendships that hopefully will follow you through the rest of your career. We believe that building social capital and networks is an important component of professional education.

**Course Assignments and Time Requirements** Assignments will be due at each meeting of the course after the initial meeting. A good guideline is to allow two hours of course preparation for every hour of class contact time. Using this rule, you should leave about 56 hours of class preparation time in your schedule for this module (in addition to the time spent in class).
**Workload warning:** this course requires a significant commitment of time and effort especially during the months of March and April—the workload is NOT evenly distributed. Students should be careful to allocate sufficient time to complete required readings and class assignments.

**Readings and Assignments Materials.** Readings for the class are available on the University Black Board system. Books on reserve are located in the Dewey reserve room. Major class readings will be taken from,


This text has been ordered at Mary Jane Books, 215 Western Avenue (465-2238)

**Group Work.** A significant component of Professional Applications II involves group work. Groups are assigned on a quasi-random basis (we try to check for some gender balance, for example). Group work forms a significant portion of the required work for this class. The Rocky Awards are designed to reward groups for excellence and innovation in this component of the class.

**Plagiarism and Cheating.** We encourage you to work collaboratively with your fellow students on most of the work in this course. Learn by interaction. However, some assignments—most notably your final assignment write-ups—should reflect individual effort. We plan to run the course on an “honor system” and hence would consider any case of plagiarism to be a most severe infringement on the basic rules of the class. An incident of plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the course with the possibility of further action being pursued at the university level.

**Alternative Learning Styles.** The University is particularly suited to the academically qualified student who has a physical or learning disability. If you have such a disability or you require an alternative mode of instruction to facilitate learning, please contact David Andersen during the first two weeks of the semester.

**Late Assignments and Incomplete Work.** As a course rule, late assignments will not be accepted. No incomplete will be given for work left undone in conjunction with this course. Any exceptions to these two rules will require written consent from the instructor of record.

**Course Grading.** The course is graded A-E. However, most course experiences are graded on a pass-fail basis (such as attendance at group presentations and your public speaking engagements). Two written assignments will be A-E graded. Your final grade for the module will be computed using the following formula:

\[
\text{Final Grade} = (\text{Pass or Fail Grade}) \times (\text{Average Grade on Written Assignments}) + \\
\text{Grade Adjustment of Re-Think Health Performance Award} + \\
\text{Grade Adjustment for Rocky Award} + (\text{or -}) \\
\text{Grade Adjustment from Assessment of Group Work and Class Participation} + \\
\text{Bonus Points}
\]

The Pass or Fail Grade varies from zero to one. One half of the weight of the pass/fail portion of your grade is made up from the assignments that you complete and turn in (or present) and the other one half from attendance at the various course meetings and sessions. If individual written work is found to be unsatisfactory, students can generally rewrite the assignment for passing grade.
**Unsatisfactory group work cannot be made up.** The required components are shown below.

Your personal group grade can be adjusted upwards by one half a letter grade if your group wins one of the Re-ThiThink Health performance awards or one of the Rocky Awards. Details of how these awards will be made will be discussed further in class.

Failure to meet group work expectations is evaluated by the instructor’s judgment based on an individual’s written evaluation of group performance. The instructor may also evaluate an individual’s contribution to a group’s performance by interviewing group participants or using a group assessment survey.

**The Professional Applications “Town Meeting” Wrap Up Session.** We plan on ending this year’s Professional Applications experience with a “Town Hall” meeting again involving the entire faculty and all of the entering class from the fall 2013. This culminating experience will involve an evaluation of your first year’s experience in the MPA core program. Several exercises will involve small teams of faculty and students working together on evaluative exercises.

Anticipated assignments and their contribution to your grade are listed below. *Please note, these assignments may change as the course progresses and detailed assignments will be handed out at each class.* If you have any questions about the course requirements or the grading system, please contact the Lead Instructor for the course, David F. Andersen at 442-5280.

**Components of “Pass Fail” portion of your grade**

1. Complete all components of the Portfolio of Public Service Competencies
2. Attendance at all scheduled sessions of the class
3. Submit Student Information Sheet
4. Submit interim assignments associated with the Self-Assessment of Professional Development
5. Group Work—Active participation in all group work preparing for Re-ThiThink Health
6. Group Project—complete ReThink Health Challenge—Rounds 1,2, and 3
7. Group Project—Submit your group nomination for a Rocky Award (optional)
8. Submit Peer Evaluation of Group Participation
9. Complete Social Network Surveys
10. Attendance at departmental “Town Meeting” on May 2

**Components of the graded portion of your work**

1. Group Work—Submit write-up of your Re-ThiThink Health Challenge: Round 3 (final presentation on April 25 to Panel)
2. Individual—Final Written Assignment post Re-ThiThink Health Exercise—Due May 2 (Details of this assignment will be handed out with the more complete Round 3 assignment).
3. Final Written Assignment relating to your Self-assessment of Professional Development.

**Components of Possible Re-ThiThink Health Performance or Rocky Award**

1. A bonus of a half grade (e.g., personal grade of B+ would bump up to A-) based on panel’s evaluation of on your group’s performance in the ReThink Health final presentation on April 25 (50%) plus instructor evaluation of the materials that you turn in after your group presentation (50%).
2. A bonus of a half grade (e.g., personal grade of B+ would bump up to A-) based on class voting on your Rocky Award (50%) plus instructor evaluation of your Rocky Award Self-
Nomination (50%). The Rocky Award for Bibliographer is to be determined by Richard Irving, the Public Affairs Bibliographer at Dewey Library

Components of your Peer Evaluation portion of your grade
1. Instructor direct observation of class participation in all its aspects
2. Tally of peer evaluation forms from members of the class who have worked with you
3. This component of your grade can lead to a grade boost OR to a decrease in your final grade.

Course Waivers for Professional Applications: In general, course waivers for the Professional Applications modules are not given. That said, the departmental policy on waivers of core courses allows such waivers when a student has prior academic coursework covering the topic of the course. For example, a student with an undergraduate major in math and statistics may petition to waive RPAD/RPUB 505, or a student with strong coursework in economics may petition to waive RPAD/RPUB 503. This same policy applies to 508. Waiver petitions are considered by a committee of the faculty and must be signed in advance by the course instructor. The committee on waivers will meet during the first week in February and will notify students by the end of the week. Please contact the lead instructor if you have any questions on these policies.
# Block Schedule for RPAD 508 Spring 2014

**Tentative Timing of Assignments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Thread 1: ReThink Health Team Work</th>
<th>Thread 2: Individual Reflections on MPA Tools and Competencies</th>
<th>Thread 3: Design and Upload First Draft MPA Portfolio</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 22</td>
<td>First Day of Classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 31</td>
<td>Intro to ReThink Health/ Start Round I Assignment/ Initial course lunch/ Results from the NYS Medicaid Redesign Team</td>
<td>Class model for “Mastery” and reflective peer-reinforced learning Discuss Rocky Awards</td>
<td>Launch Portfolio Assignment</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 14</td>
<td>Round I Due. Class Works on Simulator</td>
<td>Reflection Assignments Presented &amp; Discussed</td>
<td>Training on Portfolio Software</td>
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<td>February 21</td>
<td>Classes Suspended</td>
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<td>February 28</td>
<td>Graduate Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 7</td>
<td>Round II Due Begin Planning Round III</td>
<td>Discuss Implementation Projects with Project Mentors</td>
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<td>March 21</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<td>March 28</td>
<td>Round III Peer Exercises</td>
<td>Peer interactions around Reflection Assignments</td>
<td>Portfolio Support and Feedback Available</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 11</td>
<td>Round III Peer Exercises</td>
<td>Peer interactions around Reflection Assignments /Rocky Awards</td>
<td>Portfolio Support and Feedback Available</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 25</td>
<td>Final Presentations/ Final Course Lunch with team mentors/ Optional Rocky Awards</td>
<td>Final Presentations</td>
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<td>May 2</td>
<td>Town Hall Meeting</td>
<td>Town Hall Meeting</td>
<td>Town Hall Meeting</td>
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<td>May 8</td>
<td>Last Day of Class</td>
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<td>May 9</td>
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<td>Portfolios Due</td>
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1. There are a lot of moving pieces in this course. To help you keep better track of it all, detailed summaries of assignments due in upcoming classes are provided at the end of each session.
2. Classes are scheduled to meet from 9 AM to Noon with the exception of those classes featuring a lunch and the Town Hall Meeting.
3. Our initial class will feature a lunch and a presentation by Jason Helgerson from the NYS Medicaid Redesign Team.
4. The April 25 class will be extended to include a lunch with our team mentors and faculty. The Rocky Award ceremony after lunch will be optional.
5. Town Hall meeting is scheduled for the afternoon and will include all departmental faculty.
PLEASE COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE AND RETURN IT TODAY. This information will help us reach you with news and updates about the course.

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<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
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<td>E-mail address:</td>
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<td>Home Phone #:</td>
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<td>Home Address:</td>
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<td>Academic Background (previous degrees):</td>
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<td>Academic Program at University at Albany:</td>
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<td>Program Courses Completed:</td>
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<td>Do you require an excuse from scheduled class sessions for religious observances? (If so, you must make special arrangements with the instructor in the first two weeks of class)</td>
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<td>Do you require an alternative mode of instruction to accommodate a physical or learning disability? If so, please explain:</td>
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<td>Public Service Employment Experience (most recent):</td>
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