

PIA6903: MAPPM DISSERTATION

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

MAPPM Dissertation

Subject Code

PIA - Public and International Affairs

Course Number

6903

Academic Unit

Public and International Affairs (PIA)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

Two Semesters

Credit Units

0-3

Level

P5, P6 - Postgraduate Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Applicable to students admitted in 2023/24 and thereafter:

To be eligible to undertake a Dissertation, part-time students will be required to:

1. have completed PIA6603 Research Methods in Public Policy with Grade A- or above;
2. have gained at the end of their first two semesters of study a CGPA of 3.4; and
3. submit a formal Dissertation Proposal of at least 2,000 words by the end of their first semester B in which they set out:
 - a. their proposed topic and supervisor;
 - b. their aims and objectives;
 - c. their rationale for the study (their rationale should also include a short literature review that helps to locate their study in a wider theoretical and, if appropriate, applied literature);
 - d. their proposed methods; and
 - e. their development plan including schedules and resource requirements.

The Dissertation Coordinator (course leader of PIA6903) will review the Dissertation Proposal in consultation with the proposed supervisor and make the final approval decision based on the completeness and realism of the Dissertation Proposal and the recommendation of the proposed supervisor.

To be eligible to undertake a Dissertation, full-time students will be required to:

1. have completed PIA6603 Research Methods in Public Policy with Grade A- or above;

2. have gained at the end of their first semester of study a CGPA of 3.4; and
3. submit a formal Dissertation Proposal of at least 2,000 words by the end of their first semester A in which they set out:
 - a. their proposed topic and supervisor;
 - b. their aims and objectives;
 - c. their rationale for the study (their rationale should also include a short literature review that helps to locate their study in a wider theoretical and, if appropriate, applied literature);
 - d. their proposed methods; and
 - e. their development plan including schedules and resource requirements.

The Dissertation Coordinator (course leader of PIA6903) will review the Dissertation Proposal in consultation with the proposed supervisor and make the final approval decision based on the completeness and realism of the Dissertation Proposal and the recommendation of the proposed supervisor.

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

PIA6604 MAPP M Capstone Project

Additional Information

This course falls under the academic regulation for dissertation-type courses (AR12.6). Normal duration of the course: 2 semesters (either Semester B + Summer Term for full-time students or Semester A + Semester B for part time students). Maximum extension duration of the course: 3 semesters. After which no further extension is permitted.

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course aims to enhance students' ability to carry out independent research and to develop expertise in a chosen subject area. Through their work on the dissertation students should be able to demonstrate initiative and intellectual achievement in their application of the theory and techniques provided by the course as well as their abilities to discuss critically the chosen subject matter and the principles being applied. Where appropriate, the dissertation also aims to enable students to enhance their professional development and to make a research-based contribution to the understanding of important issues within their own organizations.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

	CILOs	Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Discover and identify a relevant issue or topic on which to undertake a substantial piece of individual research		x	x	
2	Think and debate critically on a focused subject area of the course		x	x	
3	Develop a research strategy and methodology through which they will seek and use quantitative and qualitative data and materials relevant to their chosen subject area		x	x	x
4	Define the scope and provide a rationale for the specific focus of their dissertation		x	x	x
5	Identify and critically analyse synthesize and evaluate appropriate public policy management knowledge and theories relating to their topic		x	x	x

6	Create and communicate the rationale, methods, appropriate data, analysis and conclusions of their research in a written dissertation		x	x	x
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A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

	LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Supervised individual dissertation	<p>Each student will be required to work independently, undertaking a new and individual piece of work related to the course. S/he will be required to identify a dissertation supervisor from the academic staff before undertaking the dissertation course. The principal function of the supervision is to keep the dissertation activities focused, relevant and productive. It is the student's responsibility to initiate and maintain contact with the supervisor at such times and frequency as is mutually agreed between them. The development of the dissertation normally includes the following stages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Approval of a dissertation proposal (by the Dissertation Coordinator); · Approval of ethical review (if it involves human subject, see the end of this section for details); · Approval of the draft dissertation (by the supervisor); · Submission of the completed dissertation to the Dissertation Coordinator. The length of the main text of the dissertation shall be in the range of 10,000 words excluding references. The main text may be supplemented by footnotes and appendices. 	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	0.75 hour per week of staff time per student for supervision (total 9.75 hours per semester, including the Summer Semester)

ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("-" for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	100	Summative	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

Dissertation (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Ability to discover feasible topic for research; and the level of research, writing and communication skills.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Clear mastery over a variety of the research area chosen. Creative thinking as demonstrated by astute observations, discovery aptitude, and imaginations. Strong ability to develop a feasible research. Insightful findings deduced from field surveys. Excellent research, writing and communication skills.

Good

(B+, B, B-) Fairly good understanding of the research area chosen. Reasonable ability to discover research topics and to develop a feasible research. Meaningful findings deduced from field survey. Good research, writing and communication skills.

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Basic understanding of the research area chosen. Minimal aptitude to discover worthy research topics. Barely adequate ability to develop a feasible research. Only some useful findings deduced from field survey. Basic research, writing and communication skills.

Marginal

(D) Poor understanding of the research area chosen. Poor ability to develop a feasible project plan. Findings from field survey are insignificant. Weak research, writing and communication skills.

Failure

(F) Almost no understanding of the research area chosen. Unable to develop and execute a feasible research. Findings from field survey are inconsistent. Inadequate research, writing and communication skills.

Assessment Task

Dissertation (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Ability to discover feasible topic for research; and the level of research, writing and communication skills.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Clear mastery over a variety of the research area chosen. Creative thinking as demonstrated by astute observations, discovery aptitude, and imaginations. Strong ability to develop a feasible research. Insightful findings deduced from field surveys. Excellent research, writing and communication skills.

Good

(B+, B) Fairly good understanding of the research area chosen. Reasonable ability to discover research topics and to develop a feasible research. Meaningful findings deduced from field survey. Good research, writing and communication skills.

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Basic understanding of the research area chosen. Minimal aptitude to discover worthy research topics. Barely adequate ability to develop a feasible research. Only some useful findings deduced from field survey. Basic research, writing and communication skills.

Failure

(F) Almost no understanding of the research area chosen. Unable to develop and execute a feasible research. Findings from field survey are inconsistent. Inadequate research, writing and communication skills.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Supervised individual dissertation literature review problem identification, causes and problem analysis, recommendations for change research and writing.

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Roberts, C. (2012). <i>The Dissertation Journey: A Practical and Comprehensive Guide to Planning, Writing, and Defending Your Dissertation</i> . Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
2	Cooley, L. (2003) <i>Dissertation writing in practice: turning ideas into text</i> . Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
3	Graziano, A., & Raulin, M. (2014). <i>Research methods: A process of inquiry</i> (Eight edition, Pearson new international ed.). Harlow, Essex, England: Pearson Education.
4	Jackson, S. (2012). <i>Research methods and statistics: A critical thinking approach</i> (4th ed.). Australia: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
5	Giltrow J. (2002) 3rd ed. <i>Academic writing: writing and reading in the disciplines</i> . Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview Press.
6	Slade, C., & Perrin, R. (2008). <i>Form & style: Research papers, reports, theses</i> (13th ed.). Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.
7	O'Sullivan, E., Rassel, G., Berner, M., & Taliaferro, J. (2016). <i>Research Methods for Public Administrators</i> . Milton: Routledge.
8	Johnson, G. (2014). <i>Research methods for public administrators</i> (Third ed.). Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe.

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Nil