**Change to the Comprehensive Exam**

**PhD Public Policy – begins fall 2018**

**Summary**

The current comprehensive exam format will be replaced by a requirement to pass PUBL 609, a 3-credit doctoral seminar that will culminate in a comprehensive exam paper. The course will provide an overview of philosophical and theoretical foundations of academic policy analysis and research. Students will learn to apply theory in their own empirical research and to develop theory-driven dissertation research questions. The course will be offered each spring semester. This course (3 credits) will replace the requirement for PUBL 700 for our doctorate level students.

**Timing and Prerequisites**

Preferably, students will enroll in PUBL 609 after they have completed all core and disciplinary foundations courses (PUBL 600, 601, 603, 604 ECON 600/601 and SOCY 606). Enrollment will also be allowed concurrently with students’ the final two core courses. Students must complete the remaining course or courses in the semester that they enroll in PUBL 609.

**PUBL 609 Course Requirements**

Grading (pass/fail) is based on the comprehensive examination paper. The grade will be determined by a committee comprised of the course instructor and the student’s academic advisor. The academic advisor must approve the student’s comprehensive exam topic by week 3. Any member of the public policy faculty or the student’s academic track may serve as the advisor.

A student who fails the course has the right to rewrite the paper once.  The student must inform the course instructor and his/her advisor of the intent to rewrite the paper within 60 days of receiving a failing grade.  The student will have 120 days from the date his or her failing grade is received to complete and submit the revised paper. A second failure constitutes a failure of the comprehensive examination. Students who fail on the first try will receive a grade of incomplete, which will be changed to pass or fail based on grading of the revision.

**Implementation Timeline**

The new comprehensive exam format will be offered beginning in spring 2019. Beginning in fall 2018, any students entering the PhD program will be required to pass PUBL 609 as their comprehensive exam.

Students who entered the PhD program prior to fall 2018 will be given the option of completing and passing PUBL 609 or passing under the previous exam format. We will continue to offer both exam formats until all PhD students who entered prior to fall 2018 have advanced to candidacy.

May 10, 2018