

## **Sample - Course based study proposal**

I am working towards my Master of Public Administration degree. I have completed three courses so far. The courses are JSGS 882 Strategic Management in Public Sector, JSGS 801 Governance and Administration and JSGS 808 Ethical Leadership and Democracy.

JSGS 882 - This course helps with management skills by focusing on self-assessment/reflection, goal setting, teamwork and stress management. In JSGS 801, we learned about how policies are formed and implemented in government. This has helped me to understand where those policies are coming from and the process behind their creation. We also learned about the administrative process of decision making which is something that I do everyday in my job. In JSGS 808, we learned how to apply ethics to the decision-making process and policies. This course has taught me to think about the ethics of the decisions I make and of the policies we create or amend.

I still have several courses yet to take in my degree. JSGS802 – Public Finance and JSGS 838 Sector Financial Management, will give me better knowledge of how the federal governments fiscal decisions affect provincial decision-making. In addition these courses will offer education about the government financial cycle.

JSGS 807 Statistics for Public Managers, will be useful for me in my current job as we base some of our decisions on statistical data. I am interested to learn about descriptive and inferential statistics and how to properly interpret them.

JSGS 805- Economics for Public Policy Analysis –will offer me frameworks for the analysis of public policy. I am eager to learn the key concepts of cost-benefit analysis and how this is used to analyze a public policy.

JSGS 806 – Public Policy Analysis – This course will give me an understanding of how policies are developed which will strength my ability to evaluate policy.

JSGS 891 – Public Policy Professionalism – This course gives an overview of public sector processes, focusing on the public servants' roles and responsibilities in government.

I will have to take two elective courses for my program, but I have not yet decided what those courses will be. As I go through my program I will decide these courses based on my personal interest and what would be most helpful to my professional development.

I have worked in public administration for sixteen years now. This degree will provide me with further background knowledge in public administration and will help improve my skills as well as providing me with professional development that will help me to move forward in my career.

## Sample- Research Proposal

### Background

Our capacity to recognize emotions and empathize with others is often thought of as something we learn in childhood, but research has shown that there is a relationship between facial mimicry (*unconscious copying of another's facial expression*), emotion recognition and self report empathy scores. Brain imaging studies suggest that mimicry, emotion recognition and empathy have a shared neural basis. These findings mean that instead of emotion recognition and empathy being simply a learned trait they may in fact have a biological basis. In addition, the regions of the brain that are shown to underlie emotion recognition and empathy also align with areas of the brain that are influenced by hormones both prenatal (before birth) (Goldstein et al., 2001) and circulating (current hormones). A recent study even showed that increasing circulating testosterone, decreases facial mimicry in females (Hermans et al., 2006), which indicates that females and more specifically females with lower testosterone may have better facial mimicry and thus better emotion recognition and empathy than males and females with higher testosterone levels.

**Objective:** The objective of this research is to examine the relationships between prenatal testosterone exposure (measured by the 2D:4D ratio) and facial mimicry, emotion recognition, and self-reported empathy in females between the ages of 18-25 years.

**Method:** *Step 1:* measure the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> digit (finger) on each hand of the participants to get the 2D:4D ratio. *Step 2:* we will induce facial mimicry by having participants passively watch videos of the six primary emotions (happiness, anger, fear, surprise, disgust, sadness). *Step 3:* we will have participants watch the videos and identify the emotion they are viewing. While the participants are doing both step 2 & 3 they will be recorded by a hidden camera. *Step 4:* video is reviewed so that each participants facial expressions can be analyzed to determine their level of mimicry.

**Expected results:** I hypothesize that participants who have higher prenatal testosterone will have poorer facial mimicry and emotion recognition compared to those who have lower prenatal testosterone.

**Impact:** By understanding the role that prenatal sex hormones, specifically testosterone, have on the development of emotion processing, we can gain a better understanding of how individual differences in emotion processing arise. Through understanding individual differences in emotion processing we will be better able to understand complex neurological conditions like autism.

#### Significant Contribution: Research focused

My most significant contribution came from the research I did during my Master's that led to the publication of a paper "*Occurrence of antimicrobials in the final effluents of wastewater treatment plants in Canada.*" This project, which focused on the effects of wastewater on aquatic ecosystems allowed me to become a leader in the research community analyzing human impacts on aquatic systems. I was able to present my work widely at several conferences, increasing my communication skills and expanding my professional network. The project also taught me valuable skills in the lab which I can put into practice as I continue my research on aquatic ecosystems in my PhD. By publishing groundbreaking new research which has been highly cited I have begun to make an impact on the field of research I intend to specialize in throughout my career.

#### Significant Contribution: Work Focused

My most significant contribution comes through my role as fundraising coordinator at the Saskatchewan Division of Mental Health Canada. In my role I worked with a team to raise money to fund the various supports and educational programs run through the division. My experience in this position taught me the value of building strong community partnerships to push forward the goals of research as well as ensure that people in need get the treatment they deserve. Working as a lead for the fundraising team also gave me valuable skills that I can use throughout my graduate studies as I work with varied people to accomplish the goals of my research on anxiety in youth populations. Working firsthand with an organization that supports those with mental health challenges has allowed me to see many issues from a real-world vs. a strictly academic perspective. This perspective will better prepare me for sharing the outcomes of my work as well as finding community partners to distribute my findings. I know I can use all of my experience in my Master's work to ensure that the research I do will be best positioned to help those people that need it most.

#### Significant Contribution – Volunteer focused

My most significant contribution was being a manager to my son's tackle football team. By helping the team with the organization of equipment, team fees, fundraising, practice scheduling and communicating important information to the player's parents. As well as dealing with any parent/coach conflicts. It really gives me joy to provide this organization to my son's league. By volunteering in this role it gave me joy to coordinate and organize everything for my son's league and this also showed me how important an administrative role is to an organization. This is one of the reasons I have chosen to do my degree in Masters of Public Administration.