

**ASSURANCE OF LEARNING ACTIVITY**  
**PA210 Public Administration and Management: Concepts and Application**

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**ACTIVITY**

In an effort to assess the students' knowledge and competencies in public administration, a Pre-test in PA210 was conducted at the beginning of the Spring Semester in 2009.

**TEST INSTRUMENT**

The pre-test is in true/false format and contains fifty standard questions on materials covered in the textbook adopted by PA210 (Michael C. LeMay.2006.Public Administration: Clashing Values in the Administration of Public Policy. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.).

As there is no standard test available in the PA field, I developed the test by myself in January 2009. The fifty questions can be divided into three broad parts: questions 1-16 are about the source of values and value conflicts in public administration; questions 17-37 cope with internal operations of bureaucracy and how they shape or are affected by values and value conflict; and questions 38-50 relate to the use of values to control and evaluate public policy processes and administration. It was also my intent to measure students' knowledge and competencies in each of the three subfields and to adjust my teaching accordingly.

The same tests will be used when the Post-test is administered at the end of the Spring semester. The results of the Post-test will then be compared with the Pre-test and the comparison will provide evidence on the effectiveness of student learning outcomes.

The course does not teach to the test. The test results are not included in their course grade calculation.

**PRE-TEST RESULTS**

**OVERALL**

<b>Row Score (out of 50 points) Ranges</b>	<b>Score Ranges in %</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>% Students</b>
0-18	0-36	0	0
19-20	37-40	1	3.125
21-22	41-44	2	6.25
23-24	45-48	0	0
25-26	49-52	11	34.375
27-28	53-56	4	12.5
29-30	57-60	4	12.5
31-32	61-64	8	25

33-34	65-68	1	3.125
35-36	69-72	1	3.125
37-	74-	0	0
Total		32	100
<b>Scores in %:</b> Minimum=38, Maximum=72, Mean=55.875, Median=56, StdDev=7.27			

**Part I. The source of values and value conflicts in public administration**

Row Scores (out of 16 points)	Scores in %	Number of Students	% Students
0-5	0-31.25	0	0
6	37.5	3	9.375
7	43.75	3	9.375
8	50	7	21.875
9	56.25	6	18.75
10	62.5	5	15.625
11	68.75	6	18.75
12	75	2	6.25
13-	81.25-	0	0
Total		32	100
<b>Scores in %:</b> Minimum=37.5, Maximum=75, Mean=56.44, Median=56.25, StdDev=10.82			

**Part II. Internal operations of bureaucracy and value conflict**

Row Scores (out of 21 points)	Scores in %	Number of Students	% Students
0-5	0-33	0	0
7	33.33	1	3.125
8	38.09	2	6.25
9	42.86	3	9.375
10	47.62	5	15.625
11	52.38	2	6.25
12	57.14	9	28.125
13	61.90	5	15.625
14	66.67	3	9.375
15	71.43	0	0
16	76.19	0	0
17	80.95	2	6.25
18-	85.71-	0	0
Total		32	100
<b>Scores in %:</b> Minimum=33.33, Maximum=80.95, Mean=55.21, Median=57.14, StdDev=11.08			

**Part III. The use of values to control and evaluate public policy processes and administration**

Row Scores (out of 21 points)	Scores in %	Number of Students	% Students
0-2	0-15.38462	0	0
3	23.07692	1	3.125
4	30.76923	1	3.125

10	76.92308	2	6.25
5	38.46154	3	9.375
6	46.15385	3	9.375
9	69.23077	5	15.625
7	53.84615	7	21.875
8	61.53846	10	31.25
9-	69.23077-	0	0
Total		32	100
<b>Scores in %:</b> Minimum=23.08, Maximum=76.92, Mean=56.25, Median=61.54, StdDev=12.73			

## HOW ACTIVITY IS LINKED TO THE COURSE-LEVEL STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The course syllabus of PA210 states that “ As a result of completing this course, the student will understand:

1. The basic organization of American government.
2. The conflict between political, administrative, and democratic values.
3. The nature of bureaucracy and organizational politics.
4. The Federal form of government and contemporary intergovernmental relations.
5. The various theories of organization.
6. The nature of decision making in administration.
7. The basics of personal administration and human resource development.
8. The evolution of the civil service system.
9. The nature of government budgets and fiscal policy.
10. The public policy making process and program evaluation.
11. The basics of administrative law.
12. The major issues in the study of public administration.”

The above course learning goals are consistent with several of BSPA program learning goals. Specifically, they are in line with the follows:

- **Goal 1.** Demonstrate a general understanding of the various roles of professional managers in the public and nonprofit sectors;
- **Goal 3.** Demonstrate critical thinking and analytical skills in solving real world problems in public administration;
- **Goal 4.** Demonstrate a sufficient real world understanding of public policy process;
- **Goal 6.** Demonstrate an understanding of local, regional and global environments and their relevance to public administration;
- **Goal 7.** Demonstrate an understanding of ethical, professional, and socially responsible behavior.

## CLOSING THE LOOP

The pre-test results provide some evidence on students’ pre-course competencies. Students have some certain level of knowledge of public administration. The average score is 55.8.

Furthermore, patterns (mean, median, standard deviation, etc.) with each of the three sub-fields are similar to each other, meaning that students have compatible knowledge base across the sub-fields. This provides important information to how I should arrange my teaching efforts across the semester.

I am looking forward to the end of this semester when students will take the post-test. The pre-test results will be compared with those of the post-test.

Since there is no national, standardized test with benchmarks against which to compare our students' performance, data collection over several semesters is necessary to get an idea of our students' performance.