

**PADM 691 SPECIAL TOPICS:  
SOCIAL EQUITY AND GOVERNANCE  
Ref: # 12289**

This Special Topics course is intended to continue the MPA Program's theme for this academic year, which was manifested in the joint MPA/ASPA sponsored conference and executive-in-residence presentation in September, and in PADM 689, the "capstone" class, both semesters.

**WHAT IS SOCIAL EQUITY?** Social Equity has been defined as: "The fair, just and equitable management of all institutions serving the public directly or by contract, and the fair and equitable distribution of public services, and implementation of public policy, and the commitment to promote fairness, justice, and equity in the formation of public policy" (National Academy of Public Administration, Standing Panel on Social Equity), or, per one of the few public administration texts that discusses this concept, as: "...fairness in the delivery of public services; it is egalitarianism in action—the principle that each citizen, regardless of economic resources or personal traits, deserves and has a right to be given equal treatment by the political system." (Shafritz and Russell, 2003, p. 395). H. George Frederickson says that he developed the theory of social equity in the late 1960s to remedy a glaring inadequacy in both thought and practice. He suggests that this concept should be a "third pillar" for public administrators, a concept that holds the same status as economy and efficiency values. "A full commitment to social equity might result in the development of a kind of compensatory ethic, that is, a norm which tells the administrator that public services must be especially well-developed in those areas of his [or her] community which have the most critical need to balance the inherited disadvantages of the poor."

It is the purpose of this course to develop in those serving the public, the attitudes and skills needed to implement this compensatory social ethic.

**GOALS OF THE COURSE:**

This course seeks to provide participants with the competencies to:

- Enhance current and future public administrators' sensitivity to issues of social equity and their ability to integrate these issues in professional decision making;
- Identify current issues related to social equity and governance, and consider obstacles to achieving social equity;
- Learn more about initiatives to foster social equity underway in the Richmond metropolitan area;
- Analyze the public policy process to identify key stakeholders and steps through which to better promote social equity;
- Analyze legislation and regulations to identify their impacts on the equitable distribution of public goods and services;

- Develop partnerships with local organizations to formulate an initial action agenda in response to the needs and opportunities for improving social equity in the Richmond metropolitan area.

This course will follow a Service Learning format, in which course participants, working in groups with local organizations, will identify and respond to social equity needs in specific public policy areas. The time needed to develop this collaboration requires the extended summer schedule for this course, although the actual number of contact hours remains forty-five. Assignments will include three (3) relatively short papers worth 20% of the total grade each, and one group project worth 40%. The required textbook will be The Tools of Government: A Guide to the New Governance, edited by Lester M. Salamon, Oxford University Press, 2002, ISBN 0-19-513665-9. It costs approximately \$45.00. MEETING TIMES: Evenings, 6 - 8:40 pm; Saturdays, 9 - 4 pm. 5/12, 5/14, 5/23-24, 6/13, 6/27-28, 7/11, 7/25, 8/11, 8/13, 8/18, 8/20. LOCATION: TBA.