DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

RESEARCH FOCUS AREAS FOR MASTER’S AND DOCTORAL STUDIES 2025

**FOCUS AREA PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION EDUCATION**

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| **Department** | | | Public Administration and Management | |
| **Discipline** | | | Public Administration | |
| **Research Focus Area** | | | **Public Administration Education** | |
| **Capacity for 2024** | | | **PhD (3) and Masters (3)** | |
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| **Supervision Team details:** | **Academic Profile** | | | **Capacity** |
| **Prof Liza C van Jaarsveldt[[1]](#footnote-1) (Contact person for this focus area)**  Office: Nkoana Simon Radipere Building 4-91  Email: vjaarlc@unisa.ac.za  ORCID : <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-5472-7921>  Institutional repository links:  [van Jaarsveldt, Liza Ceciel](http://uir.unisa.ac.za/handle/10500/21644/browse?authority=86410b37-15cc-4516-8d29-b4bf84b64c33&type=author) | Liza Ceciel van Jaarsveldt is an Associate Professor in the Department of Public Administration and Management at Unisa. She received a Y2-rating as researcher from the NRF. She obtained her BA (1996) and BA (Hons) in Public Administration (1997) from the University of Pretoria. In 2003 she obtained her MA in Public Administration from the University of Pretoria with a dissertation on “Web-based training in Public Administration in South Africa: Principles and considerations”. In 2011 she completed her DLitt et Phil in Public Administration at Unisa with a thesis on “Information technology competence in undergraduate public administration curricula”.  Since joining Unisa in January 2006, she has presented several conference papers at national and international conferences, published a number of articles in accredited journals and received various awards. Her full CV is available at:  <https://scholar.google.co.za/citations?user=8wH2OXgAAAAJ&hl=en>  <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Liza_C_Jaarsveldt> | | | 1 Master  1 PhD co-supervision |
| **Dr Retha Visagie**  Office: Winnie Madikizela- Mandela Building 10-35  Email: [visagrg@unisa.ac.za](mailto:visagrg@unisa.ac.za)  ORCID : http://orcid.org/0000-0002-0162-1752  Institutional repository links:  [Visagie, R.G.](http://uir.unisa.ac.za/handle/10500/3752/browse?value=Visagie%2C+R.G.&type=author) ; [Visagie, Retha](http://uir.unisa.ac.za/handle/10500/3752/browse?value=Visagie%2C+Retha&type=author) | Retha Visagie is the Manager: Research Integrity at the University of South Africa.  She provides supervision and co-supervision in studies related to research ethics and research integrity as well as for studies applying specific qualitative approaches and methods. She obtained her DCur degree with the topic: Appreciative Merger and Acquisition Team Coaching Programme to Facilitate Managers’ Mental Health in a Cross-Cultural Context from the University of Johannesburg in 2010. She is a UNESCO trained ethics educator. Retha is actively engaged in the supervision of master and doctoral students in Public Administration and other disciplines.  Her field of research specialisation is strengthening the capacity of researchers in Higher Education with a special interest in research integrity and ethics governance and education.  She has authored a book, peer-reviewed articles and presented numerous papers at national and international conferences. She will provide M&D supervision on topics related to research ethics and integrity governance and education in this focus area and provide qualitative methodological advice. | | | 1 Master  1 PhD |
| **Dr Xolile C Thani**  Office: Nkoana Simon Radipere 4-102  Email: thanixc@unisa.ac.za  ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-1579-941X>  Institutional repository links:  [Thani, X](http://uir.unisa.ac.za/handle/10500/21644/browse?value=Thani%2C+X&type=author) ; [Thani, X.C.](http://uir.unisa.ac.za/handle/10500/21644/browse?value=Thani%2C+X.C.&type=author); [Thani, Xolile Carol](http://uir.unisa.ac.za/handle/10500/21644/browse?value=Thani%2C+Xolile+Carol&type=author) | Xolile Thani is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Public Administration and Management. She joined Unisa in 2007 as an academic assistant. She obtained her MA in Public Administration cum laude. She received her DLitt et Phil in Public Administration in 2018. Her doctoral research was on the methodological preparation of doctoral candidates in Public Administration. She has published and co-published scholarly articles in accredited journals. | | | 1 Master  1 PhD |
| **Model of supervision** | Candidates will be allocated to a supervisor but will be required to work independently within the requirements of higher degree studies. Additionally, the candidate should submit his/her work to be reviewed by a blind peer review process. | | | |
| **Selection criteria: Master’s/Doctorate** | Refer to the qualification website for selection criteria. | | | |
| **Selection Procedure** | Refer to the qualification website for selection procedure. | | | |
| **Research scope** | **Please take note: research, proposal and applications that does not focus on the education of Public Administration relevant topics will be rejected.**  The research within this focus area aims at original and deepened understandings of teaching students’ ways of being public administration professionals. This is done from Open Distance and eLearning, global standards, curriculum transformation, Africanising and decolonising, the learning of research methodology, and mid-career education.  Please be clear on the meaning, focus, content and context of Public Administration education before submitting to this focus area. Aspects related to school education does not relate to Public Administration education. | | | |
| **Reading:**  **Subject Field** | **This is a selection of articles and/or recent books in this research focus area. ‎Further reading over and above these is essential:**   * Manoharan, A.P., Mirbel, W. & Carrizales, T.J. 2018. Global comparative public administration: Are graduate programs responding to the call? *Teaching Public Administration*. 36(1):34–49. DOI: 10.1177/0144739417708835. * Stout, M. 2017. The impossibility of a universal public service perspective. *Teaching Public Administration*. (304):14473941773895. DOI: 10.1177/0144739417738953. * McQuiston, J.M. & Manoharan, A.P. 2017. Developing E-Government Coursework through the NASPAA Competencies Framework. *Teaching Public Administration*. 35(2):173–189. DOI: 10.1177/0144739417690582. * Van Jaarsveldt L.C. & Wessels, J.S. 2015.  [Information Technology Competence in Undergraduate Public Administration Curricula at South African Universities](http://uir.unisa.ac.za/handle/10500/18355).    *International Review of Administrative Science*, Vol. 81 (2) 2015 * Van Jaarsveldt, L.C. 2016. Reflections on Learning Programmes*.*  *Human Resource Management in Government: A South African perspective on theories, politics and processes*. Edited by: van der Westhuizen E.J. Juta Publishers. Cape town. * Hassen, T.H. & van Jaarsveldt, L.C. 2013. *An overview of Public Administration education and training programmes to improve policy capacity in the Ethiopian civil service*. Administratio Publica, volume 21 issue 4. * Van Jaarsveldt, L.C. & Wessels, 2011. ‘*n Besinning oor tegnologie in Publieke Administrasie*. Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe, Jaargang 51, nommer 3 * Wessels, J.S. & Van Jaarsveldt, L.C. 2007. *The role of higher education in developing and retaining the best for the public service – a South African perspective*, POLITEIA – Journal for Political Science and Public Administration, volume 26 (2). 2007. * Kroukamp, HJ and de Vries, M. 2014. The dilemma of Public Administration education in South Africa. Teaching Public Administration, Vol 32, No 2, Sept 2014, pp. 158 – 168. * Archer, E., Chetty, Y.B. & Prinsloo, P. 2014. Benchmarking the habits and behaviours of successful students: A case study of academic-business collaboration. *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning*. 15(1):62–83. DOI: 10.19173/irrodl.v15i1.1617. * Prinsloo, P. & Slade, S. 2014. Educational Triage in Higher Open Education: Walking a Moral Tightrope. *The International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning*. 15(4):306–331. DOI: 10.19173/irrodl.v15i4.1881. | | | |
| **Reading:**  **Research Methodology** | **This is a selection books on methodology. Further reading over and above these is essential:**   * Wessels, J.S., Pauw, J.C. & Thani, X.C. Eds. 2014. *Reflective Public Administration: Context, Knowledge and Methods*. First edit ed. Pretoria: Unisa Press. * Mouton, J. 2001 (and later). *How to succeed in your Master’s & Doctoral Studies: A South African guide and Resource Book*. Pretoria: Van Schaik | | | |
| **Resources: Scholar community** | * Open educational resources political science and public administration: <https://lewisu.libguides.com/c.php?g=527875&p=3612541> * The International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration (IASIA): <https://iasia.iias-iisa.org/> * Association of Southern African School and Departments of Public Administration and Management (ASSADPAM): <https://assadpam.net/> * Commission on Peer Review and Accreditation (2009) Accreditation Standards for Master’s degree programs. Washington, DC: NASPAA. Available at: <https://naspaaaccreditation.files.wordpress.com/2015/02/naspaa-accreditation-standards.pdf> | | | |
| **Potential M&D research focus areas or research projects** | | | | |
| **Unit of Analysis** | | **Research Focus** | | |
| **Public Administration Curricula** | | The transformation of Public Administration curricula: imperatives and conditions  The implications of a global standard (of excellence, capabilities, skills or competence) in Public Administration curricula for South African universities.  The implication of global challenges for Public Administration curricula.  Public Administration curricula consideration in the Fourth Industrial Revolution. | | |
| **Africanising and Decolonisation of Public Administration education** | | The Africanising and decolonisation of Public Administration education: imperatives and conditions | | |
| **Open Distance Learning in Public Administration** | | An Open Distance and eLearning approach to the teaching of the Masters of Public Administration  An Open Distance and eLearning approach to Master’s and Doctoral supervision | | |
| **Pedagogy** | | Alternative pedagogical approaches to teach Public Administration  Inquiry Based Learning to promote student success in Public Administration | | |

1. Please note that consulting the research focus area leader is no assurance that your application will be approved. If, however, your application is approved, it is also not a guarantee that he/she will be allocated as your supervisor. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)