DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

RESEARCH FOCUS AREAS FOR MASTER’S AND DOCTORAL STUDIES 2025

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| **FOCUS AREA: PUBLIC POLICY** |  | |
| **Department** | Public Administration and Management | |
| **Discipline** | Public Administration | |
| **Research Focus Area** | **Public Policy** | |
| **Capacity for 2024** | **8 Masters and 7 Doctoral students** | |
| **Supervision Team** | Prof W Webb, Prof M Nkwana, Prof C Alers, Dr P Raseala, and Mr I Dube. | |
| **Name**: Prof W Webb  Office: Nkoana Simon Radipere 4-99  [webbwn@unisa.ac.za](mailto:webbwn@unisa.ac.za)  **ORCID:**  <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-9356-6799>  **Institutional repository link**  <http://uir.unisa.ac.za/handle/10500/21644> | **Academic Profile**  Werner Webb is an Associate Professor in Public Administration. In his doctoral dissertation he evaluated the implementation of the Public Service Anti-Corruption Strategy. Although his research publications concern public service ethics, his point of departure has been public policy, its evaluation, and implementation. In his doctoral research he triangulated by research paradigm and data collection instrument, and used personal interviews, and a survey to collect empirical data. Over the last 5 years he used SPSS to analyse data collected and has worked on improving the interpretation of the analysed data. He is currently supervising various masters and doctoral students. | **Capacity**  2 Doctoral |
| **Name:** Prof M Nkwana  **Office: Nkoana Simon Radipere Building 4-104**  [Nkwanm@unisa.ac.za](mailto:Nkwanm@unisa.ac.za)  **ORCID:**  <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-9733-6966>  **Google Scholar:**  <https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=yrjN30wAAAAJ&hl=en&oi=ao> | **Academic Profile**  Hunadi Mapula Nkwana is an Associate Professor in the Department of Public Administration and Management at the University of South Africa. She holds a Doctor of Administration degree in Public Administration from the University of Pretoria (UP) with a thesis titled ‘ A multisectoral public policy framework for food security in South Africa’. She completed her Masters, Honours and undergraduate degrees specialising in Public Administration and Public Management. Her research area is focused on public policy formulation and implementation specifically with regard to the achievement of food security in Sub-Saharan Africa. She has presented papers at both national and international conferences and published book chapters and articles in peer-reviewed accredited journals. | **Capacity**  2 Masters  2 Doctoral |
| **Name:** Prof C Alers  Office: Nkoana Simon Radipere 4-87  Email: [alersc@unisa.ac.za](mailto:alersc@unisa.ac.za)  **ORCID ID:** <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1796-4418> | **Academic Profile**  Corlia Alers is an Associate Professor in Public Administration. She studied for a Bachelor of Arts degree as well as a BA Honours degree in Political Science and Public Administration at the Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education. Her Magister Artium degree followed after she took interest in public policy-making processes and practices. She continued to research aspects that derive from the policy-making process, specifically the determining of methods and procedures, and obtained her PhD degree in 2018 at Unisa. She employs both qualitative and quantitative approaches in her research. Over the last 10 years, Prof Alers supervised nine master’s degree -and four doctoral degree students. | **Capacity**  3 Masters  2 Doctoral |
| **Name:** Dr P Raseala  Office: Nkoana Simon Radipere 4-109  Email: [raseaps@unisa.ac.za](mailto:raseaps@unisa.ac.za)  **ORCID:**  <http://uir.unisa.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10500/26312/thesis_raseala_ps.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.  **Institutional repository link:**  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3182-1325> | **Academic Profile**  Promise Raseala is currently a senior lecturer in the Department of Public Administration and Management at the University of South Africa (UNISA). He completed an MA degree in Public Management and Governance at the University of Johannesburg (UJ). He also completed a PhD in Public Administration at UNISA. He contributed and co-authored monograph(s), book chapter(s), policy briefs, journal article(s) and conference proceeding(s), His academic interests are on public policy analysis within the realm of evidence synthesis and policy evaluation. In his doctoral thesis, he has undertaken extensive research using mixed-methods research approach using positivism and interpretivism research philosophies, unpacking the restructuring of local government and financial viability in the context of municipal demarcation in South Africa. | **Capacity**  3 Masters  4 Doctoral |
| **Name:** Mr I Dube  **Office:** Nkoana Simon Radipere 4-80  Email: [dubeip@unisa.ac.za](mailto:dubeip@unisa.ac.za)  **ORCID ID:**  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1643-5925> | **Academic Profile**  Itumeleng Dube is a lecturer in the Department of Public Administration. He studied his junior degrees at the University of Pretoria. In 2021 he graduated with a Master of Administration degree at University of South Africa. His research focus was public policy implementation with the Business Management Training Programme at the National Youth Development Agency as a case study. His research interests include public policy making, implementation, analysis and evaluation; organisational theory and design of public service institutions; and international trends in the development of Public Administration. | **Capacity**  1 Masters |
| **Model of Supervision** | Candidates will be allocated to a supervisor but will be required to work independently within the requirements of higher degree studies. In addition, students will be expected to present their work at topic-specific colloquia. Colloquia will be scheduled for:   1. Research proposal 2. Literature review 3. Methodology 4. Findings   Students working in this track will also have the opportunity to attend the colloquia of their peers. | |
| **Selection Criteria: MAdmin and Phd** | In addition to the admission criteria contained in the myChoice brochure, potential students are required to prepare a **five-page** expression of interest essay describing the following:  1. Suitable topic aligned to a focus area  2. Introduction and background ((½ page)  3. Problem statement ((½ page)  4. Brief literature review (1 page)  5. Research questions and objectives  6. Research Methodology (½ to 1 page)  7. Motivation for the study (½ page)  8. Contribution to the discipline (½ page)  9. List of references  Use of recent literature is compulsory. Sources should not be older than 5 years. | |
| **Selection Procedure** | 1. Apply for a student number 2. Apply for a space in the research focus area using the online application process. 3. Once acceptance in the research focus area has been confirmed, you may register for your studies.   Selection of candidates will be in line with Section 37 of the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 to provide appropriate measures for the redress of past inequalities and to provide clear assessment criteria to avoid any unfair discrimination. Applicants will also receive feedback on their submissions to empower unsuccessful candidates to improve future readmission submissions.  The following criteria will be applied to assess the expression of interest essay:   1. Academic merit: Quality in terms of originality, significance and rigour and impacts in terms of their reach and significance. 2. Evidence of higher order thinking: The candidate’s skills and abilities in analysing, synthesizing, applying, and evaluating information. 3. Academic writing skills: The extent to which the essay convey coherent and well-developed arguments that are supported with relevant, detailed and convincing evidence; the logically sequence of paragraphs with content-based transitions; the use of appropriate diction and tone and constructively vary sentence structures, and the use of correct grammar, punctuation, spelling and syntax. 4. Academic and professional experience: Strengths and relevance relative to the candidate’s opportunities (impact). | |
| **Possible Alternative Opportunities for Unsuccessful Candidates** | The names of unsuccessful candidates and the reasons for their rejection will be submitted to the College Executive Committee for validation. Applicants have the right to appeal to the College Executive Management if admission is refused. Reasons for such refusal must be furnished to the applicant.  The following possible alternative opportunities exist for applicants who do not meet the generic admission requirements for CEMS:   1. Applicants with degrees that have different structures from normal South African honours degrees, applicant’s whose degrees do not clearly correspond to generic CEMS admissions requirements (e.g. no mark awarded for previous dissertations, no clear evidence of having completed a research-related module as part of the previous qualification, etc.), or applicants who do not meet generic admissions requirements but who possess applicable experience in research that may qualify them for admissions to a master’s degree will be required to apply for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). Prior academic and research activity by the applicant will be evaluated in accordance with formal Unisa RPL procedures and the outcome of the RPL process will be submitted to and approved by the College Executive Committee. If the approved outcome of the RPL process is positive, the applicant will be allowed to proceed with an application for admission, subject to all terms and conditions governing the admissions process. 2. Students who have been refused admission because of limited capacity within the academic department where the application was made may reapply in subsequent years. 3. In instances where a student does not have an average of 60% or more a submission may be made to the Department to allow such a student admission. Students must provide a written motivation of not more than three pages requesting admission to the department. The department will consider the application, taking into account:  * The relevant experience, work or otherwise, of the student, * Alternative options for access into the programme * Any other factor deemed necessary by the department | |
| **Documents to Support Application** | One-page abbreviated CV, including:   * Academic qualifications * Work experience * Contact details * Expression of interest (see selection criteria) | |
| **Research Agenda** | **Public Policy Management**  Nature of Policy Management: Problem Structuring, Root Cause Analysis, Wicked (unstructured) Problems, Agenda Setting, Policy Option Generation, Policy Design, Decision Criteria, Policy Implementation, 3 Generations of Research into Public Policy Implementation, 5C Protocol, Public Policy Implementation Obstacles.  **Policy Monitoring and Evaluation as Higher Order Management Function**  M&E as higher order policy management function  Evidence based approach to policy management  Defining M&E  M&E types and foci  M&E tools and techniques  Developing & institutionalising M&E systems & processes  **Policy Monitor and Evaluation in South Africa**  PSC  Presidency’s M&E Policy Framework  DPLG: Local Government M&E  Line function departments  **Policy Monitoring and Evaluation Approaches, Theories & Models**  Using social science theories & models  Research paradigms and data collection methods  Social science data analysis | |
| **Reading:**  **Subject Field** | Brynard, P. 2005.Policy Implementation: Lessons for Service Delivery. *Journal of Public Administration*.Vol. 40 no. 4. 1.  Brynard, P.A. 2006.The Nature of the Policy Problem.*Journal of Public Administration*.Vol 41 (2).  Brynard, P.A. 2007.The Policy Gap in South Africa.*Journal of Public Administration.*Vol 42 (3).  Cairney, P. 2022. *Understanding public policy: theories and issues*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.  Chrisinger, D. 2022. *Public policy writing that matters*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.  Cloete, F., de Coning, C., Wissink, H. & Rabie, B. 2018. *Improving Public Policy for Good Governance*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.  Guy Peters, B. 2000. Policy Instruments and Public Management: Bridging the Gaps. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory.* Vol. 10, no. 1. pp. 35-47.  Hill, M.J. 2022. *Implementing public policy: an introduction to the study of operational governance*. Los Angeles: SAGE.  Mukamunana, R. & Brynard P.A. 2005. The role of civil society organizations in policy making processes in Rwanda. *Journal of Public Administration*. Vol. 40, no. 4.1.  Okumus, F. 2003. A Framework to implement Strategies in Organizations.*Management Decision.*Vol. 41, no.9, pp. 871-882.  Presidency 2007. Policy Framework for the Government-wide Monitoring and  Evaluation System, The Presidency, Pretoria.  <http://www.thepresidency.gov.za/main.asp?include=learning/reference/policy/index.html>  Presidency 2008: Development Indicators 2008 – Mid-term Review, ThePresidency, Pretoria. <http://www.thepresidency.gov.za/main.asp?include=learning/me/indicators/mtr2008.html>  Smith, F.H. 2003. Rationality in Policymaking considered. *Journal of Public Administration.* Vol. 38, no.3.  United Nations Environment Programme. 2009. *Integrated Policymaking for Sustainable Development: A Reference manual.*  Webb, W.N. & Kanyane, B. 2019. Type III Errors: A Reflection on Policy Design Efforts in Corruption Prevention. *Administratio Publica.* Vol. 27 (3). | |
| **Reading:**  **Research Methodology** | Babbie, E. & Mouton, J. 2007. *The Practice of Social Research*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.  Mouton, J. 2006. *Understanding Social Research.* Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.  Mouton, J. 2022. *How to succeed in your Master’s & Doctoral Studies: A South African guide and Resource Book*. Pretoria: Van Schaik  Salkind, N.J. 2004. *Statistics for People Who (Think They) Hate Statistics.* London: Sage Publications Ltd.  Webb, W.N. & Auriacombe, C.J. 2006. Research Design in Public Administration: Critical Considerations. *Journal of Public Administration.* Vol. 41, no. 3.1. October, Special Issue. pp. 588-602.  Wessels, J.S. 1999. 'Research in Public Administration' in Wessels, J.S. & Pauw, J.C. (ed.) 1999. *Reflective Public Administration: Views from the South.* Cape Town: Oxford University Press.  Wessels, J.S. 1999. 'Social Science Methods' in Wessels, J.S. & Pauw, J.C. (ed.) 1999. *Reflective Public Administration: Views from the South.* Cape Town: Oxford University Press.  Yin, R.K. 2018. *Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods*. 6th ed. Los Angeles: SAGE. | |
| **Resources: Scholar Community** | SAMEA Website of the SA M&E Association. <http://www.samea.org.za>  SAMEA strives to cultivate a vibrant community that will support, guide, and strengthen the development of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) as an important discipline, profession and instrument for empowerment and accountability in South Africa.  Through this it intends to promote the recognition of M&E as a profession and discipline essential to development and practised and used in a manner that adds significant value to effective sustainable development in South Africa.  Objectives of SAMEA include to:  Provide a platform for interaction and information sharing among all those interested in M&E  Promote high quality intellectual, ethical, and professional standards in M&E  Increase the use of M&E theory and practice  Promote the development and adoption of M&E approaches and methods suitable to a South African and developmental context  Promote post graduate education and continuing professional development in M&E  Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation  <http://www.thepresidency.gov.za>  Our mission is to improve government performance in achieving desired outcomes and improving service delivery through changing the way government works. We will do this through coherent priority setting, robust monitoring and evaluation related to the achievement of outcomes, institutional performance monitoring, monitoring of front-line service delivery, and supporting change and transformation through innovative and appropriate solutions and interventions. | |
| **Potential M&D Research Focus: Public Policy Monitoring and Evaluation**  Cloete, F. 2009. Evidence Based Policy Analysis in South Africa: Critical Assessment of the Emerging Government Wide-Monitoring and Evaluation System. *Journal of Public Administration.* Vol. 44 (2).  Rabie, B. & Cloete F. 2010. *Evaluation in developing and transitional economies.* Unpublished conference paper. | | |
| **Unit of Analysis**  (Interventions/ Public Policy)  **Unit of Observation**  (human behaviour, orientation, and characteristics, and products of human behaviour and characteristics) | **Research Focus** | |
| **Policy Evaluation:**  **Formative-**  **Ongoing-**  **Summative-** | To investigate the involvement of different formal and informal role players in participating in policy design. | |
| To evaluative whether policy outputs impacted on society in the desired way (outcomes). | |
| To investigate whether the indicators for economic development reliably measures its performance. | |
| **Policy Implementation:**  Communication  Capacity  Commitment  Context  Content | To investigate the most suitable mode for policy implementation. | |
| To evaluate the impact of implementation variables on effective policy implementation. | |
| **Policy Design:**  Policy Issue Identification  Root Cause Analysis  Decision Criteria | To investigate the influence of decision criteria on policy design. | |
| To investigate whether the policy owner adequately designed policy content to ensure policy success. | |
| **Policy Functional Fields:**  Home Affairs  Health  Education | To evaluate the effectiveness of recruitment policy on reducing employee turnover. | |
| To evaluate the extent to which the policy intervention has succeeded in resolving the policy issue concerned e.g. Teacher Laptop Initiative at the Department of Education. | |
| To evaluate the effectiveness of promotion policy on employee motivation. | |