DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

RESEARCH FOCUS AREAS FOR MASTER’S AND DOCTORAL STUDIES 2025

**FOCUS AREA: LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT**

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| **Department** | | | Public Administration and Management | | |
| **Discipline** | | | Public Administration | | |
| **Research Focus Area** | | | **Local Government Management** | | |
| **Capacity for 2024** | | | **9 masters and 4 PhD students** | | |
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| **Supervision Team details:** | | **Academic Profile** | | **Capacity** | |
| **Prof P Khumalo**  **(Contact person for this focus area)**  **Office: Nkoana Simon Radipere 4-100**  **Email:** [**khumap1@unisa.ac.za**](mailto:mashamm@unisa.ac.za) | | Prof P Khumalo is a Professor of Public Administration. His research interests include Local Economic Development, poverty, Human Settlements Development and Public Administration reforms. He has assisted several postgraduate students with their research projects. | | 2 PhDs 2Master’s | |
| **Dr MM Mashamaite**  **Office: Nkoana Simon Radipere 4-82**  **Email:** [**mashamm@unisa.ac.za**](mailto:mashamm@unisa.ac.za) | | Dr MM Mashamaite completed her PhD focusing on climate change and road infrastructure. Her research interests are road transport, public financial management, project management, public policy and climate change. | | 3 PhDs  2 Master’s | |
| **Mr B Lekonyane**  **Office: Nkoana Simon Radipere 4-88**  **Email:** [**lekonbc@unisa.ac.za**](mailto:mashamm@unisa.ac.za) | | Mr B.C Lekonyane has a Master’s Degree in Public Management and Development. His research interests are as follows: Public Policy analysis and implementation, Human Settlements Development, Local government and Governance and NPO role in Public Sector. | | 2 Master’s | |
| **Ms S Ntoyanto**  **Office: Nkoana Simon Radipere 4-109**  **Email:** [**ntoyass@unisa.ac.za**](mailto:ntoyass@unisa.ac.za) | | Ms S Ntoyanto has a Master’s Degree in Public Administration and is currently pursuing a Doctorate of Philosophy in Public Administration. She has eight years (8) years lecturing experience and four (4) years of postgraduate supervision experience. She currently lectures the modules: Public Management Skills III, Local Government Finance III and Public Information Services I. Her research interests are as follows: Entrepreneurship support, Township Economy, Local government management, Public Participation and Local Economic Development, Youth Economic Development, Monitoring and Evaluation in the Public Sector. | | 2 Master’s | |
| **Ms GL Abrahams**  **Office: Nkoana Simon Radipere 4-109**  **E-mail:** [**abrahgl@unisa.ac.za**](mailto:abrahgl@unisa.ac.za) | | Ms GL Abrahams has a Master’s Degree in Public Administration. Her research interests are Local government, Public leadership, Human resource management, Public health service delivery and Policy implementation. | | 5 Master’s | |
| **Ms A Barnes-Weare**  **Office: Nkoana Simon Radipere 4-108**  **E-mail:** [**abarnes@unisa.ac.za**](mailto:abarnes@unisa.ac.za) | | Ms A Barnes-Weare has a Master’s Degree in Public Administration and a Diploma in Tourism. Her research interests are Local government, Public project management (governance), Human resource management, and Tourism in Central, Provincial and Local government | | 2 Master’s | |
| **Selection criteria: Master’s/Doctorate** | | 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). | | | |
| **Research scope** | | Local government is an invaluable socio-political laboratory for testing various new government proposals on a small scale. Local failures can be borne with far less social cost than national ones, and local successes can serve as models that the national government can follow with minimum risk. Advocates of giving maximum power to the ‘grassroots’ have generally argued that, because local governments are much more immediately visible and accessible to ordinary citizens than national government, the citizens are bound to be much more interested in, informed about, and likely to participate in them than in the more remote national government. Local democracy, participation, Local Economic Development and public Administration reforms are some of the areas covered under this focus area. The capacitation of the local government is critical for the advancement of and realisation of sustainable development giving expression to such areas as human settlements development and housing. Intergovernmental relations, district structures and their impact on developmental local government create an interesting area of study. | | | |
| **Reading:**  **Subject Field** | | * *Africa, C. 2016. Status quo entrenched and no surprises in the Western Cape. Journal of Public Administration, 51(3.1): 513 – 531.* * *Booyens, I., & Rogerson, C. M. (2019). Re-creating slum tourism: Perspectives from South Africa. Urbani Izziv, 30, 52–63.* * Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). 2007. *The state of municipal infrastructure in South Africa and its operation and maintenance: An overview*. Pretoria: CSIR. * Craythorne, c. 2006. *Municipal administration: The handbook*. Cape Town: Juta.   .   * Department: Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT). 2008. *“People – Planet – Prosperity: A National Framework for Sustainable Development in South Africa”.* Pretoria: DEAT. * Fuggle, R.F. & Rabie, M.A. 2005. *Environmental management in South Africa.* Cape Town: Juta & Co, Ltd. * Garland, A. M. (Ed.). (2015). Urban Opportunities: Perspectives on Climate Change, Resilience, Inclusion, and the Informal Economy: A New Generation of Ideas. Wilson Center. * Glasson, J. & Wood, G. 2009. Urban regeneration and impact assessment for social sustainability. *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal,* 27(4), December. * Mackay, H.M. & Ashton, P.J. 2004. Towards co-operative governance in the development and implementation of cross-sectoral policy: Water policy as an example. *Water SA* Vol. 30 No. 1 January. * *Matthews, S. 2017a. The role of NGOs in Africa: Are they a force for good? The Conversation, 25.* * Mokgosi, k., Shai, S. & Ogunnubi, O. 2017*.* Local Government Coalition in Gauteng Province of South Africa: Challenges and Opportunities*. Ubuntu* Volume 6, Number 1, June 2017, Pp 37-57. * Khumalo, P., 2018. Governance and Local Economic Development in Three Southern African Countries: Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. Alternation Journal, 25(1), pp.68-88. * Khumalo, P., 2020. Human settlements and tourism development in Kenya. Sustainable Urban Tourism in Sub-Saharan Africa: Risk and Resilience, p.3. * Khumalo, P., 2014. Improving the Contribution of Cooperatives as Vehicles for Local Economic Development in South Africa. African Studies Quarterly, 14(4). * Khumalo, P., 2013. The dynamics of poverty and poverty alleviation in South Africa. Gender and Behaviour, 11(2), pp.5643-5652. * Peters, G. & Pierre, J. 2001. Development in intergovernmental relations: towards multi-level governance. *Policy & Politics V*ol 29 no 2:131-5. * Republic of South Africa (RSA). 1998. *Local Government: Municipal Structures Act 117.* Pretoria: Government Printer. Sections 83-85. * Salamon, L.M. 2002. *The Tools of Government – A Guide to the New Governance.* New York: Oxford University Press. * Thompson, H. 2006. *Water law: A practical approach to resource management & the provision of services*. Cape Town: Juta & Co, Ltd. * United Nations (UN). 1992. “United *Nations Conference on Environment & Development, Rio de Janeiro, 14 Jun, 1992, Agenda 21”.* (available at <http://www.unep.org>/ as accessed on16 May 2010); * United Nations (UN). 1997. *“United Nations Earth Summit +5, New York, 23-27 June, 1997*.” (available at <http://www.un.org.esa/earthsummit/> as accessed on 7 May 2010).   Van der Waldt, G., Khalo, T., Nealer, E.J., Phutiagae, K., Van der walt, C., Van Niekerk, D. & Venter, A. 2014. *Municipal Management: Serving the people.* Claremont: Juta and Company Ltd. | | | |
| **Reading:**  **Research Methodology** | | * *Babbie, E & Mouton, J. 2011. The practice of social research. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.* * *Jones, T.M. & Wicks, A.C. 1999. Convergent stakeholder theory. Academy of Management Review, 24(2):206–221.* * Mouton, J. 2001. *How to succeed in your master’s and doctoral studies: A South African guidebook and resource book*. Pretoria: Van Schaik. * Thani, X. 2012. Phenomenology as a research design in Public Administration: Fitness for purpose. *Administratio Publica* 20(3):26–39. * Wessels, JS, Pauw, JC & Thani, XC. 2014, Reflective Public Administration: Context, Knowledge and Methods. Pretoria: Unisa Press. * Probert, A. 2006. Searching for an Appropriate Research Design: A Personal Journey. *Journal of Research Practice, vol. 2, Issue 1, Article D3.* | | | |
| **Resources: Scholar community** | | * Cloete, F. 1994. Local government restructuring. *Politikan*, 21:1. * Diedericks, M. 2013. A comprehensive potable water supply management framework: The case of the Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality”. PhD student (NWU). Promoter Prof E.J.Nealer (NWU). * Greenberg, S. 1999. Mbeki’s rural plan of action. Land and Rural Digest, 9 November: 12-15. * *Durgekar, V. 2016. Towards sustainable waste management though technological innovations, effective policy, supply chain integration and participation. Procedia Environmental Sciences, 35: 140-149.* * *ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability). 2015. Sustainable Development Summit 2015. Retrieved from http://old.iclei.org/index.php?id=3376 [Accessed 7 January 2020].* * *Mitchell, G.E. & Schmitz, H.P. 2019. The nexus of public and*   *nonprofit management. Public Performance & Management Review, 42(1):11–33.*   * Musingafi, M. 2013. “*Integrated resource management of potable water in Zimbabwe and south Africa: a comparative study in four local authorities*). PhD student (NWU). Promoter Prof JWN Tempelhoff (NWU). * Nealer, E.J. & Naude, M. 2011. Integrated co-operative governance in the context of sustainable development. *The Journal for Trans-disciplinary Research in Southern Africa,* 7(1) July:95-117 * Zybrands, W. 2006. *Local government.* In venter, A. & Landsberg, C. (eds). *Government and Politics in the New South Africa.* Pretoria: Van Schaik | | | |
| **Potential M&D research focus areas or research projects** | | | | | |
| **Unit of Analysis** | **Research Focus** | | | | |
| Democratising and developing the SA society | | Citizen participation and representation | | |
| Urbanisation and human settlements | | |
| Place and role of previously disadvantaged municipalities | | |
| Developmental local government | | Definition? “Maybe a bridge too far”? | | |
| Politics: Administration Systems model | | |
| Local Economic Development | | |
| Importance of monitoring, reporting, modification in the public policy implementation process | | |
| Co-operative governance | | Nature & extent of governmental relations | | |
| Organisational challenges | | |
| Leadership for good governance | | Place & role of effective leadership | | |
| Definition of “good governance” | | |
| Citizen participation | | Citizen participation versus citizen representation | | |
| Internal environment of municipalities | | Work ethic (code of conduct)  Officials versus the politicians  Effective internal organisational arrangements | | |
| Facilitation of PPPs | | Co-operative governance par excellence | | |
| Management of external environment of municipalities | | Effective PESTEL  Flexibility in adjusting to external variables  Use of modern ICT | | |
| Basic public services delivery by and in municipalities | | There are so many… First under the firsts is water services (stormwater, potable water, roads and sanitation). Subsequently issues like housing, electricity, refuse, alleviation of poverty, schooling, health, environmental conservation etc. etc. become important. | | |
| Management functions of municipalities | | Importance of effective public policy making & implementation prior to the “kick start” of the management processes (note the logical order planning, structuring, finance, HR, methods and lastly control) through the utilisation of and cognisance of all the above identified foci | | |
| Risk management | | Nature of the deteriorating human changed and natural environment leading to new unforeseen disasters | | |
| Human settlement Policy | | Human settlement policy development and implementation | | |
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| Informal Settlements | | Revisiting the upgrading of Informal settlements | | |
| Tackling the challenge of informal settlements | | |
| Financing housing provisioning Strategies | | Evaluating the Government’s funding options | | |
| The impact of Public Private Partnership in the funding of Human Settlements | | |