

Western Michigan University
School of Public Affairs and Administration
PADM6800, Project Paper Seminar
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Project Paper Defense

MPA graduates need to be astute presenters equipped with tools, techniques, and skills in effectively communicating their complex ideas and work to groups of people with or without expert knowledge in the subject matter. We value that presentation can be an effective learning tool if it is seriously utilized. It helps to clarify your own ideas and concepts as you organize your main points around some coherent themes, articulate them, and engage in structured conversation with others.

As a final exercise in this course, you will make a formal oral presentation of your project paper in class. I expect you to present the main points of your paper in about 20-25 minutes. There will also be an opportunity to listen and respond to the questions, comments, and suggestions from the fellow students and the instructor following your presentation. This exercise is tremendously valuable for you to think about the project further since the final paper is due only in two weeks.

You have the luxury of arranging your presentation the way you wish. At the same time, I expect you to include the following components of your research and paper.

1. Problem, its context, and why it needs your research attention;
2. Your conceptual framework with guiding theoretical points, questions or hypotheses, and expected outcomes;
3. Data and data collection plan including sources and methods;
4. Data analysis and findings; and
5. Recommendations.

Keep in mind that your grade for this defense will depend on how well you organize ideas and communicate them effectively. The following criteria will be used.

1. Clear, concise, and complete synthesis of the above information about the project,
2. Eye contact,
3. Voice modulation,
4. Nonverbal communication reinforcing the verbal presentation,
5. Use of appropriate audio-visual aids, and
6. Use of appropriate language.