



Master of Public Administration Program

Capstone Spring 2026 Tribal Governance Concentration

MPA Mission Statement: Our students, faculty and staff create learning communities to explore and implement socially just, democratic public service. *We think* critically and creatively; *communicate* effectively; *work* collaboratively; *embrace* diversity; we *value* fairness and equity; *advocate* powerfully on behalf of the public; and *imagine* new possibilities to accomplish positive change in our workplaces and in our communities.

“Be the change.”

Class Meetings & Locations:

April 3-5: Friday 6-8:50pm, Saturday & Sunday 9am-3:50pm Meeting Space TBD

May 1-3: Friday 6-8:50pm, Saturday & Sunday 9am-3:50pm Meeting Space TBD

May 29-31: Friday 6-8:50pm, Saturday & Sunday 9am-3:50pm Meeting Space TBD

Faculty:

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Course Description

Capstone: The Stories We Bring Home.

Students “cap off” their studies in the MPA program by completing a Capstone project. In the Capstone course, students engage in an applied demonstration project of their own design (demonstrating the knowledge, skills and abilities gained in the MPA program) as related to the MPA mission statement. The Capstone Project is designed to contribute to the applied knowledge and practice of Tribal Governance.

The Capstone class focuses on the completion of student-generated Capstone Project based on student proposals submitted in ATPS 2 (submitted pre-Spring by March 8th). Students implement their proposals selecting appropriate research techniques, analyzing data, making recommendations, and/or performing service. The design of the Capstone is based on the concept of applied research reflecting on the knowledge and skills developed through the entire program.

The course is designed as a step-by-step process to bring your work to successful completion along a continuous and engaging pathway. Timely completion of the drafts is a key to success and time to enjoy graduation. Be sure to plan your support systems in advance so you have the blocks of time to do your work.

As case study format is the required format for ATPS 1&2, students may choose to build upon their case study for Capstone. All project topics and formats will be reviewed and approved by faculty before the beginning of Spring quarter.

Final presentations will take place in the third session, May 30th and 31st. Family members, colleagues, and tribal officials are welcome to attend. As part of the Capstone course, students will also work on a reflective learning inventory as a way of bringing past knowledge to present issues and future strategies.

Learning Objectives:

1. Develop a holistic understanding of students' MPA career.
2. Create/refine students' "public identity" with skills in presenting their story (capstone, research project, etc.)
3. Ability to integrate concepts of Indigenous knowledge, social science, public service, governing, and leadership into Capstone projects focused on applied issues in Tribal Governance.

Readings for Spring 2026 are available on Canvas

Assignments

Pre-Spring Assignment:

Write a one page "Capstone Proposal" describing what you propose to complete for your Capstone project. Explain how your Capstone will demonstrate the key knowledge, skills, and abilities you learned in the MPA program and how it applies to tribal public administration. Explain what parts of the MPA mission are demonstrated by your Capstone project.

**Note if you are working in a team and/or if you are open to working in a team if classmates have similar interest areas.*

Assignment 1: Public Identity

Due April 3rd by 5:59

As a public administrator in tribal governance, you have a public identity intrinsic to the work that you do.

1. How does, or might, that identity be perceived by the various publics (remember your public from Context of PA?) with which you will be collaborating, engaging, evaluating (yes... informal judging too), responsible to and responsible for?
2. Reflect on the intersectionality of your public identity and self. How might your professional and personal identities intersect and be challenged both positively and negatively.
3. How can the form and style of your work product enhance the positive and mitigate the negative?
4. Our authentic selves are valued. What can we do to avoid being "sellouts?"
5. Assignment should be 4-5 pages double spaced (about 1000-1250 words) and use APA citations from relevant MPA and your own sources.

Assignment 2: Learning Inventory

Due April 12th † by 11:59pm

Create a list, outline, table, portfolio, or essay of your learning in the MPA program. How you present the information is up to you. For this assignment we encourage you to revisit your class descriptions, syllabi, Canvas sites, and your self-evaluations for each quarter.

1. Include the titles and brief descriptions of the classes you took that were most valuable to you in the MPA program.
2. Describe at least one KSA you learned from each class you identified. What did you take away from each learning experience?
3. Submit a list of key resources that you have amassed during the program. This will be a "go to" list that you use now or that you anticipate using for your daily work in tribal public administration. The resources might be books, articles, tools, databases, websites, blogs, podcasts, professional associations, or people you've met during the program.
4. No length requirement.

Assignment 3a: Peer Draft Capstone Paper and Presentation Plan

Due April 19th by 11:59pm

This draft Capstone will be reviewed by 2 peers and will at the minimum include:

- 1) An executive summary of your Capstone Project which may change by quarter's end.
- 2) Your Capstone's literature review which includes a synthesis of all relevant sources for your project.
- 3) Annotated outline of your paper and presentation.

Assignment 3b: Your Peer review of 2 Draft Capstone Papers and Presentation Plans

Due April 26th by 11:59pm

You will provide constructive criticism and feedback on 2 of your peers drafts.

Assignment 4a: Draft Capstone Paper and Presentation Plan

Due May 1st by 5:59pm

This draft Capstone will respond to your peers review and will at the minimum include:

- 1) An executive summary of your Capstone Project which still may change by quarter's end.
- 2) Refined and completed Capstone's literature review which includes a synthesis of all relevant sources for your project.
- 3) Draft Final Capstone: Your annotated outline will now resemble more of a final draft than outline by expanding and refining your previous assignment and responding to peer feedback. Any areas or sections of your paper that are not complete, should clearly note what needs development/revising to be done by May 22nd and include a timeline for completion.

Assignment 4b: Draft Presentation and feedback

Presented in class Sunday May 2nd & 3rd.

At this point you should have 1) Selected the medium for your presentation 2) Have a working presentation of approximately 15 minutes that is representative of your Capstone 3) be prepared for 5 minutes of Q&A.

During student presentations, non-presenters will complete feedback worksheets for each presentation which will be given to respective presenters.

The visual presentation can be a creation of your choosing and should be appropriate for the audience of your study (the visual aid may be the same as your product).

Consider using any of the following tools: slide show (powerpoint, prezi.com, haikudeck.com), poster or brochure (Canva), flip book (flipsnack.com or heyzine.com), word cloud (wordart.com, tagul.com), website (wix.com or weebly.com), videos (iMovie, Windows movie maker), infographics (piktochart.com, thinglink.com, infoogr.am.com), animation (sparkol.com, powtoon.com), timeline (timetoast.com, dipity.com, tiki-toki.com), kanban board (trello).

All presentations should adhere to the following guidelines: 1) Any photographs or graphs/charts should have a summary notes about what is being displayed. 2) All photographs or graphs/charts should be cited with their source. 3) Accessibility: contrast (dark background, light font), limit red and green (color blindness), font size, readability, universal design accessibility. 4) Video clips should not be longer than 3 minutes. If you are using multiple video clips, the limit is 5 minutes combined. See faculty for more explanation/exceptions. 5) If working in groups, all members of the group are expected to participate in the presentation/facilitation as able. 6) All AI use must include the prompts and explanation of decisions made to render the presentation output. It shouldn't be default AI output but a well-considered project reflecting your values and topic.

Assignment 5: Final Capstone Paper and Presentation

DUE May 29th by 5:59pm

Paper has no page minimum or maximum yet must be submitted as a complete, polished, final. All appendices, images, formatting, supplemental material, etc. should be included as 1 pdf for submission. Be sure to review the pdf for errors after exporting.

In Class Saturday, May 30th students will present their capstone in The Longhouse where Tribal Governance Alum will be invited to attend. A joint MPA Olympia and Tribal Governance luncheon will occur after cohorts present in their respective spaces.

In Class Sunday, May 31st student capstones that have confidentiality or limited audience requirements will present.

Capstone as Case study note: Consider submitting your case study to the Native Case Studies Institute. If doing so, review their recommendations for cases in advance.

Acknowledgement of the Squaxin Tribe for the Olympia campus of The Evergreen State College

We gratefully acknowledge and honor the Squaxin Island Tribe, upon whose traditional homelands the Evergreen State College Olympia campus is situated. For thousands of years, their ancestral families lived and thrived here. They named Budd Inlet Steh-Chass, and Eld Inlet where the campus is located Squi'Aitle. Today, the Squaxin Island Tribe continues to live on and steward the lands and waters of the Southern Salish Sea.

We also gratefully acknowledge the Puyallup Tribe whose traditional lands Evergreen's Tacoma Campus is located upon.

We respect and acknowledge the Squaxin Island and Puyallup Tribes, and other Tribes across the Americas, and their many contributions to The Evergreen State College (in support of education, Tribal sovereignty, environmental stewardship). This acknowledgement is one small step toward respect and collaboration with the aim of uplifting the voices, cultures and histories of the Tribes of these lands and waters.

Course Policies

Student Work: You are accountable for the work you submit. Within the classroom, all student work, conduct, and expectations are outlined in the student code of conduct, the MPA student handbook, our class syllabus, and our classes social conduct. Ultimately, you are responsible to your public. All graduate work can be considered practice for the practice of public administrations and hence help develop professional habits, embodying expected standards, and containing useful information that is trustworthy.

Due Dates: Capstone requires a ton of work in a short time. The due dates have been scheduled as the latest time the assignment can be submitted while still staying on track for completion.

Late Assignments: Assignments need to be submitted on time. If there is an unavoidable need to turn in an assignment late, the student must contact their faculty before the original assignment due date to discuss options. Assignments must be completed by the revised due date to ensure full receipt of course credit.

Human Subjects Review (HSR): *Students will NOT collect original data for this class.*

AI: Students should assume that the use of AI is not permitted in a class unless the faculty have explicitly stated otherwise and provided clear guidelines for its use. Additionally, students should not assume that what is allowed in one class applies to all classes. Inappropriate and/or prohibited use of AI can be considered academic

dishonesty under The Evergreen State College's Student Conduct Code ([WAC 174-123-170 \(1\)\(a\) Academic Dishonesty](#)).

If an assignment or activity in our class involves the use of AI, Faculty will provide specific guidelines and expectations for its use on a case-by-case basis. At a minimum, you will be required to document and attach your research and writing strategies, all prompts used, and a copy of the resulting conversation.

Included in Evergreen's Microsoft 365 suite is an AI chatbot, Copilot. Copilot does not share your information and hence has privacy that others do not.

Format : Unless otherwise stated, all papers should be typed, double spaced, 12 point font, and follow APA format and citation style. APA Style <http://www.apastyle.org/learn/index.aspx> Purdue Writing & Grammar Guide <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/> All written work will be of high quality, grammatically correct, clear and without spelling errors. Students may request resource writing assistance from faculty and/or the Graduate Writing Assistant. You can contact our writing support at: EvergreenWritingAssistant@gmail.com ; 360-867-6820 ; LAB I, Room 3016. Also, a guide to student writing at Evergreen can be accessed through the campus Writing Center: <https://inkwellpublication.wordpress.com/>

Participation & Attendance: Students are required to attend each class meeting in its entirety. Participation includes focusing on class content, speaking in class and seminar, listening to others, taking notes, completing class interactive exercises, avoiding distractions, and listening to and dialoging with the guest speakers. If an absence is unavoidable, faculty should be notified prior to a class and/or seminar absence.

After one absence per quarter (Ex. 3 hours on Friday is one absence), make-up work will be assigned. Makeup work must be completed by the end of Week 10 of the quarter in question for course credit. After 15 hours (Ex. one weekend) of absences total in one quarter, you may be denied full credit for the course. Also, after reoccurring absences (being late to class; regularly missing an hour of class weekend to weekend), you may be denied full credit. Finally, if you do miss a class, you are expected to do the reading for that class meeting and turn in any assignments that were due that class date.

Credit: Students will receive 6 graduate credits at the end of the course if all requirements have been satisfactorily completed. Students will be evaluated based upon their progress towards the learning objectives, assessed from classroom, seminar, and assignment performance. No partial credit or incompletes will be awarded. Full loss of credit decisions will be made by the faculty team. Full loss of credit for two terms of core may result in dismissal from the MPA program. Plagiarism (i.e., using other peoples' work as your own) may result in total loss of credit for the

class and may result in dismissal from the MPA program. See the [MPA Handbook](#) and [College statement on academic honesty](#) for more information. Failing to meet course requirements (ex. not completing one or more assignments, completing one or more assignments late, or multiple absences) may constitute denial of total credit at the discretion of the faculty. Students at risk of losing credit will receive written notification prior to the end of the quarter.

Evaluation: To receive credit, students are required to write 1) a self-evaluation and 2) a seminar faculty evaluation. All final evaluations are to be submitted via my.evergreen.edu. Evaluation conferences may occur over the phone or Zoom and should be scheduled with your seminar faculty. For more information about evaluations, see the section, "The Evaluation Process" at <https://www.evergreen.edu/our-learning-approach/narrative-evaluations>.

Multiculturalism & Diversity: Faculty and students will actively work towards contextually weaving multiculturalism and diversity throughout our learning as related to readings, lectures, seminar, and group projects. In a learning community students and faculty share the responsibility for the teaching and learning environment. Multiculturalism and diversity is to be understood as: aiming to promote constructive community discourse about issues of culture, power, and differences.

Technology Use & Learning Styles: We all have different ways of learning. Faculty will actively work towards providing information in multiple formats: tactile, auditory, visual, experiential, etc. However, we are limited to means appropriate for the classroom environment. Surfing the internet, checking social media, reading e-mail, playing with cell phones are not appropriate. Consult your faculty to discuss technology use and learning style options.

Reasonable Accommodations will be provided for any student who qualifies for them through a working relationship with Access Services. To request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact the office of Access Services for Students with Disabilities (867-6348 or 6364). If the student is already working with the office of Access Services the faculty should have received a letter clearly indicating the student has a disability that requires academic accommodations. If any student has a health condition or disability that may require accommodations in order to effectively participate in this class, please do the following: Contact faculty before class and Contact Access Services to receive a letter of accommodation. Information about a disability or health condition will be regarded as confidential. Please refer to TESC's [Students with Disabilities Policy](#).

Conduct & Conflict Resolution: Please refer to the MPA Student Handbook: <https://www.evergreen.edu/mpa/studenthandbook/conflictresolution>

Discuss any problems involving others in the learning community directly with the individuals involved (so long as the concerned party feels safe doing so). Possessing respect for others is fundamental to an open, free, and educational dialogue. All students are expected to support and contribute to a well-functioning MPA classroom and learning community. Behavior that disrupts the learning community may be grounds for disciplinary action, including dismissal from the MPA program. All students will be held accountable for maintaining the highest of academic standards.

We will abide by the social contract: WAC 174-121-010 College philosophy.

We will abide by the student conduct code (including academic integrity and plagiarism): Chapter 174-123 WAC, Student Conduct Code & Grievance/Appeals Process: <http://www.evergreen.edu/studentaffairs/student-conduct>

We will abide by the non-discrimination policies and procedures at TESC

Guest policy: Guests are welcome to visit our learning community during class time and seminar meetings with approval from course faculty in advance of each requested visit. It is the host student's responsibility to contact the faculty with details about the requested guest visit and await approval. Prospective students may visit one class meeting of first year Core without advance faculty approval, but must notify faculty that they are present prior to the beginning of class. All guests must abide by all social contract, conduct code, and nondiscrimination policy guidelines as aforementioned in this handbook. Per faculty discretion, guests may be asked to leave and not permitted to return to class if these guidelines are violated in any way including behavior that disrupts the learning community. All guests are expected to minimize their participation in class and seminar discussions.

Inclement Weather: In the event of bad weather or emergencies students should check with for announcements of campus closures. Students can call the main campus line 360-867-6000 to get the latest news regarding a campus closure or delay. Faculty may decide to cancel a class meeting even if campus is open and we will send an all-class email prior to the start of class. Students are responsible for checking email and ensuring viable transportation options are available to them.

Communicating: Email and Canvas are our primary means of communication. Email is preferred as Canvas does not work well with conversation threads, CC, and does not do multiple recipients. Students are responsible for checking their Evergreen email and Canvas regularly.

Use of Student Work Posted to Canvas: Students post their work to an online learning platform known as "Canvas". Our class Canvas site is accessible to faculty and students registered for this course only. The work students post on canvas is their private intellectual property and may not be used or distributed without their

expressed consent. Some work may also be owned by Tribal governments, Tribal organizations, or Indigenous communities. Their informed and voluntary consent would also need to be obtained for use and appropriate cultural protocols would also need to be followed.

Audio or Video Recording: No audio or video recording may occur during class without the informed and voluntary consent of the students and faculty involved.