Program Development Project Management (PDPM) Syllabus

Program Development/Project Management (PDPM) will provide students with the opportunity to gain a systematic and comprehensive understanding of key concepts and skills essential to effective program development and project management in international affairs. By examining the project cycle using potential Practicum projects, students will learn techniques and tools used in formulating and managing projects and programs for desired impact.

By course end, students will be familiar with aid and development project work, language and terminology used, different project structures, implementation practices, and strategies to address potential conflicts and obstacles. More importantly, students will have developed skills - strategic design, needs assessment, implementation, proposal and report writing, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation, advocacy, and others - that practitioners need to be effective in a range of professional contexts. In addition, one cannot speak about international work without addressing cultural sensitivity, ethics, and socio-cultural, political and economic dilemmas.

For those continuing to the Practicum in International Affairs course, PDPM is the prerequisite to the PIA course, which must be taken in the final semester.

PDPM and the Practicum in International Affairs (PIA): With proposed Spring 2012 Practicum projects as focal points, the course will use readings, discussions and class exercises to practice skills, applying them to the respective project, as well as, to the degree possible, initiating baseline research on which the Practicum will build. Students choose a project based on interest. (You are not, however, locked into the same project for the Practicum; if you wish to change to another you will be free to do so. Whether the project actually becomes a Practicum depends on continued student interest.)

As part of comprehensive preparation for the Practicum, students by end of semester will prepare an analytical and operational concept note that demonstrates:

1. Comprehensive understanding of the *context* in which they will work, including socio-political, economic, and cultural aspects.

2. Understanding of the *issue* they will work on, the causes, and its variations across contexts.

3. Strategies that have been used to tackle the problem(s) - the usual ones, and innovative ones. Students can introduce also other possible solutions worth exploring.

4. The concept note will also include a work plan with timeline to be completed during PIA.

Course Philosophy: This is a seminar course that will utilize experiential learning techniques to provide students with opportunities to practice and process what they learn. This course attempts to cover skills that are relevant and current in international program work. It is a survey course that will move quickly. Hopefully, you will leave feeling you have knowledge of the different

skills and strategies used in the international program workplace; you may not feel "expert" in any of the skills (that would take an entire semester on each), but you should feel that you know the terminology and how to use them at a basic level.

Learning Objectives: By course end students will be able to, within the above-stated limitations:

1) Conduct a basic needs assessment for a proposed project

2) Develop a project proposal

3) Develop a logical framework

4) Develop measureable indicators

5) Have ability to insert Monitoring and Evaluation into a project

6) Develop a grant proposal

7) Develop a project budget

Additional Expectations:

- **Deadlines:** Each week's assignment (unless otherwise stated) is due one hour prior to class (that means 3:00pm Tuesdays for this section). Late assignments will affect (negatively) your grade. For each 24-hour period an assignment is late, the grade will go down one letter -
    - Between 3pm on due date and 3pm next day - ½ grade
    - Later than 24 hours from due time - 1 full letter grade
    - More than 48 hours late will receive acknowledgement that completed assignment without grade
- **All assignments must be completed to pass the course.**
- No eating in class (unless sharing a class snack). Drinking water, coffee or tea is permitted.

Attendance: As this is a skills course, you must attend class to understand the work and assignments. If you miss a class, you miss that week's skill. If you must miss a class, it is your responsibility to get lecture notes and assignment from a teammate. Some lectures will be posted online, some will not. All assignments will be posted online. If work obligations make it difficult to be in class on time, perhaps you should not take this section, or take PDPM this semester.

§ University policy states that after two absences, the instructor must report any student receiving financial aid, as there are attendance issues involved when a student is using government-sponsored educational loan/financial aid.

§ Course policy is that three class absences mandate reduction of one letter grade for the course. For significant lateness, the instructor may consider tardiness as an absence for the day.

§ With four absences, the instructor may consider that the student is failing the course, and the student should think about Withdrawal from the course.

§ Extenuating circumstances could be the following:

-       An extended illness requiring hospitalization or visit to a physician (with documentation)

-       Family emergency, e.g. serious illness (with written explanation)

-       Observance of a religious holiday

Attendance and lateness policies are enforced as of the first day of classes for all registered students. If registered during the first week of the add/drop period, the student is responsible for any missed assignments and coursework.

- **Teamwork:** Everyone will be on a team based on potential Practicum project interest, and a substantial part of the course will be team work. Working on a team can be difficult. Ideally you will get along with the other members of your team, but that may not always be true. Recognize that this is a professional rather than personal relationship. If you are not getting along with a team member, try to use the opportunity to problem-solve. If it gets to the point that project work is disrupted, bring it to instructor's attention. Keep it professional.
- **Current events:** Some class discussion will focus on events occurring in the world. As graduate international affairs students, you should be well-informed on what is happening in the world.

Readings and Assignments: There will be occasional reading, and students should be ready to discuss on the day they are due. Reading and work assignments will be posted on the class group-page of gpia.info.

Class Communications: Blackboard will be used as the primary mode of communication. All readings will be posted on our Blackboard course page, unless otherwise specified.

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of another person's words or ideas as one's own in all forms of academic endeavor (essays, theses, examinations, research data, creative projects, etc), without proper acknowledgment, intentional or unintentional. Plagiarized material may be derived from a variety of sources, such as books, journals, internet postings, student or faculty papers. The New School Writing Center also provides useful online resources to help students understand and avoid plagiarism, at http://www.newschool.edu/admin/writingcenter. As per university guidelines, a student who plagiarizes an assignment will receive a failing grade on that assignment or for the course, at the instructor's discretion, and the Dean's office will be notified. The instructor may also ask the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs to convene the academic standards committee to consider additional penalties, including university dismissal.

Course Requirements and Grading: Classes will be a mixture of lecture, student presentations, and activities and exercises. There will be weekly assignments on each skill, some by team and some individual. Your grade will therefore reflect both your team and individual work. There will be many writing assignments. There will be much class discussion.

Students will be graded on:

10%	Participation in class discussions and assigned readings
10%	Paired Capacity Building Work
20%	Team weekly assignments
10%	Individual weekly assignments (3) + (1) Pass/Fail
25%	Mid-term examination
25%	Final team Concept Note with accompanying project presentation

Course Guideline:

The Course, and Introductory Concepts - Understanding course structure, grading requirements and reading materials. Discussion of PDPM-Practicum project selection process and the projects themselves. Lecture on International program work, and the different types of organizations and sectors involved. Introduction to the "Project and Program Cycle."

Project and Program Cycle - Many organizations approach problems through a "cycle," from which an organization or individual can frame a comprehensive approach to solving a problem through a broad program or targeted project.

Needs Assessments - The first steps in initiating a project are to fully understand the problem and actors involved. The needs assessment process involves using tools to reach that understanding, including stakeholder analysis, qualitative and quantitative methods, interviews and other tools.

Project Design for Results - Beginning an implementation plan for the project by designing project work with a long-term goal and shorter-term objectives in mind. Introduction to logical framework.

The Logical Framework and Monitoring and Evaluation - Further develop a logical framework as the basis for enabling monitoring and evaluation into your project plan. Work will continue on a basic framework, with goals, objectives, implementation strategies, and indicators for monitoring success, failures, effectiveness and progress of the project.

Activity-Based Budgeting, and Basic Accounting - Introduce activity-based budgeting for a project. Understanding categories and terms, including personnel, benefits, consultants, project expenses, travel and direct versus indirect costs. Basic accounting will be introduced through an exercise in which students keep a budget diary for their personal household for one week.

Writing and Editing - Writing is a major activity in the field of international affairs, and should therefore be a priority skill in one's toolbox. This lecture focuses on writing reports, memos and

correspondence that are succinct, active, informative and *readable*; learning to edit your own writing; to be conscious of adherence to style and avoiding mistakes.

Grant Proposal Writing - An overview of formatting and writing a basic grant proposal for funding of a project.

In-Class Midterm Examination

Simulation

Advocacy - Introducing different advocacy strategies to promote project / program activities.

Evaluation, and Program Enhancement - Evaluating your project, and analyzing the evaluation and making program corrections. When should your program scale up, and when should it scale down and close?

Teams also begin preparing a presentation on the team's project.

Final Group Presentations - Final submission of team project, and final presentation to class.