

ARTL 599 SYLLABUS

EXAMPLE SYLLABUS
MASTER OF FINE ARTS
ARTS LEADERSHIP
SEATTLE UNIVERSITY
ARTL 599: Summary Project Course

Introduction

Congratulations and welcome to the final leg of your MFA journey, ARTL 599. ARTL 599 is the “capstone” experience of the *Master of Fine Arts (MFA)* program, an opportunity for you to connect learning habits acquired in the *curriculum and practicum* to a management issue a nonprofit arts organization is experiencing.

The course utilizes *Academic Service-Learning (ASL)* as a method to facilitate course learning. It is important to know that ASL is a process for and product of learning. Seattle University has adopted the following definition of *ASL*. It is,

...a credit-bearing, educational experience in which students participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflect critically on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content and a broader appreciation of the discipline while enhancing their personal development and commitment to social justice.

The *ASL* experience that you will engage in is similar to that of a management consultant. Your role is as consultant to an organization (herein referred to as “the client”). My role is as academic supervisor, a resource to guide and support you throughout the *ASL* process.

Optional Course Text: Reynolds, Garr, *Presentation Zen, Simple Ideas on Presentation Design and Delivery*, Berkeley, CA: New Riders, 2008
ISBN 13:978-0-321-52565-9

Course Learning Objectives

The course is designed to help you demonstrate mastery of *Arts Leadership* curriculum.

To assist you in meeting course learning outcomes, a conceptual framework outlining the different stages and activities associated with the summary project is presented below. Figure 1 provides an illustration of the conceptual framework for the course, a guide to help you think about, plan, and organize your *ASL* work:

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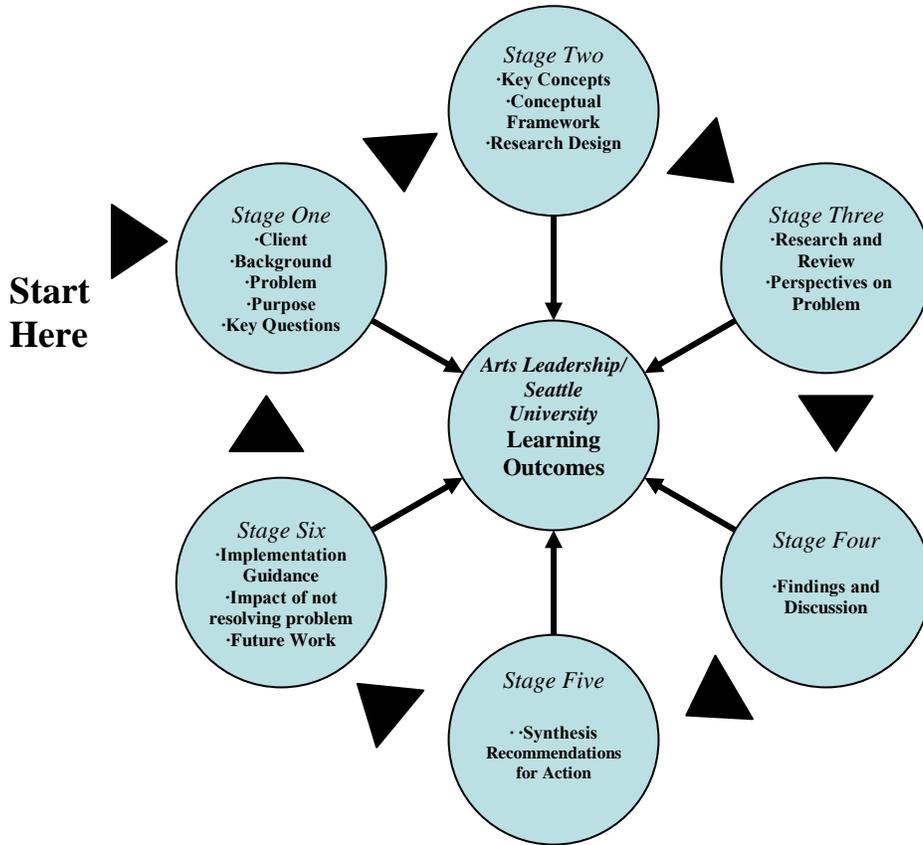


Figure 1. ARTL 599 Conceptual Framework

Project Scope

The client or project will vary according to the management problem or issue under investigation.

At the micro level, a client may be found through your place of employment, a practicum experience or through an organization or community group that you are associated with. These groups may be experiencing specific management problems (e.g. staff/volunteer relations and recruitment, meeting accountability requirements), or in need of specific

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policy advice (how to make use of use new policy tool to accomplish organizational goals).

At the macro level, the client could be an arts service organization or state, county or nonprofit umbrella agency in need of some analysis and planning advice—on a larger scale. In this type of project, your role may be to as a policy analyst researching a specific aspect of a larger problem. Regardless of the scope of your project, your task is to become knowledgeable about your client and the problem/issue they are experiencing. Therefore, it is important that the client be accessible and willing to become engaged in the learning process.

Many of you may have a specific project, topic and client in mind. For those of you who have not, I know organizations with projects. Please see me for more information. Note that projects may be done individually or with a partner (with faculty approval) depending on the needs of the client and/or project.

a. Sample Policy Issue Project:

The Prosperity Partnership is developing a legislative proposal that would create a taxing district that would provide 1/10th of 1% of sales tax collected for arts and cultural organizations in a three-county region. Reflect on the challenge from a policy implementation perspective and discuss how grass roots planning could be approached in the future to ensure passage of the necessary legislation. Include in your research report how stakeholders (public and nonprofit organizations and arts supporters) could work together to ensure a coordinated and effective campaign.

b. Sample Management Problem Project:

Executive Directors of nonprofit agencies have a mean job expectancy rate (JER) of six years. Many studies point to feelings of stress and burn-out as contributing factors to an ED's departure. Others have suggested that the JER of nonprofit EDs is not a problem at all and should be expected and managed (e.g. succession planning process should be in place). Describe the problem from the nonprofit arts sector context. Then, compare and contrast it with research coming out of the private and public sectors (e.g. CEO and Executive/Senior Director level). Draw lessons from this research and provide comment on how nonprofit organizations and boards should approach the management problem. Provide direction for future research in this area.

Learning Activities

The learning activities have been designed to help you think about and plan your work, stay on track, increase your success in meeting summary project learning outcomes, and to produce something of value for your client. Four types of learning activities will help you in this regard. They are the:

1. Research proposal;
2. Work Group & Project Status Reports;
3. Professional presentation and report; and
4. Class/client interaction

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Please review each of these learning activities below and the corresponding due dates.

1. **Research Proposal**—3 pages double-spaced

Your proposal will provide a title that captures the essence of your project. For example, *“to analyze and recommend solutions to the problem of high board turnover at XYZ Arts Organization”*.

Your proposal should include:

- a) An introduction that provides a background introducing the client, general overview of your problem, and purpose for your project;
- b) The question(s), project goal(s) and objectives the project seeks to answer;
- c) Project design including proposed method for data collection and analysis;
- d) Significance of the project at different levels of analysis e.g. for the client, the people they serve, constituents, the sector etc.;
- e) Proposed tasks and completion timelines. If this is a group project, please include a description of member roles and how the work will be divided.

Share your proposal with your client—to involve them and to ensure you are on the same page with regard to your understanding of the problem and scope of the work. Use the feedback to make adjustments to your plan. Remember this is a living document!

Be prepared to present you project proposal to the class in a maximum of 5 minutes. After presentations, students will work in small groups to receive initial feedback on project proposals and suggestions for improvements, changes, or modifications.

10 % of Grade--DUE:

2. **Work Group & Project Status Reports:**

To provide assistance in meeting the learning outcomes, you will engage in a series of Work Groups and Project Status Reports. This process will provide you with an opportunity to reflect on your capstone experience and to develop your final report gradually. Each experience reflects different stages in the development of the capstone.

• Work Group

Consider your project work thus far and be prepared to share in small work groups. Summarize the client, the problem or need your project addresses, the purpose of your project and design. To assist you, reflect on the following questions:

- *Problem*—what is the nature of the need or problem your client is experiencing? Reflect on your client and context in which the need or problem takes place or the

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nature of the problem, and the purpose or significance of your work to the organization, individuals, field etc.

- *Design*— How have you designed your approach to addressing the problem or issue? What surveys, observations, interviews or some combination thereof are you utilizing? Describe the elements of your design.

- Project Status Report

Prepare a **five (5) page double-spaced Report** summarizing your project work to date. This Report should document your literature review. How does the literature relate to the client's particular problem or issue? What conclusions can you draw from the literature? Summarize the key concepts, ways of thinking about the problem, and key works of scholars in the field and properly cite all sources.

- *Key Concepts*—what are the key concepts under investigation? What do you know about them from your review of the literature?

In qualitative research reports, a literature review generally indicates some ways others have studied the problem or issue by presenting alternative types of models or practices that have been used elsewhere. In this Report you are concerned with presenting various alternative theories, frameworks, or examples, and illustrating the strengths and weaknesses of each.

- *Project Framework*—what approach will be used to research solutions to the issue/problem, how will it be presented to the client and what methods will be used to assure integration into the client organization. Consider how senior staff and/or the board of directors will be engaged in the implementation of your recommendations, costs of implementation, timing, etc. How will the client measure success?

20 % of Grade--DUE:

- Summary Project Coaching Sessions

Reserve a time to meet one-on-one with me to review progress and plans for the final written and oral presentation. Be prepared to verbally summarize and reflect on the findings of your project and what they mean. (No written report required)
Reflect on:

- *Results*—describe the key results or findings that came about from your research. Please know that results are typically organized around specific objectives, questions (qualitative) or hypotheses (quantitative). Describe findings and

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consider using visuals to illustrate them (e.g. tables and figures). Presenting this data in a table will help the reader understand and interpret results.

- *Discussion and Recommendations*—what do the results indicate and/or suggest (e.g. key themes and patterns, differences etc.)? What have you have learned about the problem? What action can be taken to resolve it? Prioritize actions (e.g. what should they focus on first, second etc). What knowledge, skills, and abilities does the client need to implement them successfully? What resources are needed? How/where could they be acquired?

30 minute session with each student. Contact Peggy to reserve a time.

10% of Grade. Grade based on adequate project progress and formation of recommendations and conclusions.

- Final Class Gathering and Dress rehearsal

This session is an opportunity to share final results of your work with your cohort and to get candid responses to challenges that you may be facing in preparing the final written or oral presentation. You get to decide the best way to do this. This is a good time to get cohort responses to your visual presentation or brief sections of your written report. This will also be a chance to test the technology in the presentation room to assure that your presentation will work properly. Any remaining questions or issues will be addressed.

3. **Final Report and Presentation**—please prepare a 20 page report and 20 minute professional presentation discussing the problem/issue, how you went about your work (methods), key findings and recommendations, including implementation timeline.

Title Page

Your final report is similar to a professional report and should include a title page that includes a space for signature by me as your academic supervisor, and your client. **On the title page, please include your permanent mailing address and preferred non-SU email address so that your paper and feedback can be returned after grading.**

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Executive Summary

The report should also include an executive summary. It follows the title page and should be 1 1/2 -2 pages in length. It should briefly summarize the problem and context, methodology and findings, and recommendations. Typically, the executive summary is the only part of the report that most people read, especially busy upper level managers and political officials. The summary must be complete enough so that people who do not read the whole report will understand the key points of your analysis. It should also be consistent with your report.

Report Style

Your report should contain sections that are consistent with your proposal or previous summaries, and must conform to guidelines set out in the American Psychological Association (APA) Style Manual. The report should be double-spaced and printed on 8.5 by 11 inch page. Double sided printing is permitted. Individual reports should be approximately 20 pages **excluding** references and appendices. Group reports will vary according to the size of the group. If you have questions about the length of a group report, please see me.

**50 % of Grade: PRESENTATION (20%) June 13, 15th
PAPER (30%) Due at time of presentation**

Note: Grades will be assigned based on a combination of client and faculty feedback as to the quality of the work performed.

4. Class/Client Interaction (10% OF COURSE GRADE)

The participation grade will be determined based on an assessment of the extent to which the student was engaged in the project and in the projects of peers. For example, the quality of class interaction (e.g. feedback to peers); engagement in the project; effort in making contact with potential client; involving client in the work, and class presentation.

Final Course Grade

The final course grade will be determined based on the following grade point scale with performance indicators.

A 93-100 Outstanding quality work. The type of work

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		expected from graduate students with a particular talent or expertise in the field.
A-	90-93	Very good work. Shows a depth of knowledge and analytical ability normally attributable to someone with advanced study in the area.
B+	87-89	Good work. Shows fully acceptable level of knowledge and ability in the area.
B	84-86	Competent work. Shows generally adequate level of knowledge and ability in the area.
B-	80-83	Marginally acceptable work. Shows some lack of knowledge, ability or background in the area.
C+	77-79	Minimally acceptable work. Indicates a significant lack of knowledge, ability or background in the area.
C	74-76	Unacceptable work. Requires review of work.

Office Hours: By Appointment

I encourage you to set an appointment throughout the course to discuss your project and the issues you are experiencing.

Research involving Human Subjects

Your project may involve collecting data from people. If this applies to your project, please refer to the SU's Internal Review Board (IRB) website for guidelines and procedures <http://www.seattleu.edu/academics/irb>

Writing Support

The Writing Center offers to undergraduate and graduate students help with all phases of the writing process – brainstorming, organizing, drafting, revision, and editing. It is staffed by friendly and informative undergraduate writing consultants who believe that anyone can learn to write well and any draft can be developed to serve its writer well. Writing consultants prize lively conversation in a supportive and challenging environment that inspires students to produce their best writing. Primarily not a remedial service, the Writing Center encourages students to visit early and often in their writing process.

Use of Technology and Angel Website

An Angel website will be used to facilitate course communication and interaction. I will upload the syllabus to the site and create folders to store resources related to the course. Spaces will also be created for you to submit assignments as well as upload presentations and reports.

With regards to email communication, I prefer to use SU email.

Disability

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If you have, or think you may have, a disability (including an ‘invisible disability’ such as a learning disability, a chronic health problem, or a mental health condition) that interferes with your performance as a student in this class, you are encouraged to arrange support services and/or accommodations through Disabilities Services staff in the Learning Center, Loyola 100, (206) 296-5740. Disability-based adjustments to course expectations can be arranged only through this process.

Other—Late Assignments, Attendance and Plagiarism

SU rules and regulations regarding attendance, late assignments, and academic honesty will be followed to the fullest extent. Students who miss more than one class during the quarter may have their grade lowered as much as one grade point (letter grade). Arriving late to class two or more times is considered equivalent to one absence.

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SAMPLE PROPOSAL

SAMPLE TITLE

“To analyze and recommend solutions to the problem of high board turnover at XYZ Arts Organization”.

Introduction

- Provides relevant background, overview of the problem and context
- Identifies key question(s) the report seeks to answer
- Identifies hypotheses or goals and objectives

Purpose and Significance

- Why is the problem/issue important?
- What is known about it? What are the different perspectives on the problem?
- What is the impact of not paying attention to it from different levels of analysis (e.g. for your client, clients it serves, stakeholders etc).

Methodological Approach

- What methods will be used to answer the questions? Literature review, survey, focus group, personal interviews?
- How will client be involved?
- How will data be collected? Who from?
- What procedures will be employed with respect to research involving human subjects?
- Does the project meet the federal definition of research?
- Does your proposal need to be submitted to the Internal Review Board for approval? see IRB website for more information <http://www.seattleu.edu/academics/irb>

Project Management

- What activities will be performed? and when? (provide a chart of tasks and timelines)
- If group work, what are the roles? and how will tasks (activities) be divided?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Action Learning

Whitaker, G. P. (October 2004). Learning through action: How MPA public service team projects help students learn research and management skills, *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, 10 (4), pp. 279-294.

Writing Resources

Boice, R. (1990). *Professors as writers*. Stillwater, OK: New Forums Press.
Cook, C. K. (1994). *Line by line: How to improve your own writing* (3rd ed.). Houghton Mifflin.

MacDonald, S. (1994). *Professional academic writing in the humanities and social sciences*. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press.

Pyrczak, F. (1997). *Writing empirical research reports: A basic guide for students of the social and behavioral sciences* (2nd ed.). Pyrczak Publishing.

Strunk, W., Jr., & White, E. B. (1979). *The elements of style* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Woodward, J. A. (1997). *Writing research papers: Investigating resources in cyberspace*. Lincolnwood, FL: NTC/Contemporary Publishing Group.

Zinsser, W. (1990). *On writing well* (4th ed.). New York: Harper & Row.

See Boston University for tips on different report types and writing them at http://www.bu.edu/history/writing_guide.html

Research Resources

Meriwether, N. W. *12 easy steps to successful research papers*. Lincolnwood, IL: NTC/Contemporary Publishing Group.

Morton, H. C. (Ed.). (1988). *Writings on scholarly communication: An annotated bibliography of books and articles on publishing, libraries, scholarly research, and related issues*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

Stoecker, Randy (2005). *Research Methods for Community Change*, Sage