Professional Practicum

One of the important curricular innovations in Public Administration’s Ph.D. program is the 3-credit, 3-semester Professional Practicum PAD 7943. The purpose of the Practicum is to socialize full time doctoral students into the scholarly guild. One 1-credit semester of the practicum addresses the practices of teaching. As some doctoral students will eventually be teaching, learning about some of the practical issues that face college instructors – such as preparing a syllabus, lecturing, conducting discussion sessions, testing, cheating, cultural diversity, disruptive students, use of teaching technologies including e-learning, and more – will help doctoral students anticipate what may be in store for them when they enter the classroom. A second 1-credit semester familiarizes students with the norms of the academy. The scholar’s guild is a pre-modern institution, pre-dating bureaucracy, and based on norms of collegiality, including apprentice-master mentoring, peer selection of colleagues, peer review of research, faculty responsibility for academic programs and curriculum, and faculty governance. The third semester takes account of the research finding that for 50% of Ph.D. graduates, the doctoral dissertation is their last scholarly research contribution. Hence the goal of the third 1-credit semester is for students to write a manuscript of such quality that it can be submitted to an academic journal for publication.