**The Evergreen State College**

**Master of Public Administration (MPA) Core Competencies**

**DRAFT**

(Document for consideration and review – culled from various meetings and facilitated efforts (2007-2009) to define TESC MPA Core Competencies, led by Nita Rinehart. The intention of this draft is to craft a document that describes our Core competencies in a brief, accessible and general way, instead of crafting specific details for each year of Core – the details are important for curriculum design and building but not necessary in a statement that will be used for marketing and promotion along with the mission.)

Core Competences describe the key knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) TESC MPA students can attain from the MPA program. Core Competencies entail a commitment from MPA faculty and administration to structure the MPA program around, and create learning communities to teach and learn to, an agreed set of KSAs. Core Competencies entail a promise to students that the program will design classes, particularly Core classes, to the competencies.

Core Competencies do not, necessarily, describe competencies associated with MPA concentrations (public and non-profit management; public policy; tribal governance). Instead, they describe the KSAs general to all concentrations and central to TESC’s interpretation of the central and crucial things that define the *Master* of Public Administration. As such, they define TESC’s particular version or brand of the MPA.

**TESC MPA Mission**

“You must be the change you wish to see in the world” -- Mohandas K. Gandhi

Evergreen MPA 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;
* Value fairness and equity;
* Advocate powerfully on behalf of the public; and
* Imagine new possibilities and accomplish positive change in our workplaces and communities.

**TESC MPA Core Competencies**

* An understanding of the history, economics, politics, theories (mainstream and otherwise), legal frameworks and best practices of democratic public administration.
* An understanding of government structures, processes and intergovernmental relations amongst and between those who administer for the public good: tribes, state, local, federal , nonprofits and for-profits.
* An understanding, and appreciation, of the dynamic and crucial relationships amongst and between citizens and their governments.
* An understanding of, and capacity to practice, management and administrative systems and practices that maximize socially and economically just, democratic public service.
* An understanding of, and capacity to practice, budgeting and finance systems and practices that maximize socially and economically just, democratic public service.
* Understand and be able to perform policy creation, analysis and implementation.
* Understand and be able to perform research and analysis (including indigenous research) for administrative, developmental, community-based, policy and other public purposes.
* The ability to write and communicate clearly and effectively in a variety of settings and situations.
* The skills to communicate effectively, and collaborate, across differences.
* The ability to practice active, respectful listening and to effectively facilitate/negotiate people listening to and communicating with each other.
* An understanding of different learning and work styles and how these translate into practices in organizational and community life.
* An understanding of team dynamics and the ability to work effectively in team/collaborative situations.
* An ability to work with, and through, conflict.
* The recognition and development of a strong personal and professional code of ethics that supports socially and economically just, democratic public service.
* The recognition of inequities, the ability to assess differential impacts of policies and actions, a recognition of differing definitions of fairness and equity and the abilities understand power dynamics and ensure that those with less power are included and part of designing solutions.
* The ability to think and work independently; the ability to ask difficult questions and seek the answers; the ability to “think outside the box.”
* Flexibility (“nimbleness”); acceptance of ambiguity and complexity; the ability to identify and create strategies to remove barriers to positive change.

Submitted to the MPA Faculty and Staff

September, 2010

by Cheryl Simrell King