Learning Objectives
The design of this course moves graduate students from an understanding of the information about networks, to an increased capacity to see how networks reframe problem solving, to the application of skills and processes to design, manage and evaluate networks.

The course builds on experiential learning practices to apply the research on networks to classroom simulations, negotiations exercises, group projects, and presentations to develop actual skills for designing, managing, and evaluating networks.

A variety of contexts for inter-organizational networks are covered in the readings including urban, homeland security, public agencies, public health, infrastructure, environmental, community health, parks, and redevelopment.

The teaching strategy is to initially show the difficulty of cooperation in a simulation involving the exchange of chips and dominoes to make the case for the challenge of forming networks. This is accomplished though a detailed debriefing on what worked and what did not work well in this simulation.

The design of the course calls for all readings to be discussed in each session, and readings applied to case studies. There will be three occasions of a framework from the readings being applied to cases from outside that specific framework (sessions four, six and nine) to teach critical thinking skills.

One of the outcomes of the course is to develop leaders of networks, with each session including leadership practices, such as starting with reflections, debriefing group experiences, and developing strategy models, as well as session 13 specifically on leadership.

Levels of Learning
Essentially the course teaches skill sets initially from the individual level and group level, and then moves to the organizational, community, and institutional levels. A team project (of four to six students) incorporates all of these levels in their experience of analyzing and presenting that analysis of a real-world network.

Course Delivery Format Options
The course design of 14 modules can be taught as either once a week course for a 14 week semester or as full day seminar class with two sessions per day. These days can be grouped into modules of two four-day sessions, with four weeks between sessions, or as three modules of three-days, three- days, and two-days with three weeks in between sessions

Course Delivery
The proposed course offers the following five features:

1) Experiential learning through:
   a. simulations,
   b. negotiation exercises,
   c. case studies,
   d. small group exercises,
   e. team building processes,
f. presentation practice, and
g. seminar discussion.

2) Building on the increasing research on how networks successfully respond to complex challenges

3) Teaching the vertical (intergovernmental) dimension of network dynamic, as well as the horizontal (across the public, nonprofit, and private sector) character of networks.

4) A multi-disciplinary approach to the readings drawing on public management, public policy, political science, sociology, health policy, planning, management, leadership studies, and additional disciplines and professional fields.

5) Building skills of the students at five levels: individual, team, organizational, community, and institutional

Session Delivery

Session 1: Government to Governance: Why Networks

OUTCOMES: Use of the readings to establish the need for networks to address the challenges presented by Don Kettl’s reading on “wicked problems, crossing boundaries, needing new intellectual capital”. Seeing networks in the context of urban challenges, in public health and emergency response networks, and network development skills as essential for public affairs education.

ACTIVITIES: Self introductions. Small group exercise of discussion and report out of expectations for course. Have class see the convergence and divergence of expectations between different groups. Class simulation of Meta-4 to establish experientially the challenges of cooperation which are the basis of network challenges.

Session 2: Networks As Addressing Coordination Challenges

OUTCOMES: Contextualize the challenges of networks to moving from public organizations to inter-organizational challenges. Surface the design challenges in political contexts. Begin exploration of public management challenges in networks, as well as to begin distinguishing different types of networks addressed by different skill sets.

ACTIVITIES: Reflections as a class on previous class session. Apply the reading to specific networks through small group discussions and report out. Present each student’s three-page memo on analyzing actual networks.

Session 3: Rationales for Cross-sectoral Governance: Alternatives to Hierarchy

OUTCOMES: Understanding of the drivers for networks and different types of network responses. See the development of network approaches as part of an evolving approach to democratic governance. See the application of varied networks in the nonprofit sector in the United States and internationally.

ACTIVITIES: Reflections as a class on previous class session. Discussion in small groups of each reading and report out to full class. Case discussion in small groups and report out to the class of five different network successes for the “The Change Masters: How Do You Solve the World’s Problems”.

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Session 4: Networks and Contracts: Transaction Cost Analysis
OUTCOMES: An application of transaction cost analysis to contracting-out and the implications for network formation. An understanding of the micro-dynamics of network formation developed by Gladwell. Teach cross walking of concepts from transaction cost analysis to new situations and critical thinking skills. An understanding of the roles and qualities of high performing teams

ACTIVITIES: Reflections as a class on previous class session. Applying transaction cost analysis to different network arrangements from other readings in small groups and report out to full class. Class discussion of connectors, mavens, and salesmen concepts from Gladwell and application to networks. Class discussion of team projects: membership, research topic and class exercise on qualities roles for high performance teams

Session 5 and 6: Managing the Dynamics of Networks and Contracts
OUTCOMES: Understanding the different types of networks and applying a typology of four types of networks from Milward and Provan to analyze network arrangements found in the readings. Understanding the intended outcomes of varied designs for networks, and the challenges of contract specificity. Skill development for contract negotiations of service delivery for a nonprofit. Skill development for best practices for managing networks. Seeing networks in the contexts of public management challenges, of public health, and in the transportation and infrastructure. Making the case for the importance of high quality presentations drawing on the Challenger launch research of Edward Tufte. Understanding of expectations principles for high quality presentations

ACTIVITIES: Reflections as a class on previous class session. Small group discussion and report out of each article. Class discussion of Finnegan article. Class divided in to two large groups for exercise on “Government/Nonprofit Contracting Exercise”. Negotiations between different groups to arrive at a contract. Report out of groups.

Session 7 and 8: Negotiation, Collaboration, and Conflict Resolution Needed to Build Networks
OUTCOMES: Development of individual skills needed for effective negotiations for networks and skill development for collaboration and the connection to network development in issues related to planning, land use, and regional challenges. Ability to draw on readings and class activities to write analytically about networks.

ACTIVITIES: Reflections as a class on previous class session. Class discussion of Getting to Yes. Small group activities on different strategies suggested by Getting to Yes to apply to “Government/Nonprofit Contracting Exercise”. Mid-Term- two hour written exam

Session 9: Authentic Community Engagement and Participation: Building Networks with the Community
OUTCOMES: Understanding of mechanisms and processes to promote authentic community engagement for network development. Teach cross walking of Lukensmeyer’s frameworks and concepts of community engagement to new situations found in other class

ACTIVITIES: Reflections as a class on previous class session. Small group application of Lukensmeyer’s article to other class articles on community engagement and networks. Report out of small groups. Class discussion of Agranoff chapter.

Session 10: Networks through Community-Based Governance
OUTCOMES: An understanding of the mechanisms and dynamics of community driven networks arrangements. An understanding of practices for inclusions and for limiting involvement. Application of the common pool resource research to the dynamics of community based governance and implications for network formations. An understanding of the context for networks at the neighborhood level and allied to environmental issues.

ACTIVITIES: Reflections as a class on previous class session. Class discussion of articles. Case discussion in small groups identifying the challenges and mechanisms for formation of networks in “A conservation agency creates inner-city ‘natural parks’ in Los

Session 11: Evaluating Network Performance
OUTCOMES: An understanding of ways to measure the impact of networks. Connecting evaluation to design and management of networks. Applying network analysis in the context of community health and in land use and growth management.

ACTIVITIES: Reflections as a class on previous class session. Class discussion of evaluation processes for networks. Small group applications and reporting out of findings on evaluation from specific cases in the class readings. Small group analysis and report out of key findings from case discussion of “The Quest for Community Health”.

Session 12: Network Accountability
OUTCOMES: Application of accountability to networks, and tie into evaluation of networks.

ACTIVITIES: Reflections as a class on previous class session. Class discussion of Newland article on Accountability. Small group review and report out on each article. Application of Romzick accountability framework to specific network examples. Two of the team project presentation.

Session 13: Leadership Practices and Networks
OUTCOMES: Application of leadership principles to design and leadership of networks for impact. An understanding of strategy applied to network design. Application of leadership principles and network design at the institutional level drawing on the example of Thurgood Marshall’s early civil rights work. Skill development for leadership at the organizational level in developing public agency inter-organizational networks drawing on the example of New York City.

ACTIVITIES: Reflections as a class on previous class session. Application of leadership strategy model of outcomes driven by assets operationalized by behaviors. Two person
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exchange on answering questions of 1) model of leadership, 2) most important leadership experience, 3) your legacy as a leader. Small group exercise and report out on leadership principles in the case study of “Unbuilding the World Trade Center”. Two of the team presentations

Session 14: Networks: Where do we go from here?
OUTCOMES: Understanding of the future challenges facing networks. Discussion of each student’s take-aways from the course.

ACTIVITIES: Final two-team projects presentation. Class discussion of surprises, unlearning, and learning.