

MAN 710: Research Seminar in Public & Nonprofit Management

Fall Term 2025: Administrative Burdens in Citizen-State Interactions

Chair of Business Administration, Public & Nonprofit Management

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Last updated: July 2025

1 Course Description

This course will introduce students to different approaches relevant to planning and implementing research in the fields of public and nonprofit management. Students will be familiarized with the process of conducting qualitative empirical research as well as reading and writing scientific papers. They must apply this knowledge in an empirical research project that is structured around this year's seminar topic.

At the end of this course, students will have acquired the skills for doing academic work on their own and, thus, to write a qualitative- or quantitative-empirical master thesis at the *Chair of Public and Nonprofit Management*.

Seminar Topic Fall Term 2025

In the fall semester of 2025, students will work on research projects that aim to understand the mechanisms surrounding *administrative burdens in citizen-state interactions*. For their data collection, the students must get in touch with citizens or public organizations that have first-hand experience with the application for or the delivery of public programs.

To apply multiple viewpoints and address different research gaps, exploratory qualitative research will be conducted. Students will work on one research topic following the overarching research question:

RQ *How do administrative burdens influence citizen-state interactions?*

A selection of broad research avenues to choose from will be provided at the beginning of the seminar. These topics must be sharpened by the students. Own topics in line with the overarching topic can be developed. Literature suggestions that mark a starting point on the topic are provided under Chapter 5.

Students will each collect their data for the qualitative empirical seminar papers through on-site observations and interviews (e.g., with citizens who apply for or receive social benefits from a public agency). Students must identify and acquire relevant interview partners themselves. Additional information relevant to the selected research question may be manually extracted by the students from online sources, e.g., government websites or newspaper articles.

2 Learning and Qualification Outcome

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- describe research gaps, especially those related to their research projects,
- define research goals and research questions,
- search, interpret, evaluate, and select academic literature,
- select appropriate research methods (qualitative and/or quantitative) for various research questions,
- write a qualitative and/or quantitative research paper.

In this seminar, the key competence of academic research shall be acquired.

3 Organizational Information

Time frame of the seminar:	08 September 2025 until 10 November 2025
Registration:	<p>Students must formally apply for this seminar by handing in an application consisting of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(1) a motivation letter (max. 1 page),(2) a CV (1-2 pages),(3) a Bachelor certificate, and(4) a current transcript of records. <p>Please combine all documents into one PDF file.</p> <p>Students studying in the master's program Culture and Business must personally hand in the form "Antrag auf Übertragung (Export) der Masterarbeitsbetreuung". Without this form, the registration cannot be processed.</p> <p>Applications (including UNI-ID) must be submitted to Jonas Bruder (Jonas.bruder@uni-mannheim.de) by 28 August 2025 via email.</p> <p>Information about being accepted for the research seminar will be sent out by 04 September 2025. You need to send your binding participation confirmation or cancellation by 05 September 2025 to Jonas Bruder.</p> <p>Please note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This timeline applies to all research seminars in the Area Management, and exceptions from it will not be granted (Link: https://www.bwl.uni-mannheim.de/en/programs/master/mmm/information-for-students/#c324891).• Higher-semester students are prioritized when allocating seats in the research seminar. Accepted seats are legally binding, and attendance at the kickoff is compulsory.
Prerequisite:	<p>At least one of the following courses must be completed before you can complete MAN 710 (parallel attendance possible):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategic Management between Profit and Purpose (MAN 609)• Understanding and Tackling Societal Challenges through Management Research (MAN 659)• Selected Challenges in Nonprofit Management (MAN 675)

- Digital Era Government (MAN 676)
- Public & Nonprofit Management (MAN 679)
- Challenges of Public & Nonprofit Management (MAN 680)

Examination:	Seminar paper – part 1 (25%, due Sunday, 12 October 2025, 23:59 , via ILIAS) Seminar paper – part 2 (75%, due Monday 08 December 2025, 12:00 , hard-copy and via ILIAS)
Course materials:	ILIAS
Credits:	6 ECTS 180 hours: 10 in-class sessions, one mandatory office hour. In-class attendance = 16 hours. Data collection and data analysis (including preparation) = 70 hours. Writing of seminar paper (parts 1 and 2; including literature search) = 94 hours.

Contact Details

Lecturer:	Jonas Bruder
E-Mail:	Jonas.bruder@uni-mannheim.de
Office hours:	Upon appointment

4 Course Requirements

4.1 General Requirements

This course is highly interactive and thus based on critical conversations among students. Discussions will be based on conceptual and empirical academic papers and methods literature. We will critically reflect on research designs and methods and have workshops in which the theoretical knowledge will be applied. Apart from being interested in the course subject per se, participants should be highly motivated to conduct empirical research. A strong commitment to active participation in discussions in the onsite sessions is expected. Even though existing knowledge of empirical research methods will help to accomplish this seminar, it is not required.

To successfully pass the seminar, students must attend the sessions as scheduled in the syllabus and Portal². Students are allowed to miss two blocks of 90 minutes each. Please indicate your absence via email. Students must not miss the sessions in which the results of their work will be presented and discussed.

4.2 Examination Requirements

Students will conduct their research endeavor consisting of a qualitative empirical seminar paper. Students will collect the data for the qualitative empirical seminar papers through on-site observations and/or interviews. Students are required to provide a transcript of the conducted interviews as a digital appendix to the seminar paper. Each student will conduct his or her own data analysis.

Interview guideline: Based on the methodological course content and their individual research topic, students will create an interview guideline for their data collection. This guideline must be submitted to the lecturer, and students will receive feedback on the guideline before using it in the field. The interview guideline will not be graded, but submission is mandatory.

Seminar paper (part 1): Students will write a short proposal consisting of an introduction, theoretical background, and methods to be applied (parts 1–3 of an academic paper). Students must follow the guidelines for academic work, as published on the website of the *Chair of Public and Nonprofit Management*. Evaluation criteria are (1) formal aspects, (2) content, (3) scientific language, and (4) reasoning. The proposal grade is 25% of the final grade. The length of the proposal should be about 1.800 words (+/-10%, including figures and tables, excluding the title page and references, in PDF or Word format). Students will get feedback on their proposal from the lecturer during individual mandatory consultation hours. They are expected to use this feedback to improve their final seminar paper (part 2).

Seminar paper (part 2): Based on the written proposal, students must write up the results of their empirical work in a comprehensive seminar paper (5.700 words (+/-10%), including figures and tables, excluding title page, references, and appendices). For this purpose, they must include the feedback provided on the proposal, refine the methodology section, and add sections on their data analysis, findings, discussion, and conclusion. Evaluation criteria are the same as those for seminar paper part 1. Guidelines for scientific work, as published on the website of the *Chair for Public and Nonprofit Management*, must be followed. The final paper must be submitted as one hard copy and one digital copy via ILIAS (in PDF format).

Table 1 gives you an overview of the examination portfolio.

Submission Type	% of final grade	Deadline (for all)
Interview Guideline	Mandatory, not graded	Mon, 29.09.2025, 23:59
Seminar paper (part 1)	25%	Sun, 12.10.2025, 23:59
Seminar paper (part 2)	75%	Mon, 08.12.2025, 12:00
Total	100 %	

Table 1: Examination Portfolio MAN 710

5 Literature

5.1 Seminar Topic

- Baekgaard, M., & Tankink, T. (2022). Administrative Burden: Untangling a Bowl of Conceptual Spaghetti. *Perspectives on Public Management and Governance*, 5(1), 16–21. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ppmgov/gvab027>
- Barnes, C. Y. (2020). „It takes a while to get used to:“ The Costs of Redeeming Public Benefits. *Journal Of Public Administration Research And Theory*.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/muaa042>
- Burden, B. C., Canon, D. T., Mayer, K. R., & Moynihan, D. P. (2012). The Effect of Administrative Burden on Bureaucratic Perception of Policies: Evidence from Election Administration. *Public Administration Review*, 72(5), 741–751.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2012.02600.x>
- Christensen, J., Aarøe, L., Baekgaard, M., Herd, P., & Moynihan, D. P. (2020). Human Capital and Administrative Burden: The Role of Cognitive Resources in Citizen-State Interactions. *Public Administration Review*, 80(1), 127–136.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.13134>
- Halling, A., & Baekgaard, M. (2024). Administrative Burden in Citizen–State Interactions: A Systematic Literature Review. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 34(2), 180–195. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/muad023>
- Herd, P., & Moynihan, D. P. (2018). *Administrative Burden: Policymaking by Other Means*. Russell Sage Foundation.
- Masood, A., & Azfar Nisar, M. (2021). Administrative Capital and Citizens’ Responses to Administrative Burden. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 31(1), 56–72. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/muaa031>

5.2 Qualitative Research Methods

- Gioia, D. A., Corley, K. G., & Hamilton, A. L. (2013). Seeking Qualitative Rigor in Inductive Research: Notes on the Gioia Methodology. *Organizational Research Methods*, 16(1), 15–31.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428112452151>
- Howard-Grenville, J., Nelson, A., Vough, H., & Zilber, T. B. (2021). From the Editors—Achieving Fit and Avoiding Misfit in Qualitative Research. *Academy of Management Journal*, 64(5), 1313–1323.
<https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2021.4005>
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (Third edition). SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Ritchie, J., & Lewis, J. (Hrsg.). (2014). *Qualitative research practice: a guide for social science students and researchers*. London: Sage.
- Saldaña, J. (2021). *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers* (Fourth Edition). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Design and methods* (Fifth edition). Los Angeles: Sage.

5.3 [Quantitative Research Methods]

- Hair, J. F. (Hrsg.). (2014). *Multivariate data analysis*. Harlow: Pearson.
- Huntington-Klein, N. (2021). *The effect: An introduction to research design and causality*. Chapman and Hall/CRC.
- Shadish, W. R., Cook, T. D., & Campbell, D. T. (2001). *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for generalized causal inference*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

6 Timetable

Last update: July 2025, changes may occur throughout the semester

Please be aware that extensive preparation and follow-up work by all students is necessary for each session.

Date	Time	Format & Room	Session type	Content
Mon, 08.09.2025	13:45 – 17:00	On campus Room EO 256	In-class session I	Research question and conceptual framework
Mon, 15.09.2025	13:45 – 17:00	On campus Room EO 256	In-class session II	Data collection
Mon, 15.09.2025 – Mon, 01.11.2025			Data collection	Individual preparation for and execution of data collection
Mon, 22.09.2025				No session
Mon, 29.09.2025	13:45 – 17:00	On campus Room EO 256	In-class session III	Data analysis
Mon, 29.09.2025	23:59	Examination portfolio, ILIAS	Submission	Submission of interview guideline (not graded)
Mon, 06.10.2025	13:45 – 17:00	On campus Room EO 256	In-class session IV	Writing up
Sun, 12.10.2025	23:59	Examination portfolio, ILIAS	Submission	Seminar paper part 1
Mon-Tue, 20. or 21.10.2025	Individual time slots	on campus or online	Individual feedback	Feedback seminar paper part 1
Mon, 10.11.2025	13:45 – 17:00	On campus Room 210; L9, 1-2	In-class session V	Presenting the status quo of data analysis & discussion of open questions in data analysis process (every student presents the status quo of his/her research project (5 – 10 minutes))
Mon, 07.12.2025	23:59	Examination portfolio, ILIAS, hard copy	Submission	Seminar paper part 2