**Doctoral Examination**

**Public Administration and Management**

**Fall 2017**

***PART I. Please answer one of the following two questions:***

Question 1:

Research and theory development in public administration may involve both quantitative and qualitative work. Develop an essay in which you define these two approaches to inquiry and explain how they are used. From the published literature on public administration, provide at least one example of the use of each of the two approaches (i.e., one book or article exemplifying one of the approaches and another book or article exemplifying the other). Briefly evaluate the contribution made by each example. Based on your understanding of our field, which approach (quantitative or qualitative) is most often utilized? Why is this the case? Alternatively, if you think scholars rely on both equally, why do you think that is true?

Question 2:

Discuss the performance of government agencies and programs. Describe major concepts of organizational effectiveness from organization theory, and other performance concepts from the public administration literature. Discuss methods that public administration scholars and practitioners have used to assess performance, and the challenges they face in making those assessments, such as multiple and conflicting criteria that complicate the concept of performance in public administration (for example, representativeness, equity, accountability, openness and transparency, and others). What are the drawbacks of identifying and using performance targets in public organizations? Finally, would you say government performs well? Why or why not?

***PART II. Please answer one of the following two questions:***

Question 3:

Government contracting with private or nonprofit organizations for the provision of pubic services has frequently been touted as a mechanism to improve service delivery. The concept has been promoted heavily by politicians, scholars, and practitioners, and while it may have benefits, some observers note difficulties associated with it. Substantial problems have been documented, for example, showing that some contractors fail to meet their obligations. Develop an essay that discusses the literature on “contracting out” and summarizes the arguments for and against it. What are the conditions necessary for successful contracting?

Question 4:

The topic of “public management” has come more and more into use in recent decades, as reflected in such developments as the National Public Management Research Conferences (PMRC) and the formation of the Public Management Research Association. Citing authors, books, and/or articles in the literature, discuss whether you consider it to be distinctive from more general public administration, and how it is distinctive. As this question implies, you can take the position that there is not any important distinction. Whether or not you see a distinction, at the PMRC and in the research journals we are seeing more articles about topics in organization theory and behavior, and general management, in the public sector. These include such topics as public service motivation, work satisfaction and other work-related attitudes, leadership, organizational change, and various other topics. Choose a research topic that has been developing in the public management domain and describe its development. What is the main concept or variable, how have researchers analyzed it, and what have been the important findings?

***PART III. Please answer one of the following two questions:***

Question 5:

Today governments everywhere seem bent on streamlining the public sector and increasing its productivity. To further this goal, they often downsize the public workforce and institute alternative service delivery mechanisms such as volunteerism, outsourcing, contracting, forming partnerships, and in more extreme cases, even privatizing public services. This has resulted in an era of “collaborative” or “networked” governance in which much of government’s work – meaning the things government is held accountable for – is now being done by people and organizations outside of government such as nonprofit organizations, public/private partnerships, private sector contractors, and individual citizens who are increasingly called upon to help co- produce public services. Analyze this movement and assess its impact on public administration theory and practice. How is it changing public management? Note implications for organization structure, management practice, and public service performance.

Question 6:

Assume you are invited to deliver a lecture to an interdisciplinary group of professors at a large, research-oriented university. They have asked you to describe and explain the field of public administration, with emphasis on the academic field, but including matters pertaining to practice.

How would you describe the domain, purpose, and purview of public administration, and the major topics and issues in the field? They have asked that you include discussion of the most important contribution to the field, and the most important ways in which the field contributes to the rest of society and/or to general intellectual progress. You can cover issues of education (such as the nature of MPA programs) and the relationship of education and research in public administration to practice. Include discussion of whether public administration had advanced in recent years, in the quality of research in the field. Cite and describe major theories, concepts, scholarly contributions and contributors, as appropriate.