Revising Comprehensive Exams in the MPA Program

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Rationale & Implementation

Rationale
- Online MPA created an opportunity for us to revisit our comprehensive exam into a format that would be identical for campus and online students.
- Faculty discussion in April 2013.

Implementation
- Refocused the exam questions on Knowledge (of theories and concepts), Skills (to apply theories and concepts to examples), and Abilities (to evaluate a proposal/idea related to the theme of the question).
- Exam administered through Blackboard three times annually.
- Students select 2 out of 3 questions.
- Students may use texts and notes.
- Revised comprehensive exam guidelines.
- Continued clarification on grading policies.
Suggestions and Recommendations

- Thinking through the objective of the exam is critical.
- Full faculty engagement is key.
- Clarity on guidelines and grading is essential.