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## APPLYING THE PROJECT-BASED LEARNING APPROACH IN THE DEGREE IN PUBLIC MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION AT THE UNIVERSITY JAUME I (SPAIN): A PILOT DESIGN OF DEGREE-BASED INTEGRATIVE PROJECT

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The Public Management and Administration (PMA) degree at the Universitat Jaume I (Castellon, Spain) (UJI) is relatively new, in July of 2016, the first four years cycle (2011-2012 to 2015-2016) will be completed; and the first six years evaluation process by the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation will take place in 2018. This degree was designed according the Bologna degree structure adapted for Spain by the corresponding statute law: four years or 240 European Credit Transfer System credits. Its main career opportunities are ranging from the local until European and international administration and in the private sector too.

Since 2011, the degree has three main problems: (1) almost the 30% of new students mark the PMA degree as second or third option in the registration process; (2) the enrollment rate has a negative trend; and (3) there is a high average of relinquishments. Every year there are 70 new positions available. However, the rate has gone down from 64 (91%) in 2011 to 37 (53%) in 2015. In addition, an average of 12% of students leaves this degree at the end of the second semester. The most of them changes to different studies and/or universities because PMA was not motivating for them. UJI authorities are very worried about the risk of continuity in this degree. In our EDULEARN 2014 communication, we described the two years of experience in running PMA, and we proposed some measures to fight against the lack of student's motivation (problems 1 and 3). Nonetheless, after four years of experience, we think that new strategies are needed to solve the negative enrollment trend (problem 2). We also think that one of causes of problem 2 could be the low visibility of PMA in the social and high school environment of UJI, and the lack of interest in some high school staff charged of mentoring students about college issues.

Therefore, in order to increase the degree visibility, some institutional measures, as increasing efforts to broadcast the PMA degree knowledge (open doors journeys, visiting schools, etc.) to the High schools' staff and students, are needed. But, to enhance the degree attractiveness, some academic strategies have to be applied. The study attractiveness comes from different sources: institution prestige, very (old and) consolidated career, current professional interests, very good quality and organization, etc. In our case, among different strategies, we found that the Project-Based Learning (PBL) is the appropriate approach for making PMA more comprehensive and coherent along the four academic years. It is possible to design a project roadmap which starts from the first semester and goes to the Degree Thesis, involving the more subjects per semester as possible. First semester students can start with a basic administration project which supervision and evaluation is split on selected subjects along the following semesters, adding new requirements in order to increase the project complexity and/or specify. That could become a Degree Thesis if all parts agree to extend and enhance it during seventh and eighth semesters. PBL allow to students gaining a wide and consolidated vision of the degree and distributing efforts along the eight semesters. The aim of this work is fully describe a pilot design process, with requirements, methods, techniques, and time sequence of PBL cases. This work would be a draft for the future official revision of the PMA degree.

**keywords:** public management and administration degree, project-based teaching, degree 4y project.