



PPOL-580-1: PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

Professor Jason J. Fichtner
Spring 2007

GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION:

Room: Car Barn 302 A
Day and Time: Mondays, 6:00 – 8:30 p.m.
Instructor's Phone: 202-225-0371
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Office Hours: After class, or by appointment

This course introduces us to public management: actors performing managerial roles in the pursuit of public purposes. A key purpose of the course is to demonstrate that management matters and to examine the constraints on and strategies of public managers in a democratic society. Another purpose of the course is to show how the challenges of public management vary across different organizational and policy settings. A related purpose is to show how public management and policy analysis frequently intersect and to connect policy design and policy management.

One of the main objectives of this course is to provide students with a purposeful mix of practice and theory. Public Policy students have to keep one foot in the world of practice and the other in the world of academic theory. You must become “pracademics.” Hence, class readings and discussions will revolve around concepts, tools and skills of public management. Guest speakers will occasionally visit the class to provide a practitioner’s viewpoint on how things work “in the real world.”

Throughout the course we will pay considerable attention to democratic accountability. How do we hold bureaucracies accountable? Which techniques seem most promising? To what ethical code should public managers adhere? Does accountability collide with other values, such as efficiency and effectiveness? Is it possible or useful to shift from accountability through fair procedures to accountability through good results? Answering these questions will help you become more effective public managers.

EXPECTATIONS

- You are expected to act with the highest professional ethics and skill.
- You are expected to complete all of the readings in advance of each class, and to be prepared to discuss them as well as your own experiences and insights regarding public management.
- You are expected to adhere to the Georgetown University Honor Code. For all written course assignments please provide citations for all outside sources for the ideas in your assignments. Copying, cheating or plagiarism will not be tolerated.
- Students are expected to attend all class meetings and participate in class discussions. If you have an important reason to miss a class or delay an assignment, and you let me know in advance, I will work to accommodate your situation. Important reasons involve major unexpected family or personal challenges and events (e.g. death in the family, severe illness, etc.).
- Even if you miss class, journal entries and assignments are still due on time.
- Late assignments will be marked down at least 1/3rd of a letter grade.
- I have an open-door policy. Please do not hesitate to see me if you have any questions, concerns, comments, etc.

READINGS

The following textbooks will be used in the class:

James Q. Wilson, *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It*, (New York: Basic, 2000 – Paperback). [Amazon \$26]

Jay M. Shafritz and Albert C. Hyde (Eds.), *Classics of Public Administration*, 5th Edition (New York: Harcourt Brace, 2004 - Paperback). [Amazon \$66]

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Suggested Reading – Though not required, this is a good “tool kit” book for public managers:

Lester M. Salamon (Ed.), *The Tools of Government* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002). [Amazon \$45]

The texts are available at the GU bookstore and also can be purchased on-line from stores such as Amazon.com, Border.com or Barnesandnobles.com. Make sure to shop around for the best price. I reserve the right to hand out additional readings to supplement the core texts.

ASSIGNMENTS

Journal on Course Readings

You will keep an on-going journal of your reflections of the readings. Come to class with 1 to 2 typed pages (in Memorandum style) discussing your thoughts on the reading, including general themes, disagreements, and any insights you glean from the reading that can be applied to current public management events. I'm not looking for an outline of the reading. These reflections will not be graded per se, but they will count towards your participation grade.

Issue of the Day

Please read the major newspapers and come to class ready to bring up interesting and relevant topics. Every day in the newspapers, particularly in the national and metro sections, there are lots of stories that pertain to public policy and public management. You are also encouraged to read the op-ed pages, as often they touch upon public management issues. At the beginning of each class, I will solicit topics from the class and we will hold a brief (10 minutes) discussion session. This will be considered part of your overall class participation grade.

Papers

Along with Participation, your course grade will be based on your performance in the following assignments:

Paper #1 - Op-Ed and Public Speaking.

Public managers must often make presentations to a variety of audiences – congressional committees, association/interest group meetings, officials from other agencies, the general public. A key objective is to present a persuasive case for a particular policy or course of action, while drawing from some of the key concepts of the first part of the course. For this assignment, you are asked to do two things: first, write a 750-word op-ed piece and, second, present your topic to the class in a very brief talk (NO MORE than five minutes long). **The op-ed is due on February 12.** We will devote an entire class session to the op-ed presentations. This assignment will be graded according to the quality of your written argument as well as the quality of your public speaking. The key thing is to choose your topic as soon as possible. I am happy to consult with you.

Paper #2 – Review and Analysis.

This assignment is to write a brief analytical paper on a topic dealing with the bureaucracy literature covered in the first phase of the semester. I will distribute the paper assignments on **February 12**. The paper should be about 1500 words (5 pages) and is due **March 12**.

Paper #3 – Issue Memorandum.

The third paper will be an analysis of a current, ongoing issue in public management. This paper will be in the form of an issue memorandum to a senior decision-maker and should be about 2500 words (7-10 pages). The topics will focus on contemporary issues unfolding in the world of public management; the issues will be real, although the specific assignment itself may be hypothetical. You will need to select a topic by the **March 26 class** (a list of examples is at the end of the syllabus) and your memorandum will be due on **April 16**.

Final Exam

The final exam will be a group PowerPoint presentation dealing with the course material and concepts. The final exam assignment will be handed out during the **April 2** class. Teams will consist of 3 – 4 people. Students will select their own teams. Presentations will be due and given in class on the last scheduled class day, **April 30**.

Note: All assignments need to be handed in during class, as well as delivered via e-mail to jjfichtner@cavtel.net. Journal entries do not need to be e-mailed, unless you miss a class.

GRADES

Grades will be based on a variety of individual contributions, described below:

Paper #1 (750 words)	15 percent
Paper #2 (1500 words)	20 percent
Paper #3 (2500 words)	25 percent
Final exam (PowerPoint team presentation)	20 percent
Participation (attendance, in-class & journal)	20 percent

Grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

95-100	= A
90-94.9	= A-
87-89.9	= B+
83-86.9	= B
80-82.9	= B-
77-79.9	= C+
70-76.9	= C
< 70.0	= F

I do not grade on a Bell Curve – All students are expected to perform at B level or above.

Summary of Course Assignments, Activities and Due Dates:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Due Date</u>
Op-Ed	February 12 th
Handout Questions for Paper #2 – Review & Analysis	February 12 th
Paper #2 – Review & Analysis	March 12 th
Topics for Paper #3 – Issue Memorandum	March 26 th
Handout Final Exam & Select Groups	April 2 nd
Paper #3 – Issue Memorandum	April 16 th
Final Exam Group Presentations	April 30 th
Guest Speakers:	
L.B.	February 26 th
Dan Miller	March 12 th
Kirk Johnson	April 2 nd
Donald Marron	April 16 th

Course Schedule, Topics, Readings, and Activities

Notes: (1) The first class of the semester will be on Wednesday, January 10th – all other classes will be on Monday night starting with the 2nd class on January 22nd. (2) Students are expected to complete the readings prior to class and come prepared to discuss.

January 10	WEDNESDAY CLASS - CLASS INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW <u>Activity: Instructor & Student Introductions / Discussion of Class Norms</u>
January 15	NO CLASS - MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY HOLIDAY
January 22	PUBLIC MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW & WHY MANAGEMENT MATTERS Read: The Constitution of the United States. Available at: http://www.archives.gov/national-archives-experience/charters/constitution.html Wilson (Chapters 1, 2 & 16); Shafritz, pp. 22-34 (Wilson), 35-37 (Goodnow), 396-413 (Allison); Mises (Preface/Intro), to be handed out by Instructor; Ingraham (Chapters 1-3 & 7), to be handed out by Instructor.
January 29	OPERATORS & MANAGERS Read: Wilson (Chapters 3, 4 & 7); Shafritz pp. 414-422 (Lipsky)
February 5	EXECUTIVES & LEADERSHIP Read: Wilson (Chapters 10 & 11); Selznick, (Chapter 1), to be handed out by Instructor; Case: “Donald Rumsfeld and Prisoner Abuse at Abu Ghraib,” available at: http://www.redtapelimited.com/text/HallwayCase_rumsfeld/ghraib_a.pdf
February 12	OP-ED CLASS Note: No Journal Entry For This Class <u>Activity: Handout Paper #2 Assignment</u> <u>Activity: Written Op-Ed Due / Oral In-Class Op-Ed Presentations</u>
February 19	NO CLASS – PRESIDENTS’ DAY HOLIDAY
February 26	ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE Read: Wilson (Chapters 5, 6 & 9); Selznick, (Chapter 5), to be handed out by Instructor. <i>Guest Speaker: FBI Special Agent L.B.</i>
March 5	NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK
March 12	THE PRESIDENT, CONGRESS & THE JUDICIARY Read: Wilson (Chapters 13-15) <u>Activity: Paper #2 Due</u> <i>Guest Speaker: Former Congressman Dan Miller (R-FL)</i>

- March 19 BUREAUCRATIC DYSFUNCTION
Read: Case: 9/11 Commission, Chapter 11, “Foresight and Hindsight,” available at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/911/>
Case: Columbia Accident Investigation Board: Chapter 7, “The Accident’s Organizational Causes,” available at:
<http://www.nasa.gov/columbia/caib/PDFS/VOL1/PART02.PDF>
- March 26 PUBLIC SECTOR MANAGEMENT REFORM & CONTRACTING OUT
Read: Wilson (Chapters 17-19); Shafritz 467-76 (Moe);
Salamon (Chapter 1) – to be handed out by Instructor;
Case: “Implementing Alternative Sourcing Strategies: Four Case Studies” (Case #2 – Internal Revenue Service), available at:
<http://businessofgovernment.org/pdfs/GanslerReport4.pdf>
“21st Century Challenges: Transforming Government” Statement of David Walker, available at <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d05830t.pdf>
Activity: Topics for Paper #3 Due
- April 2 MANAGING PEOPLE
Read: Wilson (Chapters 8 & 12); Shafritz, pp. 171-176 (McGregor); 533-555 (Barzelay) & 556-563 (NPR)
Activity: Handout Final Exam Assignment & Select Teams
Guest Speaker: Kirk Johnson, Vice President, Environmental Affairs, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association & former Legislative Director to Senator Kent Conrad (D-ND)
- April 9 NO CLASS – EASTER BREAK
- April 16 PUBLIC BUDGETING / FEDERAL BUDGET PROCESS
Instructor PowerPoint Presentation
Read: Shafritz, pp. 423-433 (Caiden)
Activity: Paper #3 Due
Guest Speaker: Donald Marron, Deputy Director, Congressional Budget Office
- April 23 EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS – DEALING WITH THE MEDIA AND THE PUBLIC
Read: Salamon (Chapter 7, Public Information, Weiss) – to be handed out by Instructor;
“Working with the Media,” John Trattner, available at:
<http://businessofgovernment.org/pdfs/JohnTrattnerReport2.pdf>
Case: “Fraud, Abuse, and Waste at HEW,” available at:
<http://www.mnstate.edu/messeltb/FRAUD.pdf>
- April 30 FINAL EXAM DAY, SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS
Read: Wilson (Chapter 20)
Activity: Course Evaluation
Activity: Final Exam Group Presentations
Activity: End of Course Celebration

EXAMPLES OF TOPICS FOR PAPER #3 – ISSUE MEMORANDUM

ASSIGNMENT

The assignment is to prepare a brief strategy paper that touches on a current, ongoing issue in public management. This paper will be in the form of an issue memorandum to a senior decision-maker and should be 2500 words. The topics will focus on contemporary issues unfolding in the world of public management; the issues will be real, although the specific assignment itself will typically be hypothetical. Though the objective of this assignment is not for you to become expert on the issue in question, you will need to do a little background research. Your issue memorandum, regardless of the specific topic, should concentrate on a few key areas:

- Focus on the process--how things should be done
- Describe what key individuals and institutions should be involved
- Provide a draft plan of action--what should be the major steps
- Discuss any historically relevant cases or examples
- Be sure to highlight key management and political issues

EXAMPLE TOPICS

- *Homeland Security*. You work in a mid-sized city and your city manager has complained that the Department of Homeland Security color-coded threat warnings are too vague to use as a guide for action. You are asked to write a short paper describing options for raising this issue up through higher levels for discussion and deliberation.
- *Smallpox Vaccinations*. You work at the National Security Council and your branch chief has been asked by the National Security Advisor to write a memo laying out a potential process for deciding who should be vaccinated. Ultimately, the president plans to issue an executive order.
- *Government Pay*. You work for the federal government's Office of Personnel Management, which is conducting a study on public sector-private sector pay comparability. You are the team leader on this project and need to write a short paper for your team describing a process for action. The eventual objective is to make recommendations to the president and Congress on whether to raise government pay levels.
- *Recruiting Young People to the Public Sector*. You work for the federal government's Office of Personnel Management, which is dealing with a potential crisis in the federal workforce; namely, that substantial numbers of senior managers are set to retire in the next few years while, in the meantime, the federal government has had difficulty recruiting young college graduates (and holders of advanced degrees). You have been asked to write a short paper describing a basic strategy for dealing with this problem.
- *Diversity in Political Appointments*. You work for the White House Personnel Office. As of summer 2006, reports were issued that the Bush Administration's political appointees included fewer women and minorities than the Clinton Administration at a comparable point in time. While the Bush Administration has appointed more women and minorities to cabinet-level positions, the Administration is nonetheless concerned that there is not enough diversity in lower-ranking appointments. You have been asked to outline a strategy memorandum detailing

the gap between the Bush and Clinton Administrations, potential causes for the gap and provide a strategy for increasing diversity in political appointments.

- *Cyber-terror Threat.* You work for a state government economic development agency, which has been victimized recently by several computer virus attacks. In some cases, it appears that hackers have managed to gain access to agency systems for brief periods of time. Your manager has asked you to write a short paper describing a plan of action for dealing with this threat. His plan is to present the governor's chief of staff with some recommendations.
- *Power Outages.* You work for the Lieutenant Governor of a state that borders some of the states that were affected by the energy blackouts a few years ago in the upper Midwest, Northeast, and Canada. The Lt. Governor has asked you to provide a short paper proposing a plan of action to ensure that your state's power grid is operating effectively and is protected against future outages.
- *Federal-State Relations on Regulations.* You work for the federal Environmental Protection Agency and the associate administrator is concerned about persistent complaints from state governors and other state-level officials that EPA regulations often impose undue cost and burden on the states, further compounded by a lack of advance consultation before regulations are issued. The associate administrator has asked you to write a strategy paper giving him some alternative approaches for dealing with this issue.
- *Outsourcing Criteria.* You work for the federal Office of Management and Budget and your team has been asked to develop a short paper laying out criteria that can guide the federal outsourcing initiative. The associate director is sensitive to criticism from one side that complains that the administration is being too aggressive in outsourcing, as well as complaints from the other side that it is not being aggressive enough. There is a feeling that development of criteria might help both sides find common ground.
- *U.S. Military Weapons Acquisitions.* You work for the Department of State and the Under Secretary has asked you to put together a short paper describing a strategy for reaching agreement on how funding and acquisition of a new weapons technology. Eventually, the Under Secretary wants to present some criteria to the Secretary as well as to the Pentagon (pick the weapons systems of your choice).
- *Political-Career Relationships.* You are an advisor to the newly confirmed Deputy Under Secretary of Labor. The Deputy Under Secretary is sensitive to criticisms that the predecessor had poor relations with the career staff. You have been asked to write a paper laying out a strategy for getting off on the right foot with the career staff at Labor.
- *Evaluating Performance.* You work in a large public organization where supervisors complete annual evaluations of employee performance. The administrator has become concerned about inflated performance evaluations. Huge majorities of employees are rated as "outstanding," making it all but impossible to sort out who are really the top performers. The administrator has asked you to develop a short strategy paper describing a plan of action to address this issue.
- *Rebuilding Trust.* You work for the newly installed executive director of a nonprofit foundation. The previous executive director left the position under an ethical cloud amid accusations of mismanagement and misappropriation of funds. The new director wants to work immediately to rebuild trust, both within the organization and in the donor and client communities. You are asked to prepare a short paper outlining a basic strategy to pursue in the coming weeks and months.

- *Communicating with the Public.* You work for the city manager of Arlington County, Virginia. Given the rising real estate assessments and subsequent rise in tax burden for Arlington homeowners, he is concerned that the various city departments and agencies do not do a good job of communicating with the public, both in terms of highlighting the various services they provide as well as finding out what citizens are thinking and what they want. He has asked you to develop a short paper outlining a plan of action he can share with the department and agency heads.
- *Cutback Management.* You work for the governor of a state that is experiencing serious fiscal difficulties. In the last two years, the state budget has gone into deficit status. And yet, the state constitution requires a balanced budget. The governor has asked you to develop a strategy paper laying out some options for how to tackle the deficit problem. What is needed is an overall plan for deficit reduction that can be sold to the public and to the state assembly.
- *Reduction in Force (RIF) Management.* The Internal Revenue Service is facing budget cutbacks and has to conduct a RIF. You are asked to prepare a strategy memorandum for the Commissioner outlining a strategy for conducting this RIF. The Commissioner has asked that you pay attention to and try to balance the issues of diversity, accountability, equity, effectiveness, efficiency and morale.
- *Training and Development.* You work for a major cabinet department in Washington, D.C. The department employs a diverse community of professionals (including economists, lawyers, information technology specialists, engineers, and more economists). The Assistant Secretary for Human Resources is concerned that department employees are not receiving adequate training. Training resources are limited and supervisors have typically been resistant to approving training, worried that they will lose good workers for long periods of time. The Assistant Secretary has asked you to draw up a working paper laying out some options for how to address this challenge.
- *Public – Private Partnerships.* You work for the Governor’s Office in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Governor would like to find additional sources of revenue to fund a proposed extension of the Metro rail line out to Tyson’s Corner. One idea is to partner with a private organization to sell the Dulles Toll Road. The Governor has asked you to prepare a strategy memorandum outlining the steps he should take to lay the groundwork and proceed with this policy action.
- *Transportation Funding.* You work for a Northern Virginia county board that supports the Metro rail line extension through Tyson’s Corner. Further, the Board supports the option for a tunnel to be built (instead of raised railway tracks) under Tyson’s. However, the tunnel option costs hundreds of millions of dollars and might jeopardize federal matching funds from the Federal Transit Administration. You have been asked to outline the FTA’s funding criteria for “cost-effectiveness” and develop a strategy memorandum that can be used by the Board to promote the tunnel option.