

Metropolitan College of New York
School for Public Affairs & Administration

Course information:

PAA 610 SYS: Intro to Public Administration (Purpose 1 Systems)

2017 Summer 01 (5/8/2017 - 8/15/2017)

Tuesday 8:00 PM - 9:50 PM; Metropolitan College of New York, 60 West, Room 704

Instructor:

Professor Sophie Lee

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Online office hours by appointment (via Skype)

Course description:

This course is about the bureaucratic process and the implementation of public policy. It traces the evolution of public administration over the last century, from the Wilsonian concept of scientific management to the more contemporary New Public Service. We will study the operations of the executive branch of government and explore the relationship between civil servants and elected public officials, the structure of public organization, and the meaning of legislative oversight. Students will also develop an understanding of organizational culture and its impact on the decision making process.

As a core dimension, the course will establish the foundations for understanding the role of public bureaucracies in our daily lives and how they play a crucial role in the operations of government on a practical level. The course will also establish a framework for evaluating the decision making process in the public sector in contrast to the private sector.

Learning objectives:

- 1) Explain the meaning of the administrative state and how that state developed in the United States.
- 2) Explain and restate basic principles of public administration.
- 3) Illustrate the relationship between those principles and general governmental processes.
- 4) Explain the meaning of public administration within the context of America's constitutional separation of powers.
- 5) Describe the organization of the federal bureaucracy and explain how the U.S. civil service system operates.
- 6) Differentiate between an executive function, whether it be a President, Governor, Mayor or agency director, and a legislature's oversight function, whether it be the U.S. Congress, a state legislature, a city council, or county legislature.
- 7) Analyze specific cases and evaluate them in light of those administration principles.
- 8) Differentiate management in the public sector from management in the private sector.
- 9) Compare different management styles and appraise them.
- 10) Analyze public decisions within the context of competing decision-making models.

11 Be able to evaluate and assess goals of policy so that a plan can be designed for implementation.

12) Read an act of a legislative body, whether it be the U.S. Congress or local city council, interpret it, and design a plan for implementing it.

Required texts:

Public Administration: Concepts and Cases (9th ed.) by Stillman, Richard Joseph, II

Mastering Public Administration (3rd ed.) by Brian R. Fry and Jos Raadschelders

All other readings will be posted on the course website.

Grading:

Class presentation and weekly assignments 20%

Participation 20%

Class debate 10%

Midterm quiz 20%

Final paper 30%

Tentative Weekly Plans:

Wk 1) What is Public Administration?

- introduction
- overview of course
- how it differs from administration in the private sector
- administration within context of constitutional separation of powers
- views of Woodrow Wilson

Readings:

Stillman Ch. 1

F & R Ch. 2

Optional readings:

Wilson. 1887. The Study of Administration. Political Science Quarterly

Wk 2) Organizational Structure

- impersonal structure – Max Weber
- concept of bureaucracy
- American bureaucracy v. European bureaucracy

Readings:

Stillman Ch. 2

F & R Ch. 1

Wk 3) Organizational Theory

- general bureaucratic environment
- concept of ecology

Readings:

Stillman Ch. 3

F & R Ch. 6

Presentation:
Tiffany DeSilva

Wk 4) The Political Environment

- power
- administration
- interests of elected officials v. interests of appointed officials
- competing institutional objectives

Readings:
Stillman Ch. 4, 5
F & R Ch. 4

Presentation:
Andrea Thomas

Wk 5) Actors: Official and Unofficial – interest groups

- iron triangles
 - relationships between legislative oversight committees, members of the bureaucracy, and interest groups
- policy networks
- inside the bureaucracy

Readings:
Stillman Ch. 6
F & R Ch. 5

Presentation:
Windy Edwards

Wk 6) Decision making

- competing decision making models
- comprehensive, rational decision models
- the process of “muddling through” in incremental steps
- factors that go into making a decision
- politics of making decisions
- administrative communication

Readings:
Stillman Ch. 7, 8, 9
F & R Ch. 7 & 8

Optional readings:
Essence of Decision by Graham Allison Ch. 4 & 6

Presentation:
Pernell Hanton & Jerrel Bruns

Wk 7) Management

- concept of effective organizations
- motivating people in the public sector

– concept of public service culture

Readings:

Stillman Ch. 10 & 11
F & R Ch. 9

Optional readings:

A. Maslow. 1943. A Theory of Human Motivation. Psychological Review, 50.
Clayton Alderfer. 1969. An Empirical Test of a New Theory of Human Needs. Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 4 (2).
McGregor and Doshi. 2015. How Company Culture Shapes Employee Motivation. Harvard Business Review

Presentation:

Gail Noel & Elizabeth Santos

Wk 8) Midterm quiz & Review

Wk 9) Budgeting

- principles
- politics of budgeting
- models
 - traditional line item budgeting
 - planning program budgeting
 - zero base budgeting
- political implications of a budget

Readings:

Stillman Ch. 12

Presentation:

Winston Pengel

Wk 10) Implementation

- evaluating policy goals and objectives
- interpreting the will of the legislature
- designing plans
- concept of ambiguity-conflict model

Readings:

Stillman Ch. 13

Optional readings:

Richard Matland. 1995. Synthesizing the Implementation Literature: The Ambiguity-Conflict Model of Policy Implementation. Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 5 (2)

Presentation:

Anna McDonald

Wk 11) Regulation and Oversight

- congressional oversight

- relationship between administration and politics
- who regulates and how it is done

Readings:

Stillman Ch. 14

F & R Ch. 3

Presentation:

Arlene Lewis

Wk 12) Bureaucratic Accountability

- bureaucracy and the public interest
- concept of public sector deregulation

Readings:

Stillman Ch. 15

Presentation:

Angelica Rodriguez

Wk 13) Administrative Ethics

- concept of competing ethical obligations
- to whom do bureaucrats owe their principal obligations?

Readings:

Stillman Ch. 16

F & R Ch. 10

Presentation:

Yanique Brown

Wk 14) Class Debate