

PLSC 270–Winter 2016

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to give students an introduction to some of the principles of public administration and the problems and practices of public administrators in the various levels of government in the United States. The course will cover both historical aspects and current issues in the field. Due to the format in which this course is being taught and its intense nature, it is essential that students keep up with the readings and that no class time be missed.

OBJECTIVES:

This is an introductory course in public administration intended to provide a broad overview of the "field" and a basis for further study in public administration. It presumes a working knowledge of American governmental institutions at the national, state and local levels, but does not assume any previous course work in public administration.

There are several specific objectives:

- to explain the background and development, "the roots" of the discipline;
- to integrate readings in management, organization theory and the social sciences with a focus on public sector management;
- to examine a number of current issues in and challenges to public management; and
- to provide a practical perspective on public administration to complement our theories by completing exercises and case materials.

Attendance policy: This class is your virtual workplace. Just like you should not skip work or turn in work assignments late, you should not miss class or turn in class assignments late. Work turned in late will have its grade docked. Work turned in more than a week late will be accepted and graded only for good cause and at the discretion of the instructor.

Correspondence: When you are corresponding with your professor and your colleagues use a professional language. Use salutation and sign your name. If you use e-mail, write the topic of your correspondence in the subject line and don't forget to use spell check. See the file on the course homepage regarding emails and file names.

Classroom conduct: Students are expected to abide by the **Student Conduct Code** and assist in creating an environment that is conducive to learning and protects the rights of all members of the University community. Incivility and disruptive behavior will not be tolerated and may result in a request to leave class and referral to the *Office of Student Judicial Services (SJS)* for discipline. Examples of inappropriate classroom conduct include repeatedly arriving late to

class, using a cellular telephone, or talking while others are speaking. You may access **the Code** online at www.emich.edu/sjs.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Kettl, Donald F. *Politics of the Administrative Process*, 6th ed.
ISBN 978-1-4833-3293-2
These are available at campus bookstores, and online as an e-copy.

GRADES

Grades will be based on one mid-term, one paper (10+ pages in length, topic to be discussed), some case studies, and one final exam. Although I do not ordinarily give quizzes, I reserve the right to do so if warranted by evidence of failure in preparation by the class. (In other words, if it appears to me you are not doing the work, the quizzes start.)

PAPERS

Potential topics for the papers will be discussed in class. The topics of the papers may be used as the basis for the papers. I have fairly stringent Paper Rules. They can be found in the Files section of the course homepage on Canvas under that file name.

REPORTS

Reports will be assigned on topics gleaned from the current local and national news. Each student will pick a topic, subject to approval by the instructor, and write a report detailing the political situation, the public administration task, the major players in the decision/task, etc. To be discussed in greater detail in class.

TESTS

Tests will be a combination of multiple choice, definition, short answer, and essay questions, leaning heavily on the short answer and essay questions. Generally the students will be allowed to choose from some number of each type of question.

PARTICIPATION

Substantive class participation will be taken into consideration for those students whose final grades are on the borderline of the next higher grade. Substantive participation means that the conversation is on the topic being discussed. The best way to prepare for intelligent discussion of the topic is by completing the assigned readings before class.

Grading points breakdown

Mid-term	25%
Case Studies	20%

Paper	25%
Final	30%
Total	100%

No Grade of Incomplete will be given unless there are special circumstances deserving of such a grade. The decision on whether or not the circumstances warrant an incomplete will be made by the instructor, in due accordance of University policy. Students seeking an incomplete may be asked to provide evidence supporting such a request. In fairness to students who completed the work on time, completion of an incomplete will be different, and will be graded differently.

Make-up Exams will be infrequent. As with incompletes, supporting evidence of personal tragedy, etc., may be required. Make-ups will be different than the exam missed, and will be graded differently. Late Papers and Reports will be docked 1/3 of a letter grade for each day late (yes, including weekends and even one second into the next day.). Papers and Reports are due at the beginning of class on the date due. Thus, handing in a paper one second after class starts will result in a dock of 1/3 of a letter grade.

PLAGIARISM

All students should be familiar with the University policy on plagiarism and all other forms of academic dishonesty.

Examples of plagiarism include:

Copying word-for-word from the work of an author or any other person without proper citation;

Heavily paraphrasing the work of another without proper citation;

Using another's concepts, ideas, or frameworks without acknowledging their contribution to your work.

Copying information from the Web, especially from such sources as Wikipedia.

If you are in doubt about whether a specific citation or procedure is in order, consult your instructor, another professor, or advisor.

CHEATING WILL NOT BE TOLERATED
 INDIVIDUALS CAUGHT WILL FACE
 SEVERE ACADEMIC PENALTIES
 CLASS SCHEDULE

Week 1: Intro to Public Administration. What we're going to do. Rules of the Game. Chapter 1 of Kettl.

Week 2: Politics in Public Administration. Accountability and What Government Does. Why we can't "just do it right." Chapter 2 and 3 of Kettl.

Week 3: Some Theory of Organizations. How do we get our bureaucracies

to work. Chapter 4-7 in Kettl.

Week 4-5: Ethics for Public Administrators. Doing the right thing.
Chapters 5-7 Kettl.

Week 6-7: People. Chapter 8-9 of Kettl.

Week 7: Mid-term.

Week 8-10: Planning, Executing, Evaluating. How do we give ourselves
the best chance to "do it right"? Chapters 10-12 of Kettl.

Week 11-14: Public Administration in a Democracy. Chapters 13-14 of
Kettl.

FINAL.