

PADM 601
Principles of Public Administration
Prof. Gregory Saxton, PhD

Class Hours: Thurs. 4:00 – 6:40pm, Henrico County
Instructor's Office: Scherer Hall, Room 211
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Overview of the Course

This course is designed to introduce the new MPA student to the field of public administration. It is an overview of the foundations of public administration and, as such, surveys the field in general, its history, and its sub-specializations.

Course participants will develop an understanding of the definitions, history, environment, scope, theories, and processes of today's public administration. You will develop skills in conducting research in public administration, especially using the library databases, the Internet, and the World Wide Web. You will develop knowledge concerning the attributes of high-performing public organizations, and attitudes and skills that will enable you to develop a public or not-for-profit organization performing at this level.

Students who have participated fully in the course readings and class discussions should come away with a basic understanding of the intellectual foundations of the discipline, the various roles and functions of the public administrator in local, state, federal and nonprofit organizations, and the historical framework and current trends that structure and inform the field.

Course Materials

- Starling. 1998. *Managing the Public Sector*. 5th edition. Harcourt Brace.
- Readings marked with a double asterisk (“**”) are available in a course reader.
- [Class web page] indicates that the reading is available via the course web page.

Course Web Page <http://www.people.vcu.edu/~gsaxton/padm601.htm>

This page contains an electronic version of the syllabus through which all electronic readings are available. All updates on course material will also be available at this site. A variety of miscellaneous and research tools are also available.

Methods of Instruction

This course integrates a variety of active learning techniques into the seminar format, including case studies, group discussions, debates, student presentations, video clips, and simulations.

Assignments & Grading

Participation

Active participation in the classroom is an essential element of all graduate classes. For optimal discussion to occur, it is imperative that you develop ideas and ask questions that are relevant to the subject matter. Such participation is difficult, however, unless you come to class prepared. In order to do well, you must complete all assigned readings and come to class ready to participate. Your classmates and I will evaluate your participation at the end of the semester.

Tests

There will be two in-class tests in total—a mid-term on March 8th and a final on May 3rd.

Case Study Presentation

Each student (either individually or in groups) will be required to prepare a 15-minute presentation on one of the cases to be discussed during one of the class sessions.

Case-Based Paper

Each of you will write an 8 to 10-page paper based on the case study that you present.

15%	Case Presentation	
20%	Class Participation	
15%	Case Paper	(Due day of presentation)
25%	Mid-Term Exam	(March 8 th)
25%	Final Exam	(May 3 rd)

Grading Scale

85% - 100%	= A
70% - 84.9%	= B
60% - 69.9%	= C
50% - 59.9%	= D
Less than 50%	= F

Make-up Policy

Make-up exams will be given only to students with medical or personal emergencies with appropriate documentation. If an emergency arises, you need to contact me **before** the exam. I will be strict on this policy. If you fail to communicate with me (in person, via e-mail, or voice mail) prior to the exam, you will receive a grade of 0 for that exam. The make-up exam will be different and more difficult than the original, scheduled exam. There will be no make-up for in-class exercises or the class presentation.

Late Papers

Case papers are due at *the start of class* on the presentation date. Papers that are turned in after this will receive an immediate penalty of 5%, with an additional 5% penalty per day.

Classroom Etiquette and Attendance

You are expected to attend class regularly and take notes. A large segment of the exams is taken from the mini-lectures and seminar discussions, and we will often deal with material that is not covered in the readings. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to get the notes from a classmate. It would also be a good idea to come and discuss the class material you have missed, once you have acquired the notes from one of your classmates. As an added reminder, outstanding class participation might bump you up part of a grade, while showing up late and missing classes will result in deductions from your participation grade.

Miscellaneous

As your instructor, I want to make this course accessible for everyone. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 require Virginia Commonwealth University to provide an “academic adjustment” and/or a “reasonable accommodation” to any individual who advises us of a physical or mental disability. If you have a physical or mental limitation that requires an academic adjustment or an accommodation, please arrange a meeting with me at your earliest convenience.

Case Studies

During most class sessions in the last two-thirds of the course we will examine a unique case relevant to that session’s material. One student (or group of students) will be responsible for conducting a brief (10-minute) presentation introducing the case and touching on the key questions implied by the case. The rest of the class will be responsible for reading and thinking about the case

Schedule of Topics

January 18: Introduction

- Introduction to the course and to each other. Review syllabus, schedule of assignments, and expectations for the course.

January 25: What is Public Administration?

- A history and overview of the state of public administration.

Required Readings:

- Starling, Chapter 1: *What is Public Administration?*

February 1: The Politics & Ecology of Administration

- During this session we will discuss the contextual, or environmental, factors in today’s public administration and analyze the influence of these factors on the behavior of public administrators.
- The impact of the cultural, political, and economic context on administration in different (local, state and national) settings.

Required Readings:

- Starling, Chapter 2: *The Politics of Administration*

CASE:

- “PUGET SOUND WATER QUALITY AUTHORITY.” [Class web page]
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February 8: Interorganizational Relations; International Public Administration

Required Readings:

- Starling, Chapter 3: *Interorganizational Relations*.
- ** James Q. Wilson. 1989. *Bureaucracy*. (Basic Books).
 - Chapter 16: “National Differences.” pp. 295 – 312.

CASE:

- Mark W. Huddleston. 1999. “Innocents Abroad: Reflections from a Public Administration Consultant in Bosnia.” *Public Administration Review*. [Class web page]
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February 15: Administrative Responsibility & Ethics

Required Readings:

- Starling, Chapter 4: *Administrative Responsibility and Ethics*

CASE:

- INTERVIEW WITH AL ZUCK. [Class web page]
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February 22: No class session (ISA Conference)

March 1: Planning and Decision-Making

Required Readings:

- Starling, Chapter 5: *Planning* and Chapter 6: *Decision-Making*.

CASE:

- REINVENTING THE BOY SCOUTS. Based on Rick Mullin. 1996. “Reorienting the Boy Scouts.” *The Journal of Business Strategy*. [Class web page]
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March 8: MID-TERM EXAM

March 15: Spring Break

March 22: Organizing & Reinventing Government

- An overview of some of the central ways of approaching bureaucratic organization. We will also discuss some of the challenges and opportunities presented by the movement to “reinvent” government organizations.
- Examination in a comparative light of the “reinventing government” reform movement.

Required Readings:

- Starling, Chapter 7: *Organizing*.
- Browse the web site of the book *Businesslike Government: Lessons Learned from America's Best Companies*, by Al Gore. Read each of the short chapter summaries. <http://www.npr.gov/library/nprprt/annrpt/vp-rpt97/bg.html>
- Kettl, Donald F. 1998. *Reinventing Government: A Fifth Year Report Card*. A Report of the Brookings Institution's Center for Public Management. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution. (Read the *Executive Summary*) [Class web page]
- Bruce G. Posner and Lawrence R. Rothstein. 1994. “Reinventing the Business of Government: An Interview with Change Catalyst David Osborne.” *Harvard Business Review*. [Class web page]
- Peter Drucker. 1995. “Really Reinventing Government.” *Atlantic Monthly*. [Class web page]

CASES:

- REINVENTING NEW ZEALAND. Based on pp. 342 – 344 of Starling text.
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March 29: Policy Analysis and the Policy Process

Required Readings:

- ** Thomas R. Dye. 1998. *Understanding Public Policy*.
 - Chapter 2: “Models of Politics.” 13 – 38.
- ** Arnold J. Meltsner. 1986. “The Seven Deadly Sins of Policy Analysts.”
- ** Deborah Stone. 1997. *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*. Selected Readings.

CASE:

- MANAGING CUTBACKS AT THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES. [Class web page]

April 5: Implementation and Evaluation

Required Readings:

- Starling, Chapter 9: *Implementation and Evaluation*.
- ** Michael Lipsky. 1980. "Street-Level Bureaucracy."

CASE:

- POLITICS OF ESTABLISHING THE URBAN GROWTH AREAS IN ST. CLAIRE COUNTY. [Class web page]

April 12: Leadership in Organizations; Human Resources Management

Required Readings:

- Starling, Chapter 8: *Leadership in Organizations*; Chapter 10: *Human Resources Management*.
- Daniel Goleman. 2000. "Leadership that Gets Results." *Harvard Business Review*. [Class web page]

CASE:

- CHANGE OF LEADERSHIP AT THE LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY. [Class web page]

April 19th: Environmental Policy and Administration; Digital Government

Required Readings:

- ** Thomas R. Dye. 1998. *Understanding Public Policy*.
 - Chapter 7: "Environmental Policy" [public choice perspective]. 169 – 194.
- *The Economist*. 2000. A series of seven short articles (total = 20 pages) on the implications of the Internet for governance. [Class web page]
- Joseph W. Grubbs and Jason Hansen Alexander. "Wired Government: Information Technology, External Public Organizations, and Cyberdemocracy." *PAMIJ*. [Class web page]
- Don Tapscott and David Agnew. 1999. "Governance in the Digital Economy." *Finance & Development*. [Class web page]

CASES:

- WILLIAM D. RUCKELSHAUS AND THE EPA. [Class web page]

April 26: Globalization and the Information Revolution

- Analysis of globalization: one of the most powerful contextual components impacting the administration of public institutions throughout the world.
- Examination of implications of globalization for administration, such as the growing need for inter-jurisdictional solutions to complex administrative problems.

Required Readings:

- Starling, Chapter 12: *The Information Revolution*
- Farazmand A. 1999. "Globalization and public administration." *Public Administration Review*. [Class web page]
- H.V. Savitch. "Global challenge and institutional capacity: or, how we can refit local administration for the next century." *Administration & Society*. [Class web page]
- Donald Kettl. 2000. "The Transformation of Governance: Globalization, Devolution, and the Role of Government." *Public Administration Review*. [Class web page]

May 3: FINAL EXAM
