

Foundations in Public Administration

GPA 8000-11062

Fall 2006 Syllabus

Instructor: Jane Calabria McPeak, Associate Professor

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Office hours: Saint Paul campus – Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:00-5:00 p.m.

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Class Meetings & Location

Wednesdays, September 5 – October 25, 2006

Minneapolis Center - Room 201

Course Materials

Bureaucracy (Wilson)

Classics of Public Administration, 5th edition (Shafritz et al.)

The New Public Service (Light)

Public Administration for the Twenty-First Century (Cooper et al.)

Course Description/Goals/Performance Objectives

This course is designed to present an overview of the history of, issues in, and competencies required for public administration, while orienting students to the Graduate School of Management. The course is the beginning of a preparation to be an effective practitioner in the public sector.

Teaching Methodology & Philosophy

To better integrate the subject matter of this course and in recognition of the fact that we do not all learn in the same way, a wide variety of teaching methods are used: lectures, readings, class and Blackboard discussion, case studies, presentations, speakers, and videos or DVDs.

This and all classes in GSM are “learning communities.” You are encouraged to participate in each class session and Blackboard discussion thread by being prepared and sharing your insights, opinions, and questions. While your participation in the discussions is critical, watch that you are not monopolizing them and be respectful of others. My expectations of you will be high. Be prepared to work hard, challenge yourself, challenge your classmates, challenge me, and support your ideas and conclusions. You will learn from one another as well as me.

If you are having difficulty in the class, please see me immediately. DO NOT panic and disappear! Talk with me. If you do not attend class, participate through Blackboard or hand assignments, you will fail the course!

Tips for this Course

**Plan ahead:* assignments take thought and time; do not expect to complete them the night before class.

**Show respect:* for other people, for other cultures, and for other points of view. Always assume positive intent on behalf of others. Treat others as you would like to be treated.

**Be a team player:* a critical competency in today's world is teamwork. Practice this here. Be on time, honor commitments, and do your part.

**Follow the rules:* comply with all ethics and attendance policies of the University and GSM.

**Have fun:* learning should be enjoyable.

Attendance

Attendance at all class sessions is expected. There is also an expectation that you arrive on time for class and do not leave early. Please review the GSM policy on attendance and grades in the Course Information area of Blackboard. You may miss up to three (3) hours of class without an impact on your overall grade. However, further absences may result in a grade reduction and could include an expectation that you retake the course. You are responsible for signing the class attendance list and for all material presented in class regardless of attendance.

Ethics

Students are expected to uphold the highest ethical standards in their conduct in the classroom, their exchanges on Blackboard, and in completing assignments. Academic dishonesty and plagiarism are not tolerated. You are responsible for reading and understanding the policy on academic honesty in the GSM Policies and Procedures which is in the Course Information area in Blackboard. If you have any questions, ask your advisor or me.

Grading

Course grading will follow GSM rules and evaluation of material will generally reflect Palloff and Pratt's evaluation levels from *The Virtual Student*.

Student work and participation will be evaluated on a hierarchy from describing or summarizing to synthesizing (B- to A/A-) as described by Palloff and Pratt at pages 156-157:

1. "Descriptive papers that simply describe or summarize material read;
2. Analysis papers that compare and contrast theories or ideas. An analysis will break a theory into its component parts, describe the basic elements, illustrate why those points are important. A good analysis will break a theory into its component parts, describe the basic elements, and illustrate why the points are important. A good analysis will reorganize the material to create a summary that reflects on the important elements of the material and how they fit together.
3. Synthesis papers that bring elements together and illustrate that the writer (speaker) is engaging with the material being written about. A student writing a synthesis may agree or disagree with the material being read. The student may point out gaps in the material and will go far beyond a description of what this material means. A good synthesis demonstrates good critical thinking skills, engages the reader, and makes the reader think."

On-line discussions should be succinct and on point with the question(s) asked. Analysis and thought are to be put into your posting. Pay close attention to the instructions given. APA style

and academic writing style are not required for on-line discussions. Do not use all capital letters in on-line postings.

Initial postings should be comparable to at least one-page in length and contain a thoughtful and well-developed response or argument or analysis. Most likely, you will need to prepare a draft and rework it before posting it. Postings responsive to class members' initial postings should be respectful and thoughtful. Critical thinking skill should be applied but not criticism. If you disagree with a posting, your comments should always be directed to why you disagree and to supporting your position and should never be personal. You are encouraged to exceed responsive postings to allow for a richer and more meaningful discussion. Comments on postings should expand on the posting and not simply indicate that you agree or disagree. Your first responsive posting should be comparable to at least one-page in length. There is no minimum requirement for additional postings or discussion.

Final grade components and values:

Class attendance and participation: 15%

Blackboard participation: 15%

Reading report: 5%

Analysis of city council meeting: 15%

Presentation: 15%

Research paper: 35%

Assignments

All written assignments should be submitted through Blackboard no later than midnight on the due date. Late assignments will receive a grade reduction.

Daily

Check Blackboard for course updates and/or additional assignments.

Attend a city council meeting

You will attend one city council meeting. Be sure to obtain a copy of the agenda prior to the start of the meeting. See the Course Information section in Blackboard for the Guide to City Council Meetings.

Presentation

You will be assigned a topic/question associated with a reading assignment. You will prepare a 10-minute presentation. Be sure to review the criteria for evaluating student presentations in the Course Information section in Blackboard. Also be sure to practice your presentation and time yourself so that it is 10 minutes, no more, no less.

Written assignments

Use APA style in all written work except Blackboard discussions.

Reading report

Choose one of these topics and write an analysis not to exceed 2 pages:

1. What are the common themes of efficiency and beliefs about their present times that are shared or distinguished in the three readings from Shafritz et al. for September 13? OR
2. How does James Q. Wilson's critical task model for effective organizations fit with the models from the September 13 readings from Shafritz et al.?

Analysis of city council meeting

Using the Guide for City Council Meetings in Blackboard Course Documents, write a four-page analysis of the meeting you attended. There is no requirement to use outside source but you may do so if you wish.

Research project

You will choose a timely topic/issue in public administration and submit it to me for approval. Be sure to follow Associate Dean Hellerud's advice for focusing your topic in a manageable way for a paper of 10-12 pages, excluding title page and references. Your paper should have at least 5 references to scholarly publications other than course texts. If you wish, you may use additional references not from scholarly publications.

The components of your research paper are:

1. Introduction and brief history of your topic;
2. Analysis of the issue;
3. Strategy or strategies for dealing with the issue;
4. Conclusion.

Class Schedule & Assignments

September 6, 2006

Introductions/overview of course

7:00 p.m. Blackboard instruction with Marcos Montero

September 12, 2006

Reading report due in Blackboard by midnight

September 13, 2006

Orientation to research with Research Librarian Kate Borowske

Introductory readings in public administration

Pre-class reading assignment: Shafritz et al. – articles 2, 5, & 8

- pages 72-89, 189-205, & skim 371-395

- articles 27,30, 37, & 43

Wilson – chapters 1 & 2

Light – chapter 1

September 19, 2006

Last day to attend a city council meeting

September 20, 2006

Writing skills with Associate Dean Nancy Hellerud

Bureaucracy

Pre-class reading assignment: Shafritz et al. – articles 7, 13, & 51
Wilson – chapter 9
Cooper – chapter 8
Light – chapter 3 & 4

September 21 & 24, 2006

On-line discussion #1 – look for the *Roles of Officials* forum in Blackboard Assignments

September 27, 2006

Public policy

Intergovernmental relations

Pre-class reading assignment: Shafritz et al. – article 26
Wilson – chapters 5, 6, & 7
Cooper – chapters 4 & 6
Light – chapter 5

Student presentations

Research topic due in Blackboard by midnight

September 29, 2006

Analysis of a city council meeting due in Blackboard

October 4, 2006

Privatization, business models & values & their applicability to government

Pre-class reading assignment: Shafritz et al. – articles 39 & 45
Wilson – chapter 17

Legal issues and impact on administration

The media

Pre-class reading assignment: Wilson – chapters 15 & 18
Cooper – skim chapter 2

Student presentations

October 6 & 9, 2006

On-line discussion #2 – look for the *International* forum in Blackboard Assignments

October 11, 2006

Topics related to people

Pre-class reading assignment: Shafritz – articles 38 & skim 42
Wilson – chapters 8, 10, & 11
Cooper – skim chapter 10

Guest speaker – Wally Wysopal, North St. Paul City Manager, MAPA Human Resources instructor

Student presentations

October 18, 2006

Fiscal issues

Pre-class reading assignment: Shafritz - articles 41 & 52

Cooper – chapter 5

Guest speaker – Wallace Swan, MAPA Public Fiscal Management instructor

Student presentations

October 25, 2006

Ethics

Pre-class reading assignment: Shafritz – article 44

Wilson – chapter 20

Cooper – chapter 3

Guest speaker – Craig Waldron, Oakdale City Manager, MAPA Ethics instructor

October 28, 2006

Research paper due in Blackboard by midnight

**PLEASE BRING A STAMPED SELF-ADDRESSED ENVELOPE TO CLASS ON
OCTOBER 25th IF YOU WANT YOUR RESEARCH PAPER RETURNED TO YOU.**