PADM-5301: Theory & Practice of PA

Prepared by
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Course Overview & Syllabus
Texas A & M – Corpus Christi
Course Syllabus for PADM 5301-001
Theory & Practice of Public Administration
Fall, 2008
Monday, BH 127

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Office Hours: Monday and Thursday, 3:00-6:00 pm; Tuesday 1-4 pm; or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is to examine and understand the structures, functions, processes and theories of public administration in the American federal system. This course is designed to give you a broad review of the major theoretical foundations of administrative practice via an overview of the intellectual heritage and recent literature and how it affects the concepts and practices of public administration. The first part of the course will examine the context of public administration: the political system, the role of federalism, bureaucratic politics and power and various theories of public administration that guide public managers today. In the second half of the course, we will study key components of public administration including: personnel, budgeting, decision-making, organizational behavior, and leadership and policy implementation. Finally, we will conclude the course with observations about the future of public administration in America.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To educate current and future public administrators on the importance of public administration in a democratic society.

2. To understand the theoretical foundations of American public administration and the criticisms surrounding their assumptions.

3. To foster critical thinking skills by carefully considering the complexity of policy issues and the context in which public decisions are made and policies are implemented through the analysis of case studies.

4. To overview the public management process with particular emphasis on the role of public managers and the political, cultural and structural contexts within which they operate.

5. To examine and develop key skills in political, program and resource management that are required for successful public administrators.
REQUIRED TEXTS and READING


Other reading materials that will include:
- Government Reports
- Scholarly articles

SUPPLEMENTARY RESOURCES

Supplementary resources can be found in the course WebCT site in the supplementary resources page. Here students will find additional reading for each topic discussed each week as well as web resources to obtain more in-depth information on a specific topic.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

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<th>Grade Proportion</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Mid-term exam</td>
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<td>2. Final Exam</td>
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<td>3. Case Study Analysis</td>
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<td>4. Literature Review Essay</td>
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<td>5. Class Participation</td>
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STUDENT PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

1. *Midterm Exam and Final Exam*

The midterm and final exams will be in class and consist of short answer essay questions that will be based on the readings and class discussions. The readings for each week will have discussion questions for each chapter that should be used to prepare students for the mid term and final exams. The mid term exam will be worth 20% of the final grade and the final exam will be worth 30% of your final grade.

2. *Case Study Analysis*

Each week students will be assigned cases to read in the assigned chapters from the Stillman textbook. For four of the 14 cases that are read, students are required to prepare a 3-4 page typed, double spaced analysis of the case study. Students can choose to do their analysis of any of the cases but are required to submit their papers on the dates indicated in the syllabus. The first case analysis is due no later than 10/13/08, the second no later than 11/3/08, the third, no later than 11/17/08 and the final one no later than 12/1/08. Each case will be worth five points for a total of 20 points or 20% of your final grade.
The case analysis should be in the following format:

1. Provide an overview of the case on one page.
2. Identify and explain one or two important lessons for public administrators from this case as it relates to the reading for that week in 1-2 pages.
3. Explain the lessons of this case as it relates to the course discussions, readings or materials, or current events in one page.

Each section of your case analysis is important so respond carefully and thoughtfully to each component. In writing your analysis of the case, you will want to choose the most essential events to report. In writing the lessons section, thoughtfully consider what you have learned about public management and administration from the case. This should lead you naturally to the last section of the analysis: how this particular case relates to theories and concepts we have discussed in class or read in the texts. The last section is critical in showing your understanding of key theories and concepts and your ability to apply theories and concepts of public administration to real world management examples.

3. Literature Review Essay

The literature review essay is designed to help the student to achieve all of the course objectives in one assignment while developing the writing and research skills necessary in public service. The student is to select a topic in the area of public administration in which he or she has a interest. Students will prepare a literature review utilizing recent (1994 to present) databases and periodical indices, as well as browsing the most current journal issues. Students shall select a minimum of 10 full-length scholarly articles on their topic. In a literature review, students do not simply describe the problem by summarizing the chosen articles. The focus of the literature review is how the problem is analyzed in the literature. The review essay will be worth 20 points or 20% of your final grade.

The literature review begins with a short introduction that provides background on the topic and the sources covered. Also, the sources discussed are arranged into paragraphs that focus on one aspect or another of the topic. The discussion of the various sources is organized logically. Sources aren’t introduced randomly, one by one. They’re grouped together. All the sources that deal with similar ideas or information are in the same paragraph. Sometimes, a particularly important or interesting source gets a paragraph to itself, but more typically, sources are dealt with in groups according to their subject matter or methodology.

In terms of evaluating the sources, note that the literature review focuses on one area of overall weakness in the sources they cover. Each source isn’t evaluated separately. The strengths and weaknesses enumerated in the reviews are primarily the strengths and weaknesses of the literature as a whole. What are evaluated aren’t individual sources so much as the whole collection of sources, taken together. The claim in a literature review isn’t that “Source X is/is not a good source” but that “the research on Topic X is/is not good and complete research.”

So, as you consider and prepare your literature review, you will need to think about what criteria you should use to evaluate the literature on your topic collectively. What claim can you make about the weakness(es) of the literature on your topic? Where is the published research on your topic inadequate or incomplete? What hasn’t been researched thoroughly yet? What still needs corroboration or verification? Where is there an overall need for more research?

Your literature review should end with a 2-3 page conclusion that draws everything together and restates your main claim.
The paper should be typed, double spaced using 12 point font and be no more than 12 pages long not including the references page in APA style formatting. Students will give a 5-8 presentation on their paper on 12/1/08.

4. **Informed Class participation**

A great deal of information will be presented in this course, thus it is critical that students not only attend all classes but also read the assigned readings before class and be prepared to discuss the readings and case studies both as a large group and in small group discussions. This course is designed to have you acquire a significant portion of the material through your readings, which consists of textbooks, as well as scholarly articles that will be available on the course WebCT site. Class participation will make up 10% of your grade and will be evaluated weekly by the instructor. Student participation is important because we will be using class time to work through concepts, processes, issues and new developments that go beyond the reading itself.

**SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS**

All work done for this course is to be the product of a student’s own efforts with proper academic attribution to sources. Students are expected to do their own work and abide by the Texas A & M Corpus Christi honor code. Students will be expected to provide the proper identification of source data including language, ideas, and products of another author using APA style in all written assignments. The assignments in this course are not group exercises, though study groups are encouraged for preparing for exams.

All assignments are due the day given on the syllabus. Please make a copy (or electronic backup) of your assignments before submitting them to me. Please submit assignments in hard copy the day they are due in class or to my mailbox at room 305 Bay Hall. Please do not fax assignments to me. If you are not able to attend class, you can e-mail an assignment to me by the due date.

For the written assignments, please use standard fonts (times new roman, size 12) and 1-inch margins and double spacing. If you send a paper via e-mail, please make sure to get a confirmation message from me to ensure that I was able to download the file and read it. Sometimes there are difficulties with software or system compatibility. Please send all documents to me in MS Word. Do not assume I have received an assignment unless I send you a confirmation message that I was able to download your material.

Please ensure your name is on all documents submitted to me. I will never ask you for your Social Security number via email and I ask that you do not use it when you are submitting materials to me.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

In accordance with the policy at TAMUCC, and my own desire to ensure your opportunities for success, any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating his or her abilities should take the appropriate steps with the university and contact me personally as soon as possible so that we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation.
COMMUNICATIONS

Over the past two decades there has been a dramatic expansion in electronic mail, cell phones and PDAs. While these devices are helpful they have also created some communications issues with which we are all familiar. First, when writing e-mails please use normal syntax and avoid e-speak. Second, avoid sending controversial e-mails. If you have a difference of opinion please discuss it in person with the individual or, if that is not possible, by telephone. There is a tendency these days with e-mails to say things in ways one would not say in face-to-face conversation and to use excessively sharp or harsh language. Related to those problems is a tendency to become overly familiar or simply unprofessional. Professionalism and respect are as essential in e-mail as they are anywhere else.

Please be aware that I access e-mail every weekday to answer e-mails, provide feedback to students and answer questions. If you do send e-mails in the evening, please be aware that they may not be read and no response provided until the next day at the earliest. I also do not access e-mail on the weekends as this time is spent with my family and on my own scholarship and research. I will make every effort to respond to your questions as soon as possible. Finally, do not assume that I have received an e-mail because you sent one. There are numerous system problems in software and in Internet Service Providers that can mean that e-mails do not reach their intended destination. I will acknowledge e-mail when I receive it.

Important information for this course will be distributed via WebCT and e-mail. Class readings, discussion forums, and additional course resources are available on the WebCT site for this course. It is your responsibility to monitor your e-mail account regularly to obtain these materials. Please let me know if your e-mail account changes or if you have difficult accessing WebCT.

Finally, please ensure cell phones and text messaging devices are turned off or on vibrate during the class as these devices are disruptive to the class. Thank you for your cooperation in this area.
## SYLLABUS FALL TERM 2008

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading s &amp;Assignments Due</th>
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<td><strong>Week 1</strong>&lt;br&gt;9/1/08</td>
<td>Labor Day Holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 2</strong>&lt;br&gt;9/8/08</td>
<td><strong>Course Review &amp; Introduction</strong>&lt;br&gt;<em>The Scope and Purpose of PA</em>&lt;br&gt;Starling, Chapter 1&lt;br&gt;Stillman, Chapter 1</td>
<td>Review Syllabus&lt;br&gt;Starling, Chapter 1&lt;br&gt;Stillman, Chapter 1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 3</strong>&lt;br&gt;9/15/08</td>
<td><em>The Scope and Purpose of PA cont.</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>Library Workshop</em>&lt;br&gt;Same as week 2</td>
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<td><strong>Week 4</strong>&lt;br&gt;9/22/08</td>
<td><strong>Political Management</strong>&lt;br&gt;<em>History, Ecology and Politics of Administration</em>&lt;br&gt;Starling, Chapter 2&lt;br&gt;Stillman, Chapters 3 &amp; 4</td>
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<td><strong>Week 5</strong>&lt;br&gt;9/29/08</td>
<td><em>Intergovernmental Relations</em>&lt;br&gt;Starling, Chapter 3&lt;br&gt;Stillman, Chapter 5</td>
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<td><strong>Week 6</strong>&lt;br&gt;10/6/08</td>
<td><em>Administrative Responsibility and Ethics</em>&lt;br&gt;Starling, Chapter 4&lt;br&gt;Stillman, Chapter 16&lt;br&gt;<em>1 of 4 Cases Due</em></td>
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<td><strong>Week 7</strong>&lt;br&gt;10/13/08</td>
<td><strong>Midterm Exam</strong></td>
<td>Review for Exam</td>
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<td><strong>Week 8</strong>&lt;br&gt;10/20/08</td>
<td><strong>Program Management</strong>&lt;br&gt;<em>Planning &amp; Decision Making</em>&lt;br&gt;Starling, Chapters 5 &amp; 6&lt;br&gt;Stillman, Chapters 7 &amp; 8</td>
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<td><strong>Week 9</strong>&lt;br&gt;10/27/08</td>
<td><strong>Organizing &amp; Leading</strong>&lt;br&gt;Starling, Chapters 7 &amp; 8&lt;br&gt;Stillman, Chapters 2, 6, 10&lt;br&gt;<em>2nd of 4 Cases Due</em></td>
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<td><strong>Week 10</strong>&lt;br&gt;11/3/08</td>
<td><strong>Implementation &amp; Evaluation</strong>&lt;br&gt;Starling, Chapter 9&lt;br&gt;Stillman, Chapter 13</td>
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<td>Date</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Resources Management</td>
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| 11/10/08   | *Human Resource Management*    | Starling, Chapter 10  
|            |                                | Stillman, Chapter 7 |
| Week 12    | Fiscal Resource Management     |                |
| 11/17/08   | *Fiscal Resource Management*   | Starling, Chapter 11  
|            |                                | Stillman, Chapter 12  
|            |                                | *3rd of 4 Cases Due* |
| Week 13    | Information Management         |                |
| 11/24/08   | *Information Management*       | Starling, Chapter 12  
|            |                                | Stillman, Chapter 9  |

| Week 14    | Literature Review Paper        | Literature Review Due |
| 12/1/08    | Presentations                  |                |
| Week 15    | Presentations Cont.            | 4th of 4 Cases Due |
| 12/8/08    | *Exam Review*                  |                |

| Week 15    | Final Exam                     | Final Exam      |
| 12/15/08   |                                |                |

**Assignment Due Dates:**

1\textsuperscript{st} of 4 Case Analysis Due  
10/6/08

Mid Term Exam  
10/13/08

2\textsuperscript{nd} of 4 Case Analysis Due  
10/27/08

3\textsuperscript{rd} of 4 Case Analysis Due  
11/17/08

Literature Review  
12/1/08

4\textsuperscript{th} of 4 Case Analysis Due  
12/8/08

Final Exam  
12/15/08