Course Syllabus

PA 301
Concepts and Issues in Public Administration
Section 02 (22279)
Fall 2013
Wednesday – AH 2108
4:00 – 6:40 p.m.

Instructor: Jerry Wilkins
Phone: (619) 563-2720
Email: jerry.wilkins@sdcounnty.ca.gov

Course Scope and Objectives
This is an introductory course in public administration, and is designed to provide a basic introduction to the subject for students without previous coursework in this field. The activities of public bureaucracies currently touch practically all aspects of contemporary life, and their expenditures account for approximately one-third of the total value of goods and services produced in the U.S. As persons who have a special interest in the public policy process, it therefore behooves us to gain some insight into what we mean in general when we talk about public administration; the role of bureaucracy in a democratic system and its interaction with other branches and levels of government; and the internal aspects (or management) of public organizations.

Text

Course Requirements
Students will be expected to complete assigned readings before class. Class sessions will include both lecture and discussion, so students may be called upon at random to address relevant questions.

Grades will be based upon a short paper (100 points), a midterm exam (100 points), a final exam (100 points), and attendance and participation (ranging from +20 to -20 points), for a total possible score of 320 points. (See below for attendance policy.)

The midterm and final exams will be take-home, and will consist of a combination of short answer/identify and essay questions. The due date for exams (and the short paper) is a “firm” date. For each calendar day that the exam/paper is past due, the grade will go down by ½, that is, an A paper receives an A- on late day number one, a B+ on late day number two, etc.

Suggested length for the short paper is eight to twelve pages, typewritten (12-point), double-spaced. Footnotes and bibliography are not required, unless a source is directly quoted.
**Attendance Policy**
Regular class attendance is necessary for you to master the course material and to make a good grade in the class. *“Attendance” means that you are present for the entire class session; if you leave early, you will be counted absent for that day. I will take roll at the beginning and the end of each class session.* If you have 8 or more unexcused absences, you will automatically fail the class. There are no exceptions to this rule.

Attendance/participation points will be added or subtracted on the following scale:

1 absence +20 points  
2 absences +15 points  
3 absences +10 points  
4 absences 0 points  
5 absences -10 points  
6 absences -15 points  
7 absences -20 points  
8+ absences Automatic F in the class

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**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Week 1**  
(8/28) Introduction  
Chap. 1

**Week 2**  
(9/4) Bureaucracy in a Pluralist Political Context  
Chap. 2

**Week 3**  
(9/11) Bureaucracy in a Federal System  
Chap. 3

**Week 4**  
(9/18) Privatization  
Chap. 4

**Week 5**  
(9/25) Organizations: Dynamics and Culture  
Chap. 5

**Week 6**  
(10/2) The Policy Cycle  
Chap. 6

**Week 7**  
(10/9) Leadership  
Chap. 7

***************Midterm Exam: Handout 10/9; Due Back 10/16***************

**Week 8**  
(10/16) The Decision-Making Process  
Chap. 8

**Week 9**  
Budgeting
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<tr>
<td>10/23</td>
<td>Chap. 9</td>
<td>The Public Personnel System</td>
<td>Chap. 10</td>
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<td>10/30</td>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Regulation</td>
<td>Chap. 11</td>
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<td>11/6</td>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Bureaucratic Clientele</td>
<td>Chap. 12</td>
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<td>11/13</td>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Implementation</td>
<td>Chap. 13</td>
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<td>11/20</td>
<td>Week 13</td>
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***************No Class on 11/27, Thanksgiving Break***************

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<tr>
<td>12/4</td>
<td>Week 14</td>
<td>The Responsive Bureaucracy &amp; Ethical Considerations</td>
<td>Chap. 14</td>
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<td>12/11</td>
<td>Week 15</td>
<td>P.A. in the 21(^{st}) Century</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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***************Short Paper Due 12/11***************

***************Final Exam: Handout 12/11, Due Back 12/18***************
PAPER TOPICS

Please choose one of the following:

1. You have just been appointed Secretary of the Treasury in a new national administration. The President has asked you to address problems of declining worker productivity, a large and growing trade deficit, a large and growing budget deficit, a crushing national debt, declining revenues, and the most serious decline in the overall American economy since the Great Depression of the 1920s-1930s. What is your response? [This is a hypothetical situation, and does not necessarily correspond entirely to current realities.]

2. As the new mayor of City X, you face substantive problems in the areas of solid waste disposal, delivery of water and sewer services, crime and law enforcement, and economic development. Also, you must deal with declining city revenues, a shrinking public work force, and poor employee morale. What is your program? [This is a hypothetical situation and does not necessarily correspond to current realities in the City of San Diego.]

3. Choose a substantive policy area in U.S. government that has been emphasized by the current President, Barack Obama. (Sources for this could be messages to Congress, press releases, journalistic coverage, etc.) Analyze this policy in terms of (1) an outline of the previous situation; (2) suggested changes to current policy; and (3) your evaluation of the President’s suggestions and how well you think they will work, and why. (Further options: you may substitute California Governor Jerry Brown for President Obama.)