Concepts & Issues in Public Administration (PA 301)

Mondays, Wednesdays and *Fridays 1:00 – 1:50 pm
Little Theater Rm. 161
Spring 2012

Instructor: Patricia A. Frosio
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course will cover areas of theory and practice of government administration in differing environments, role of administrators in public policy, issues facing administrators and techniques of administration.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
A student who successfully completes this course will understand the body of knowledge and key concepts that have evolved within the discipline of Public Administration. Students will be able to identify major public administration functions and describe the role they perform in the overall governing of the public sector. Students will be able to analyze decision-making issues and relate them to general managerial practices in an array of quasi-political environments. Finally, students will be able to identify and critically review the impact of political influences on the public sector decision-making process.

COURSE PREREQUISITES:
NONE

COURSE TEXTBOOK AND READING ASSIGNMENTS:

Supplemental articles and study material provided on Blackboard.

*METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:
This is a “hybrid” class that combines the traditional classroom environment with an on-line component. The class will meet on Mondays and Wednesdays and sessions will consist of lectures about theories and current events in government as they relate to material covered in the textbook. There will be no class sessions on Fridays. Instead, students will be required to engage in threaded discussions with their peers on Blackboard and/or complete brief assignments as assigned.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:
Students are expected to attend all class sessions and complete all required reading before arriving to class. Students are also expected to complete the weekly assignments on Blackboard, written assignments and exams.
Grades for this class will be based on the following point system:

- Weekly Blackboard Assignments/Contributions to the Learning Environment (4 points @10 weeks) 40 Points
- Public Policy Paper 40 Points
- Local Government Meeting Paper 40 Points
- Midterm 30 Points
- Comprehensive Final Exam 50 Points

TOTAL 200 Points

WEEKLY BLACKBOARD ASSIGNMENTS/CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT:

There will be no class sessions on Fridays. Instead, students will be required to engage in threaded discussions with their classmates on Blackboard and/or complete brief assignments to apply concepts covered in class lectures. This may include researching, reviewing and analyzing current events that address the subject and/or reading short case studies or written works on the topic and providing your own critical analysis and commentary on the analyses provided by your peers.

During the weeks in which Blackboard assignments are given, the assignments will be announced at the end of class on Wednesdays. Students will have access to the assignments on Blackboard for two days (2:00 pm on Wednesdays until 2:00 pm on Fridays). No contributions to the discussion or other submittals will be accepted after 2:00 p.m. on Fridays, no exceptions.

A maximum of four points can be earned during each of the 10 weeks that Blackboard assignments will be given, for a total of 40 points. The weekly written assignments will be graded on quantity as well as quality (see Writing Standards rubric on page 3) as follows:

- Four points = Exceeds minimum requirements of the assignment.
- Three points = Meets the minimum requirements of the assignment.
- One to Two points = Effort was made, but work product does not meet the minimum requirements of the assignment.
- Zero points = No submission.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS:

Students are required to complete two writing assignments which will assist them in obtaining first-hand knowledge of an issue of interest in public administration as well as the decision-making processes of local government governing bodies and the impact of political influences on decision-making processes. All writing assignments must be turned in (hard copy) to the instructor during class. Electronic copies will not be accepted. There will be a five point per-day penalty for late assignments.

Public Policy Paper:

Students will write a five (5) to six (6) page analysis addressing the issues below:

- A description of a pending state or local government public policy issue;
- Discussion of the government agencies and other organizations involved in the issue;
- Identification of the stakeholder groups, their positions on the issue and venues provided for these groups to influence the decision-making process;
- Analysis of the political environment in which the decision is being made;
- Budgetary impact of the policy issue; and
- Your recommendations for how this public policy issue should be addressed and how public administrators can remain accountable to the stakeholder groups and taxpayers during the course of its implementation.
Local Government Meeting Paper:
Each student will be required to attend a meeting of a local government. Options include the San Diego County Board of Supervisors, City Council of any of the county’s 18 cities or the Board of Trustees Meeting of any school district. Meetings of community Town Councils/Planning Boards, SANDAG or committees of City Councils or Boards will NOT satisfy the requirements of this assignment. After attending and carefully observing this meeting, each student will be required to write a five (5) to six (6) page analysis and critique of the meeting with the following information:

- Overview of the purpose/function of the governing body (found on the local government’s website);
- Overview (in your words, not what is printed on the published agenda) of two agenda items addressing public policy or budget initiatives that involved input/communication from members of the public (note: special presentations such as resolutions honoring a community group or issues discussed by members of the public during the “public comment” section of the agenda does not count as a policy initiative);
- Analysis of the role of one or more public administrators (non-elected “staff” positions) in relation to the elected officials in influencing the outcome of your featured agenda items;
- Analysis of one or more members of the public in relation to influencing the outcome of your featured agenda items;
- Analysis of the level of respect you believe members of the public were given by the elected officials during the proceedings; and,
- Critical review of the meeting’s representation of the democratic process in local government.

NOTE: This cannot be emphasized enough: PLAN EARLY FOR THIS ASSIGNMENT! Most governing boards meeting 2-4 times a month in the day or evening. Meeting information is available on each government agency’s website. Students are required to attend the meeting in person (not view on television or via the Internet) and include the cover page of the meeting agenda on the back of the assignment.

Writing Standards Rubric:
Students are expected to show writing skills that demonstrate proficiency in describing, analyzing, and evaluating ideas, concepts and experiences. Written material must follow the specific standards as stated in each assignment or points will be deducted. Assignments must be presented in APA format and citations of authors’ work must appear within the text and references at the end of each paper (as needed).

The following rubric with percentage breakdown will be used to evaluate all written submittals (including the weekly on-line assignments) during the course.

- 10% Relevant Topic and Support
- 20% Organization and Formatting
- 20% Mechanics (Spelling, Grammar, Punctuation)
- 50% Content and Coherence

EXAMINATIONS
Students will be required to complete one mid-term exam and one final exam. The final exam will be comprehensive, with an emphasis on material covered after the mid-term exam. Examinations will consist of multiple choice and short essay questions. Study guides will be provided and class time will be dedicated to review the material that will be featured on each exam.

**CLASS SCHEDULE, ASSIGNED READING AND ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES:**

**Week 1: Introduction and Course Overview**  
Wednesday, January 18  
Friday, January 20 (No class: No Blackboard Assignments)

**Week 2: Defining Public Administration (Chapter 1)**  
Monday, January 23  
Wednesday, January 25  
Friday, January 27 (No class: Blackboard Assignments **Due 2:00 pm**)

**Week 3: The Political and Cultural Environment of Public Policy and Its Administration (Chapter 2)**  
Monday, January 30  
Wednesday, February 1  
Friday, February 3 (No class: Blackboard Assignments **Due 2:00 pm**)

**Week 4: The Continuous Reinventing of the Machinery of Government (Chapter 3)**  
Monday, February 6  
Wednesday, February 8  
Friday, February 10 (No class: Blackboard Assignments **Due 2:00 pm**)

**Week 5: Intergovernmental Relations (Chapter 4)**  
Monday, February 13  
Wednesday, February 15  
Friday, February 17 (No class: Blackboard Assignments **Due 2:00 pm**)

**Week 6: Honor, Ethics, and Accountability (Chapter 5)**  
Monday, February 20  
Wednesday, February 22  
Friday, February 24 (No class: Blackboard Assignments **Due 2:00 pm**)

**Week 7: The Evolution of Management and Organization (Chapter 6)**  
Monday, February 27  
Wednesday, February 29  
Friday, March 2 (No class: Blackboard Assignments **Due 2:00 pm**)

**Week 8: Organizational Behavior (Chapter 7)**  
Monday, March 5  
Wednesday, March 7 **PUBLIC POLICY PAPER DUE!**  
Friday, March 9 (No class: No Blackboard Assignment)
Week 9: Managerialism and Information Technology (Chapter 8)  
Strategic Management and Government Regulation (Chapter 9)  
Monday, March 12  
Wednesday, March 15  
Friday, March 16 (No class; Blackboard Assignment Due 2:00 pm)

Week 10: MID-TERM WEEK  
Monday, March 19: Mid-Term Review Session  
Wednesday, March 21 MID-TERM TODAY!  
Friday, March 23 (No class; No Blackboard Assignment)

Week 11: No Class March 26-30. Have a Safe Spring Break!

Week 12: Leadership (Chapter 10)  
Monday, April 2  
Wednesday, April 4  
Friday, April 6 (No class; Blackboard Assignment Due 2:00 pm)

Week 13: Personnel Management and Labor Relations (Chapter 11)  
Monday, April 9  
Wednesday, April 11  
Friday, April 13 (No class; Blackboard Assignment Due 2:00 pm)

Week 14: Social Equity (Chapter 12)  
Monday, April 16  
Wednesday, April 18  
Friday, April 20 (No class; Blackboard Assignment Due 2:00 pm)

Week 15: Public Financial Management (Chapter 13)  
Monday, April 23  
Wednesday, April 25 LOCAL GOVERNMENT MEETING PAPER DUE!  
Friday, April 27 (No class; No Blackboard Assignment)

Week 16: Program Audit and Evaluation  
Monday, April 30  
Wednesday, May 2  
Friday, May 4 (No class; No Blackboard Assignment)

Week 17: FINALS PREPARATION  
Monday, May 7 – Review for Final

FINAL EXAM: WEDNESDAY, MAY 16, 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM