



**School of Public &
International Affairs**
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Course Syllabus
PADP 6960: Public Management
Spring Semester 2021

Online Mondays 4:10 – 7:00 p.m.

The University of Georgia
School of Public and International Affairs
Department of Public Administration & Policy
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Athens, GA 30602-1615

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Course Description and Objectives

Public Management is a graduate-level seminar designed to familiarize students with the major themes and issues in the field of public management, which spans government and the nonprofit sector. The course will help students understand the political context of public management and cultivate management skills for working in that environment. Students will learn to recognize individual and organizational level phenomena that affect organizational performance and effectiveness, and they will consider what it means to be a public-minded manager.

Organization theories are the primary source of management theories. These theories are interdisciplinary and help explain individual and organizational level behavior in the context of organizations pursuing their goals or, in the case of public organizations, implementing public policies. This course describes what organization theory is, how it has developed over time, and its relevance to the field of public management. Emphasis is placed on understanding the theoretical development of the field and its many practical applications. Students will learn how public and nonprofit organizations differ from business firms, and how public, nonprofit and private management practices differ. Many of the examples and exercises in the course pertain to government organizations at different levels (such as federal, state, and local), and to various nonprofit organizations (such as hospitals, schools, and museums). The course is also relevant to private sector managers who operate in the public square, such as government contractors.

Classical organizational theorists believed it was possible to develop a single, universal theory for structuring and managing organizations. Current theorists take a different approach. They believe in the unique nature of each organization and the need to develop customized solutions based on key elements of the organization such as its size and environment. The headline topics in this course mirror those key elements: e.g., the dynamic relationship between an organization

¹ Office hours are by appointment, but please feel free to drop by whenever I am in the office. Also feel free to contact me by email or telephone whenever necessary. Email usually works best.

and its environment; its performance and effectiveness; its structure and design; its leadership and management; its strategy and decision-making; and other related topics.

People are often seen as the most important element in any organization. An organization usually performs well when it has highly motivated staff, competent leaders, a salient mission, and adequate resources to fulfill its mission. The behavioral sciences have become an integral part of the study of management and the primary source of knowledge about organization behavior, which refers to the behavior of individuals within an organization. This course will cover many aspects of organization behavior including motivation, performance, satisfaction, commitment, leadership, and other topics of importance.

The definition of effective public management has expanded over time. Contemporary public managers need to be versatile and competent. They must be able to diagnose problems, initiate action, and lead organizations effectively. They must navigate the turbulent political environment, act accountability, and orchestrate collective action in suboptimal conditions. The level of cultural diversity and dynamism in today's workplace can pose significant challenges for public managers, and their yardstick for success includes not only managing their own organizations effectively, but also managing across organizations, networks, and global partnerships to achieve larger public purposes.

Students are encouraged to apply the subject matter of the course to their own individual fields of specialty or interest, and to share their personal insights with the class. Doing so will enliven seminar sessions and enrich the learning experience for all.

Student Learning Outcomes

This course will help prepare students to lead and manage in public governance. Students will complete some assignments individually but also work in small groups or teams to complete assignments collaboratively.

The course has several closely related aims. Students will:

- 1 Grasp the important themes, perspectives, and theories of public management;
- 2 Explore the relationship between organization theory and behavior, on one hand, and public management theory and behavior on the other;
- 3 Learn about the literature and major issues involved in the subject (including conceptual, theoretical, methodological, and practical issues);
- 4 Survey and analyze the theoretical frameworks commonly used for the study of public management and reflect on the current state of the field;
- 5 Write a term-length paper on a topic related to organizational performance and effectiveness;
- 6 Develop a keen understanding of what it means to organize, lead, and manage well in the public and nonprofit sectors;
- 7 Learn important management concepts such as unity of command, span of control, delegation of authority, total quality management, etc.;
- 8 Learn to write correctly and succinctly as a public manager;
- 9 Lead discussions and complete exercises applying knowledge gained from the course; and
- 10 Explore ways to strengthen theory-practice linkages (and vice-versa).

The following MPA core competencies will be imparted in the course:

- 1 To lead and manage in public governance;
- 2 To participate in the public policy process;
- 3 To analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions;
- 4 To articulate and apply a public service perspective; and
- 5 To communicate with a diverse workforce and citizenry

Seminar Sessions

The course will be taught online with live class meetings on Zoom. These meetings will be recorded and archived on the UGA eLearning Commons (eLC) course website. Various forms of media will be utilized to enhance learning in the course. Small work groups will be formed early in the semester to lead discussions on course readings and case studies, and to complete other assignments throughout the semester. Students will need a desktop computer or portable electronic device such as a laptop or smart tablet and a reliable internet connection to join the Zoom sessions and participate in the course. Students should join class sessions from a quiet location without pets, guests, or other distractions. The eLC course website and Zoom platform are accessible at: <https://uga.view.usg.edu/d2l/login>.

Most seminar sessions will include lectures and class discussions on headline topics. During these sessions, the instructor will present material, pose questions for discussion, focus on points of dispute, help guide the search for answers, and aid in the process of critical inquiry. Students are encouraged to ask questions and raise important issues. Students should complete all readings on time and be prepared to discuss the literature and any key issues on the agenda. For individuals, attendance and the frequency and quality of their contributions to the class will influence grades, as explained below.

Assignments and Grades

Grades will be assigned based on the student's performance on written assignments and their attendance and participation in the course. These written assignments include a research paper and a midterm and final examination submitted online. Late penalties will apply. These course components are explained below, and they will be discussed in more detail during the first class session.

The overall grading scheme is as follows:

<u>Component</u>	<u>Weight</u>
Midterm examination	30%
Course project paper	20%
Final examination	30%
Attendance, participation and group work	<u>20%</u>
	100%

Note: any Ph.D. students taking the course will have substantially different assignments, including more research-oriented readings and an original research paper aimed for publication. The nature and deadline for these assignments will be negotiated with the instructor.

Midterm and Final Examinations

Students will take a midterm examination worth approximately 30 percent of the final grade. This examination will consist of several short essay questions and objectively scored items. Students will also take a comprehensive final examination worth approximately 30 percent of the final course grade. This examination will be similar in format to the midterm examination.²

Course Project Paper

Students will write an original research paper of 10-15 pp. on one of the following topics: (1) a great organizational success story, or (2) a colossal organizational disaster. A paper proposal should be submitted by midterm and the final paper is due at the semester's end. The purpose of this assignment – and the key element in grading – is for students to immerse themselves in an organization and its environment, utilizing knowledge gained from the course to conduct an analysis of the organization and its performance (that is, its success and/or failure). Students should strive for papers that are high quality, cosmetically pleasing, and easy for readers to understand. The papers should be type-written in a conventional 10- to 12- point font and double-spaced with one-inch margins on all sides. All pages should be numbered. Students should collate all pages into a single Microsoft Word document (no PDFs!) and submit as a single file attachment via email. In-text citations and references are required. The papers should be formatted according to the Style Manual for Political Science, which is stored on the eLC course website. The paper will be graded based on content and quality of presentation.

Attendance, Participation and Group Work

Attendance and participation are required in this course and, along with group work, count approximately 20 percent of the final grade. Students who miss excessive time, or who frequently arrive late or leave early, should expect to receive a lowered grade in the course, regardless of their performance on graded assignments. With respect to participation, I first consider the student's attendance because this is a prerequisite for participation; then I consider how frequent, valuable, and constructive the student's contributions have been to class, and how responsive the student has been to course assignments and my specific requests during the semester. Finally, I differentiate between required and spontaneous participation: the latter earns more credit.

Reasonable Accommodations

Students with disabilities that could affect their ability to participate in the course should see me early in the semester. I am receptive to these situations and will make any reasonable accommodations. If you plan to request accommodations, please register with the Disability Resource Center. It can be reached by visiting Clark Howell Hall, calling 706-542-8719 (voice) or 706-542-8778 (TTY), or by navigating to <https://drc.uga.edu>.

Mental Health and Wellness Resources

If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care and Outreach in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-7774 or visit <https://sco.uga.edu/>. They will help you navigate through any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you

² Note: university policy provides that any student with three final examinations scheduled on the same calendar day or two examinations at the same time may petition an instructor to reschedule one exam at a different time.

with the appropriate resources or services. UGA has several resources for a student seeking mental health services (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) or crisis support (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>). If you need help managing stress, anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit BeWellUGA (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) for a list of FREE workshops, classes, mentoring, and health coaching led by licensed clinicians and health educators in the University Health Center. Additional resources can be accessed through the UGA App.

Academic Honesty

The ethical bar is set very high and a strong work ethic is expected. Students should familiarize themselves with the University Honor Code and Academic Honesty Policy, particularly as it relates to plagiarism and related concerns. All academic work must meet the standards contained in *A Culture of Honesty*. Students should learn about these standards before submitting any written work. All written assignments should be completed individually – not collaboratively – unless otherwise stated. The UGA Student Honor Code states: “I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others.” *A Culture of Honesty*, and the University’s policy and procedures for handling cases of suspected dishonesty, can be found at <https://ovpi.uga.edu>.

Prohibition on Recording Lectures

In the absence of written authorization from the UGA Disability Resource Center, students may not make a visual or audio recording of any aspect of this course. Students who have a recording accommodation agree in writing that they:

- Will use the records only for personal academic use during the specific course.
- Understand that faculty members have copyright interest in their class lectures and that they agree not to infringe on this right in any way.
- Understand that the faculty member and students in the class have privacy rights and agree not to violate those rights by using recordings for any reason other than their own personal study.
- Will not release, digitally upload, broadcast, transcribe, or otherwise share all or any part of the recordings. They also agree that they will not profit financially and will not allow others to benefit personally or financially from lecture recordings or other course materials.
- Will erase/delete all recordings at the end of the semester.
- Understand that violation of these terms may subject them to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct or subject them to liability under copyright laws.

FERPA Notice

The Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) grants students certain information privacy rights. See the registrar’s explanation at <https://reg.uga.edu/generalinformation/ferpa/>. FERPA allows disclosure of directory information (name, address, telephone, email, date of birth, place of birth, major, activities, degrees, awards, and prior schools), unless requested in a written letter to the registrar.

Required Readings

The required readings for the course are as follows:

- Richard L. Daft, *Organization Theory and Design*, 13th edition (Boston, MA: South-Western College Publishing, 2021). ISBN: 978-0357445143
- Hal G. Rainey, *Understanding and Managing Public Organizations*, 5th edition (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2014). ISBN-13: 978-1118583715
- John Clayton Thomas, *Leading as a Public-Minded Manager: People, Politics, Purpose* (Irvine, CA: Melvin & Leigh Publishers, 2020). ISBN-13: 978-1733934428
- Other readings as assigned.

Books are available from the UGA main campus bookstore and off-campus bookstores in the area. Limited copies may also be available for temporary use from the main library, departmental library, or directly from the instructor. These books are available in a variety of formats and at different prices. Students should contact the UGA main campus bookstore, online retailers, or the publisher's website for details. All additional readings will be provided by the instructor and posted on the ELC course website.

Tentative Course Schedule

Assignments are in the course schedule (attached). Please complete all readings and assigned work before the applicable class period. This schedule will serve as a guide but not a rigid constraint throughout the semester. Some topics will likely take less than the allotted time, while others may require more attention. Some minor rescheduling may also occur. Any changes to the syllabus or course schedule will be announced in advance when possible. Students should check their UGA email inbox regularly for updates and other information pertinent to the course.