

PADP 7500: Local Government Management

Spring 2021

University of Georgia

School of Public and International Affairs

Department of Public Administration and Policy

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Class Schedule: Wednesdays, 7:15 PM to 10:00 PM

Class Location: Jackson Street Building, Room 123

Office Hours: Meetings will take place by request using Zoom

Note on COVID-19 Course Modifications: Alterations to class management procedures related to the COVID-19 pandemic are written in red text in this document for easy reference.

Our class will meet through a high-flex model with concomitant face-to-face and online instruction. Students may choose to attend class on campus or online. Those attending class on campus should still bring an electronic device to enter Zoom in order to have the opportunity to interact with colleagues and guest speakers. Participation during the scheduled class time is strongly encouraged. A video recording of class will be posted on ELC within 24 hours of the end of class for those not able to participate at the schedule time.

Course Description

This class will introduce students to local government operations and service delivery. The semester is designed to bring theory and practice together in the classroom. We will begin the class with an overview of structure and operations of local government in the United States. Then, we will review major areas of local government service delivery, reflecting on management through four major themes. Our themes this semester include public engagement, innovation, budget stress, and sustainability. Each week, students will review academic literature related to a set of functions in city government. We will also host guest speakers with direct supervisory responsibility for the public services under discussion. Topics covered include city management, governing boards, clerk, public works, public safety, water and wastewater, planning, economic development, parks, recreation, and social services. This is a graduate seminar. Beyond the reading, students will have responsibility for facilitating class discussions with guest speakers. Through this approach, students will leave the class with perspectives on local government administration informed by the academic literature and the real world challenges of public administration.

Student Learning Objectives

- ✓ Review four critical challenges for local government discussed in the public administration literature, and use public administration theory as a lens to better understand local government services
- ✓ Review the role of professional management in local government with an emphasis on council-manager government and the work of chief administrative officers

- ✓ Introduce students to the primary departments and service delivery responsibilities of local governments
- ✓ Develop professional writing skills through short application memos and reflection essays

Integration with MPA Competencies

This elective supports at least two MPA program competencies. First, students will learn to lead and manage in public governance, specifically in the context of local government. This includes an understanding of the legal and institutional context in which local government managers operate and the norms and professional standards of council-manager government in the United States. Management insights also come from the many local government professionals who will share their expertise with students in class.

Second, students will learn to engage with a diverse workforce and society. Our readings challenge students to think about serving diverse constituencies, offer strategies for effective public engagement, and highlight approaches for more equitable service delivery. Students should consider how at least one class assignment illustrates personal development of program competencies for the portfolio process at the end of the MPA program.

Required Books

Students are required to have access to both of the following books for class this semester. Bookstores and publishers provide a variety of options to access texts, including book and e-book rental. Please consider the option that works best for you for the semester and for your long-term mastery of public administration.

Nelson, Kimberly L. and Carl W. Stenberg. 2018. *Managing Local Government: An Essential Guide for Municipal and County Managers*. Thousand Oaks, CA: CQ Press. ISBN: 978-1-5063-2337-4

Stenberg, Carl W. and Susan Lipman Austin, eds. 2007. *Managing Local Government Services: A Practical Guide*. Washington, DC: ICMA Press. ISBN: 978-0-87326-143-2

Note: The Stenberg and Austin (2007) book from IMCA Press is only available online as an e-book. You can obtain this book at a discounted price if you are a member of the ICMA Student Chapter. Visit: <https://bookstore.icma.org/managing-local-government-services-third-edition-p47.aspx>

E-Learning Commons and Online Resources

In addition to the required textbooks, additional reading is posted in a folder in the E-Learning Commons. Students can access online information about our class at <http://elc.uga.edu>. Graduate students should become familiar with searching for journal articles and books using the library's holdings and electronic databases. Many journals are free to you through your status as a student at the University of Georgia, and you should make use of these resources.

Assignments and Grading

Assignments will be evaluated using a point system, with 100 points possible for the class. The following scale will be used to assign letter grades in this class:

100 – 94 points	A	86.9 – 83 points	B	75.9 – 70 points	C
93.9 – 90 points	A-	82.9 – 80 points	B-	69.9 – 60 points	D
89.9 – 87 points	B+	79.9 – 76 points	C+	59.9 – 0 points	F

This class will use a hybrid grading system with a required take-home final exam worth 30 points. The remaining 70 points are fulfilled through a bundle or “spec” evaluation process. This approach provides students the flexibility to select their assignments and schedule. This approach requires significant personal responsibility for scheduling work. To aid in this, I have created a suggested schedule for work submission. You are personally responsible for tracking your progress and monitoring ELC for feedback.

Suggested deadlines are:

Submission 1: January 27
Submission 2: February 17
Submission 3: March 10

Submission 4: March 31
Submission 5: April 21

Assignment information sheets with full requirements are available on ELC. The syllabus provides a short summary of the assignment requirements. **Each item in the list below is worth 15 points. Assignments will be evaluated credit/no-credit. Students may obtain a maximum of 70 points.** The instructor will provide feedback within 10 days of submission with specific instructions for improvement if credit is not granted. General feedback and comments will be provided for all submissions based upon a structured evaluation form included in the assignment information sheet on ELC. When you complete an exercise, submit the exercise in the ELC assignment folders marked submission one through five. Be sure to label your submission to identify which type of assignment you are submitting. Note, some assignment types may be completed more than once (with distinct substantive foci), while others are one-time opportunities. If you have any questions about the assignment structure, contact the instructor.

1. *City Charter Reflection Essay*: Select a local unit of government—city, county, or special district—that is of interest to you. Identify the primary governing documents that shape that jurisdiction’s institutional form and authority. This may require consultation with state constitutions and statutes. Submit a reflection essay discussing this structure in the context of our readings about form of local government.
2. *Public Meeting Reflection Essay*: Virtually attend or watch two governing board meetings for municipal governments online or through local cable access. Compare and contrast the roles and interactions of a) professional public managers, b) elected officials, and c) members of the general public during the meeting. Reflect upon these dynamics in the context of our readings on governing boards.
3. *Theme Application Memos*: Select a local unit of government—city, county, or special district—that is of interest to you. Select one of our four major themes from class. Write a three page memo, from the perspective of a management analyst, explaining how the theme

illuminates management challenges and opportunities in the organization. This assignment may be completed up to twice for two distinct themes.

4. *Service Delivery Innovation Video Poster Presentation:* Investigate an innovation in local government service delivery from the United States or abroad. Develop a poster presentation to share details about this innovation with colleagues in class. Use Zoom to record a video discussion of your poster, no longer than four minutes in length. Submit both the poster and video for credit. This assignment may be completed up to twice for two distinct service areas.
5. *GovLove Podcast Reflection:* Identify an episode of the GovLove Podcast from ELGL that expands your understanding of one of the topics addressed in our syllabus this semester. After listening to the podcast, submit a one-page memo to the instructor explaining how the podcast interview expands our understanding of the topic beyond our class reading and discussion.
6. *Wastewater Treatment Field Trip:* Attend the optional wastewater treatment field trip on March 5, 2021. Sign-up is required in advance. Be prepared to participate in discussion during the field trip.
7. *Documentary Discussion Participation:* View the documentary “All the Queen’s Horses” and participate in a group discussion about how the documentary informs our understanding of local governance. Each participant in the discussion will be expected to participate and contribute to the discussion in order to receive credit. Advance sign-up is required.
8. *SimCity Buildit:* Start a new game of SimCity Buildit, a free mobile game available on multiple platforms. Develop a city, playing through at least level 15 of the game without investing any money to gain advantages in the game. Write a short reflection essay, up to five pages in length, explaining how the game illustrates central management concepts related to a) planning and development or b) local government service delivery, using our readings to reflect upon your experience.

Again, this approach to assignments and evaluation provides you the opportunity to structure the class content and schedule in line with your personal preferences and professional goals. Please take advantage of this flexibility in a well-planned manner. Consult with the instructor as needed.

Expectations and Guidelines

All of the University’s expectations for your conduct as a student apply in this class.

Face Coverings: Effective July 15, 2020, the University of Georgia—along with all University System of Georgia (USG) institutions—requires all faculty, staff, students and visitors to wear an appropriate face covering while inside campus facilities/buildings where six feet social distancing may not always be possible. Face covering use is in addition to and is not a substitute for social distancing. Anyone not using a face covering when required will be asked to wear one or must leave the area. Reasonable accommodations may be made for those who are unable to wear a face covering for documented health reasons. Students seeking an accommodation related to face coverings should contact Disability Services at <https://drc.uga.edu/>.

Additional information regarding this guidance can be found online from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html>

The university has supplied all students with two face masks, and the Department of Public Administration and Policy has supplied an additional mask to incoming MPA students with the assistance of the Graduate School. Please come to class prepared with your face covering for the protection of your colleagues.

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Social Distancing: Please maintain at least six feet of distance between you and other individuals in our classroom and on campus. Chairs are marked for occupation or distancing. Please respect these signs. Leave the room in its pre-established set-up and do not move tables or chairs during class. When you enter the room, please respect the space of others and attempt to move to the back of the classroom, leaving the front for those who enter late. When leaving, please allow those ahead of you to exit to maintain distance. Avoid congregating in the hallways.

Cleaning: Disinfecting your workspace in the classroom is another prudent precaution during the pandemic. The university has provided disinfectant wipe buckets in the hallways. Please obtain supplies before entering the room in order to clean tables, chair arms, and other high-touch surfaces that you will encounter in the classroom. Please wash your hands regularly, including before our class meeting.

Academic Honesty: As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University's academic honesty policy, "A Culture of Honesty," and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in "A Culture of Honesty" found at: <https://honesty.uga.edu/Academic-Honesty-Policy/>. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

Plagiarism: Our capacity to learn and synthesize knowledge within the public administration profession depends upon our ability to build on the foundation of existing knowledge and research. Recognizing and documenting the work of others is critical for all students, but especially for graduate students. When writing, students must take great care in how they reference ideas and information sources. Never use someone else's words or ideas in your writing without proper attribution. Serious penalties exist for academic misconduct and plagiarism. Students should read and be familiar with the following resources:

- UGA Academic Honesty Policy: Plagiarism
https://honesty.uga.edu/Academic-Honesty-Policy/Prohibited_Conduct/
- UGA Libraries Research Guide: Writing and Citing
<http://www.libs.uga.edu/researchguide/writing/index.html>

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 any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you 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.

Electronic Devices: Silence all phones and other electronic noise-making devices while you are in the classroom. Save text messages and emails for the break or after class. Laptop computers or tablets are encouraged for use to participate in the high-flex environment, in which some students may participate from the classroom and some students may participate online. In order to maximize your communication with colleagues in class and our guest speakers, you are encouraged to log into the class Zoom meeting, even if you are participating face-to-face on campus. Please limit browsing of material unrelated to class to minimize distractions for your colleagues.

Attendance and Accommodations: Active engagement in the classroom is critical for the success of graduate students; however, this semester brings unique constraints due to health precautions, family and childcare demands, and the potential for illness. You are responsible for staying up to date on class content. If you fall ill, please communicate with the instructor so that we can make appropriate accommodations. If you are unable to a class meeting, either face-to-face or online, then view the recorded class meeting posted in ELC. Follow up with the instructor to address any remaining questions. If health concerns develop and you require an accommodation, please reach out to the instructor and/or the Disability Resource Center (DRC) on campus, as appropriate. The DRC can be reached at drc@uga.edu or 706.542.8719.

Class Discussion: Complete the reading assigned for each class meeting and be prepared for discussion. Make sure everyone has an opportunity for input. We are interested in each person's contribution, so please understand if I ask for brevity or a conclusion to a chain of discussion.

Late Assignments: Deadlines have been structured so that the instructor can provide regular and periodic feedback on your understanding and application of the course material. **Late penalties will not be applied to course work this semester; however, late material will delay feedback and reduce the value you derive from the class. No class material will be accepted after April 28, 2021, and no late final exams will be accepted.**

Communication with the Instructor: If you have questions or if there are topics you would like to discuss in greater detail, schedule an appointment with me through my calendar: www.calendly.com/zeemering. **While I have not scheduled regular office hours this semester, each week I have many time slots available for student meetings. When you schedule with me, you will receive a Zoom meeting link for our conversation.** If the available meeting times do not align with your schedule, contact me by email so that we can identify a good meeting time.

Disabilities and Accommodations: If you plan to request accommodations for a disability, please register with the Disability Resource Center. They can be reached by visiting Clark Howell Hall, calling 706-542-8719 (voice) or 706-542-8778 (TTY), or by visiting <http://drc.uga.edu>

Syllabus and Schedule Changes: The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary. The instructor will communicate changes in writing through your UGA email account.

**PADP 7500: Local Government Management
Schedule – Spring 2021**

Week 1: Welcome and Overview (January 13, 2021)

Readings:

- ICMA-Stenberg & Austin, Chapter 1 and 2

Week 2: Scope of U.S. Local Government (January 20, 2021)

Readings:

- Nelson & Stenberg, Chapter 1 – 3
- Starnes, Becky J. 2013. *Challenges in City Management: A Case Study Approach*. Boca Raton: CRC Press. Chapter 2: City-State Relationships and City Charters.
- Carr, Jered B. 2015. What have we learned about the performance of council-manager government? A review and synthesis of the research. *Public Administration Review* 75 (5): 673-689.

Week 3: Four Themes for Understanding Local Government (January 27, 2021)

Readings:

- Nelson & Stenberg, Chapter 5, 8 and 9
- Nabatchi, Tina and Lisa Blomgren Amsler. 2014. Direct public engagement in local government. *American Review of Public Administration* 44 (4S): 63S – 88S.
- Cho, Seongkyung, Karen Mossberger, David Swindell and John David Selby. 2020. Experimenting with public engagement platforms in local government. *Urban Affairs Review* <https://doi.org/10.1177/1078087419897821>
- Tang, Shui-Yan, Richard F. Callahan and Mark Pisano. 2014. Using common-pool resource principles to design local government fiscal sustainability. *Public Administration Review* 74 (6): 791-803.
- Zeemering, Eric S. 2018. Sustainability management, strategy and reform in local government. *Public Management Review* 20 (1): 136-153.

Week 4: Councils and Local Governance (February 3, 2021)

Readings

- Nelson & Stenberg, Chapter 6 and 7
- Terry, Larry. 2010. El Paso: Professionalism over politics in the shift to council-manager government. In *More than mayor or manager: Campaigns to change form of government in America's large cities*, edited by J. H. Svara and D. J. Watson. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.
- Nalbandian, John and Sarah Negrón. 2009. Defining facilitative leadership: A view from inside the Mayor's office in Lawrence, Kansas. In *The facilitative leader in city hall: Reexamining the scope and contributions*, edited by J. H. Svara. Boca Raton: CRC Press.

Week 5: Intergovernmental Context (February 10, 2021)

Readings:

- Nelson & Stenberg, Chapter 4
- Zeemering, Eric S. 2021. Local politicians' advice networks and the prospect of metropolitan civil society. *Journal of Urban Affairs*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07352166.2019.1599293>
- Siciliano, Michael D., Jered B. Carr and Victor G. Hugg. 2020. Analyzing the effectiveness of networks for addressing public problems: Evidence from a longitudinal study. *Public Administration Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.13336>

Week 6: “Instructional Break” (February 17, 2021)

The University of Georgia canceled spring break this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic and has inserted “instructional break” days in the spring calendar. Our class will not meet today.

Week 7: Clerks and Records Management (February 24, 2021)

Readings:

- ICMA – Chapter 3: The Clerk (Dolan)
- Dornudo, Redeemer, Yao Krah, and Gerald Mertens. 2020. Transparency in local government: Patterns and practices of twenty-first century. *State and Local Government Review*.
<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0160323X20970245>

Week 8: Budget and Local Government Performance (March 3, 2021)

Readings:

- ICMA – Chapter 4: Budgeting and Financial Management (Swain)
- See the virtual issue of *State and Local Government Review* on fiscal stress and economic recovery through the link available on ELC.

Optional Field Trip – Friday, March 5, 2021, 1:00 PM or 2:30 PM
North Oconee Water Reclamation Facility, Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County
150 N. Oconee Access Road, Athens, Georgia
If you choose to attend, please sign-up on ELC and review personal safety instructions.

Week 9: Planning (March 10, 2021)

Readings:

- ICMA – Chapter 6: Planning (Meck)
- Fainstein, Susan S. 2000. New directions in planning theory. *Urban Affairs Review* 35 (4): 451-478.

Week 10: Economic & Community Development (March 17, 2021)

Readings:

- ICMA – Chapter 7: Economic Development (Iannone)
- ICMA – Chapter 8: Community Development and Affordable Housing (Brown-Graham & Morgan)
- Morgan, Jonathan Q., Michele M. Hoyman, and Jamie R. Call. 2019. Everything but the kitchen sink? Factors associated with local economic development strategy use. *Economic Development Quarterly* 33 (4): 267-278.

Week 11: Public Works (March 24, 2021)

Readings:

- ICMA – Chapter 9: Public Works (Lazarus)
- Kim, Jiseul and Carol Ebdon. 2020. Asset maintenance practices and challenges in U.S. counties. *Public Works Management and Policy*. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1087724X20937715>

Week 12: Police (March 31, 2021)

Readings:

- ICMA – Chapter 13: Police (Cordner)
- U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division. 2015. Investigation of the Ferguson Police Department. Washington, DC. Available Online: https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/opa/press-releases/attachments/2015/03/04/ferguson_police_department_report.pdf
- Ammons, David N. and Joshua S. Edwards. 2008. Misrepresentation of staffing standards for police. *State and Local Government Review* 40 (3): 186-194.

Week 13: Fire and Emergency Medical Services (April 7, 2021)

Readings:

- ICMA – Chapter 14: Fire and Other Emergency Services (Swain)
- Henderson, Alexander C. and Jessica E. Sowa. 2018. Retaining critical human capital: Volunteer firefighters in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. *Voluntas* 29: 43-58.

Week 14: Parks and Recreation (April 14, 2021)

Readings:

- ICMA – Chapter 10: Public Parks and Recreation (Vick)
- Cran, Galen and Michael Boland. 2004. Defining the sustainable park: A fifth model for urban parks. *Landscape Journal* 23:102-120.
- Cheng, Yuan (Daniel). 2019. Exploring the role of nonprofits in public service provision: Moving from coproduction to cogovernance. *Public Administration Review* 79 (2): 203-214.

Week 15: Chief Information Officers and IT (April 21, 2021)

Readings:

- Tufts, Shannon. Forthcoming. Chapter 7: Strategic Information Technology Investments in Local Governments.
- Norris, Donald F., Laura Mateczun, Anupam Joshi, and Tim Finin. 2019. Cyberattacks at the grass roots: American local governments and the need for high levels of cybersecurity. *Public Administration Review* 79 (6): 895-904.
- Preis, Benjamin and Lawrence Susskind. 2020. Municipal cybersecurity: More work needs to be done. *Urban Affairs Review*. DOI:10.1177/1078087420973760
- Oliveira, Gustavo Henrique Maultash and Eric W. Welch. 2013. Social media use in local government: Linkage of technology, task, and organizational context. *Government Information Quarterly*. 30 (4): 397-405.

Week 16: Health and Human Services (April 28, 2021)

Readings:

- ICMA – Chapter 11: Health and Human Services (Benavides)
- Research on the local government response to COVID-19 in Georgia is available on ELC.
- Craw, Michael. 2015. Caught at the bottom? Redistribution and local government in an era of devolution. *State and Local Government Review* 47 (1): 68-77.

Week 17: Exam (May 5, 2021)

The final take-home exam must be submitted through ELC by 10:00 PM on Wednesday, May 5, 2021.