

Introduction to Public Administration
Summer Session 1 (June 5th, 2025 – July 3rd, 2025)
LOCATION: Online on UGA ELC
This syllabus is subject to change

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Course Description and Objectives

Public administration is an interdisciplinary subject, touching upon several areas of study within the broader set of social sciences. This interdisciplinary nature of public administration contributes to difficulty in explaining just what exactly public administration is and why it matters. The intention of this course is to provide students with a general overview of the field of public administration by highlighting concepts that are central to this field. By the end of the summer semester students should be able to:

1. Provide a general overview of public administration
2. Understand the different roles public administration plays in society
3. Understand how these roles differ according to context
4. Identify differences between public and private organizations
5. Identify challenges facing public administration and tools used to address these challenges

Grading and expectations

Lectures: Monday of each week, a narrated PowerPoint will be posted to UGA ELC. Students are expected to view the narrated PowerPoint.

Communication

Given that we do not meet face to face, it is essential that we maintain clear and consistent lines of communication. Please make sure that you regularly check your UGA email address and UGA ELC for course updates. Also, please do not hesitate to email me with questions – do not sit on them as nothing good can come from that.

Grades

Grades consist of weekly online participation in discussion forums (50%) and one final exam (50%).

Discussion Forums: Every week we will have either one or two online discussion threads. Students are asked to post at least one original post in the thread and reply to at least one post that is made by a colleague per week. This means that students are expected to post a minimum of one original post in weeks where there is one discussion thread, or a minimum of two original posts in weeks where there are two discussion threads. They are also expected to post 1 reply post every week. An original post is a response to a question I have asked. A reply post is a reply

to a post that a fellow student has made. Original posts should be a minimum of 100 words and reply posts a minimum of 50 words. The goal of posts is to stimulate discussion so posts must be made on at least two different days a week (***two posts on one day results in a 2 point deduction for that week***). Please think carefully about your posts, but realize that your posts need not be journal articles or essays (do not overly stress about what you are putting out there – you have your final exam for that).

Final Exam: Students will have a final exam. The exam is cumulative and will address major themes that have been addressed in class and in the readings. A list of final exam questions and grading rubric will be posted on Monday of week 5. Students will have 5 days to work on the exam. Good responses are those that answer the questions by citing real life examples and relevant information discussed throughout the course of the semester. The final exam counts for 50% of your grade.

Note on writing assignments: For all assignments, please do NOT cite or depend upon Wikipedia, blogs, online encyclopedia, or other unreliable sources. The most well-regarded and reliable sources of information and data can be found in scholarly journals, textbooks, and government websites. Certain magazines or news outlets (such as Time Magazine, The Economist, Scientific American, The New York Times, etc.) may also offer useful material but these sources should be used rarely and only in conjunction with or as supported by scholarly sources. If you have any questions regarding the appropriateness of a specific source, please ask the instructor.

94 and above: A

90-93: A-

87-89: B+

84-86: B

80-83: B-

77-79: C+

74-76: C

70-73: C-

67-69: D+

64-67: D

60-64: D-

Schedule

Week 1: Introduction to Public Administration

Objective: To overview key issues that provide a foundation for modern public administration, particularly in the United States. To gain a general understanding of what public administration attempts to accomplish.

Reading:

Holzer Chapter 1

Week 2: The traditional structure of public organizations

Objective: To familiarize students with the concept of bureaucracy and the role it plays in public administration.

Reading:

Holzer Chapter 2

Week 3: Gauging public sector performance

Objectives: To consider dimensions of performance of public institutions and discuss methods for capturing the way in which public organizations are contributing to the betterment of society.

Reading:

Holzer Chapter 10

Week 4: Transparency and Accountability

Objectives: To understand what is meant by the terms transparency and accountability. To discuss how transparency is thought to contribute to greater accountability.

Reading:

Gregory Porumbescu, "Using Transparency to enhance Responsiveness and Trust in Local Government: Can it work?" State and Local Government Review, 2015 vol. 47 no. 3 205-213

Week 5: Final Exam

The final exam will be made available Monday of Week 5. It should be submitted no later than

Expectations and Guidelines

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

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. Use of artificial intelligence or word mixing software to write your paper or disguise plagiarized work is considered unauthorized assistance in this course. Suspected unauthorized assistance, or other violations of UGA's "A Culture of Honesty," will be reported to the Office of Academic Honesty. 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:

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

Electronic Devices: Turn off 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 may be used for taking notes, but students must refrain from participating in any online activities during class that are not related to our topic of study. Before using electronic devices with online access in class, students should be aware of the learning distractions associated with these technologies in the classroom (e.g., <http://tinyurl.com/q7pdtgc>).

Attendance: The classroom experience provides opportunities for discussion and engagement that cannot be replicated for those who miss class. Make attendance and active engagement a priority. Please do not attend class if you are feeling ill. You are not required to notify the instructor of your absence or provide documentation related to any illness or personal circumstances that keep you away from class. If you miss class, please do check with a colleague for notes and an overview of class content before contacting the instructor for any assistance.

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. Assignments submitted after the class meeting on the due date will receive a 20 percent point penalty. No late assignments will be accepted two weeks after the deadline or after the final class meeting. No late final exams will be accepted. Students should consult with the instructor about extreme or severe circumstances for which these conditions might be waived.

Communication with the Instructor: If you have questions or if there are topics you would like to discuss in greater detail, make use of my office hours or schedule an appointment with me. No appointment is necessary during office hours. Scheduling through Calendly allows you to select a time for an in-person or Zoom meeting. When scheduling, please provide a note to state if you will attend the meeting in person or by Zoom. Email is the best method to reach me, and I strive to return email within 24 hours. Make use of these communication resources.

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>

UGA Wellbeing Resources: UGA Well-being Resources promote student success by cultivating a culture that supports a more active, healthy, and engaged student community. Anyone needing assistance is encouraged to contact Student Care & Outreach (SCO) in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-8479 or visit sco.uga.edu. Student Care & Outreach helps students navigate difficult circumstances by connecting them with the most appropriate resources or services. They also administer the Embark@UGA program which supports students experiencing, or who have experienced, homelessness, foster care, or housing insecurity. UGA provides both clinical and non-clinical options to support student well-being and mental health, any time, any place. Whether on campus, or studying from home or abroad, UGA Well-being Resources are here to help.

- Well-being Resources: well-being.uga.edu
- Student Care and Outreach: sco.uga.edu
- University Health Center: healthcenter.uga.edu
- Counseling and Psychiatric Services: caps.uga.edu or CAPS 24/7 crisis support at 706542-2273
- Health Promotion/ Fontaine Center: healthpromotion.uga.edu • Disability Resource Center and Testing Services: drc.uga.edu

Additional information, including free digital well-being resources, can be accessed through the UGA app or by visiting <https://well-being.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.