

PADP 6910: Public Administration and Democracy (**SYLLABUS SUBJECT TO CHANGE**)

Thursday 7:00 pm – 9:50 pm, Baldwin Hall 102

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Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description

This class explores the critical role of bureaucracy within a democratic state and more generally, provides a primer on key concepts within the discipline that will help students navigate the MPA curriculum. Towards this end, the semester engages with readings that introduce students to enduring theoretical concepts in public administration as well as contemporary ideas salient to the practice of public administrators.

This class engages in heavy discussion and in-class applications. As such, students are expected to have read the material for the week's lesson and be prepared to connect an abstract academic body of work to practical considerations of interest to the student.

Student Learning Objectives

- Present and apply theories of public administration to substantive issues facing modern governance.
- Recognize the tensions and interactions between various approaches to public administration.
- Build career skills and a basic knowledge of the core functions of public administration to ensure success in the program.

Connections to MPA Competencies

Core Competency #1: To Lead and Manage in Public Governance

Students will learn the implications of the unique political and legal environment in the public sector and its human management implications. They will be able to understand the importance and dynamics of working in teams to make collaborative decisions, incorporate diverse viewpoints, and create a cohesive and professional product. Furthermore, students will be equipped to identify leadership and management demands across sectors, particularly in the public and nonprofit sectors, including their similarities and differences as well as unique intergovernmental and inter-organizational challenges.

Core Competency #2: To Participate in the Public Policy Process

Students in the Master of Public Administration program at The University of Georgia will understand the public policy process at the federal, state, and local levels, including formulating, implementing, and evaluating policy. They will develop the ability to interpret and persuasively communicate information regarding policy alternatives through memoranda and presentations. Additionally, students will analyze policy alternatives using quantitative and qualitative tools to evaluate decisions and explain potential ramifications for diverse constituencies. They will learn to manage financial resources and develop a comprehensive budget proposal to achieve organizational goals.

Core Competency #3: To Analyze, Synthesize, Think Critically, Solve Problems and Make Decisions

Students in the Master of Public Administration program at The University of Georgia will utilize various methods and analytical tools to analyze and interpret data to provide effective reasoning for decision making and policy creation. Students will learn to effectively and concisely inform the public and other stakeholders of decisions and initiatives through the presentation of data and research findings. Furthermore, they will produce policy papers involving the synthesis of information, evaluation, and analysis of critical questions or problems currently facing the field of public administration and policy.

Core Competency #4: To Articulate and Apply a Public Service Perspective

Students in the Master of Public Administration program at The University of Georgia will understand and appreciate the intellectual history of American public administration, competing ideological frameworks, and major issues or controversies that have emerged over time. They will learn to apply the profession's code of ethics to decisions and value conflicts unique to the public sector, ensuring practices remain accountable and transparent. Moreover, students will demonstrate an appreciation of the complex legal/political/fiscal environment of public management.

Core Competency #5: Communicating with a Diverse Workforce and Citizenry

Students will exhibit knowledge of principles and practices associated with effective public personnel management. Such skills will include the ability to recognize, consider, and respect differing points of view in administrative and policy decisions. Students will execute specific strategies to enhance equity within and representativeness of the public workforce to ensure all people within a government's jurisdiction are well served. Finally, students will demonstrate an appreciation for diversity and will be able to work productively in teams by displaying composure, professionalism, and effective communication skills.

Grading and Assignments

This class adopts a 10-point grading scale. In razor's edge cases, I will always round up to the higher letter grade.

A 100 - 90	D 69 - 60
B 89 - 80	F 59 - 0
C 79 - 70	

Assignments

All assignments are expected to be turned in by the designated due date. My late policy is an immediate letter grade reduction (e.g. a reduction from an A – B if an assignment is due at 11:59 pm and your submission is 12:01 am) with an additional grade deduction for each subsequent 24 hours beyond the due date. With that said, my goal is to be accommodating—life happens and I do not want this class to get in the way of your learning. It is my belief that we absorb information best if we are not overly rigid about due dates. If you are proactive and ask for an extension, I promise to grant it 100% of the time. Unless there is an emergency, I ask for a 24-hour notice on extension requests.

Public Service Analysis (30%)

Students will choose a public service organization (or individual) and write an 8-10 page analysis which links concepts covered in the course to the nature of the organization and its role within a democratic state. More details, guidelines, due dates, and rubrics will be given during the semester.

Exam 1 (25%)

Students will be given a choice of 3 prompts and are expected to prepare a 5-6 page essay which covers the material discussed during Weeks 2 through 7.

Exam 2 (25%)

Students will be given a choice of 3 prompts and are expected to prepare a 5-6 essay which covers the material discussed during Weeks 9.

Talking Points (20%)

After engaging with the reading materials, each student (in addition to the instructor) will prepare a series of questions which they think will help facilitate discussion in-class. These will be due by 11:59 pm the night before class.

Class Schedule

Week 1: Introduction (8/20)

<https://nathanfavero.substack.com/p/regression-in-500-words>

<https://nathanfavero.com/wp-content/uploads/Guide-to-Reading-Efficiently-for-Grad-School-PUAD-684.pdf>

Week 2: Theoretical Foundations (8/27)

Long, Norton E. "Bureaucracy and constitutionalism." *American Political Science Review* 46, no. 3 (1952): 808-818.

Rosenbloom, David H. "Public administrative theory and the separation of powers." *Public Administration Review* (1983): 219-227.

Meier, Kenneth J. "The future of public administration in the US: Coping with political dysfunction in scholarship and practice." *Public Performance & Management Review* (2026): 1-26.

Riccucci, Norma M., and Gregg G. Van Ryzin. "Representative bureaucracy: A lever to enhance social equity, coproduction, and democracy." *Public Administration Review* 77, no. 1 (2017): 21-30.

Jilke, Sebastian, Asmus Leth Olsen, William Resh, and Saba Siddiki. "Microbrook, mesobrook, macrobrook." *Perspectives on Public Management and Governance* 2, no. 4 (2019): 245-253.

Week 3: Tensions between Bureaucracy and Democracy (9/3)

Stewart, Debra W. "Professionalism vs. democracy: Friedrich vs. Finer revisited." *Public Administration Quarterly* (1985): 13-25.

Meier, Kenneth J. "Bureaucracy and democracy: The case for more bureaucracy and less democracy." *Public Administration Review* (1997): 193-199.

Moynihan, Donald. "Delegitimization, deconstruction and control: Undermining the administrative state." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 699, no. 1 (2022): 36-49.

Week 4: Professional Identity in Public Administration (9/10)

DiMaggio, Paul J., and Walter W. Powell. "The iron cage revisited: Institutional isomorphism and collective rationality in organizational fields." *American sociological review* (1983): 147-160.

Teodoro, Manuel P. "When professionals lead: Executive management, normative isomorphism, and policy implementation." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 24, no. 4 (2014): 983-1004.

Kennedy, Brandy A. "Sorting through: The role of representation in bureaucracy." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 23, no. 4 (2013): 791-816.

Week 5: Discretion, Policy Implementation, and Bureaucratic Roles (9/17)

Tummers, Lars LG, Victor Bekkers, Evelien Vink, and Michael Musheno. "Coping during public service delivery: A conceptualization and systematic review of the literature." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 25, no. 4 (2015): 1099-1126.

Watkins-Hayes, Celeste. "Race, respect, and red tape: Inside the black box of racially representative bureaucracies." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 21, no. suppl_2 (2011): i233-i251.

Cecchini, Mathilde, and Gitte Sommer Harrits. "The professional agency narrative—conceptualizing the role of professional knowledge in frontline work." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 32, no. 1 (2022): 41-57.

Week 6: Public Service Motivation (9/24)

Perry, James L., and Lois Recascino Wise. "The motivational bases of public service." *Public administration review* (1990): 367-373.

Christensen, Robert K., Laurie Paarlberg, and James L. Perry. "Public service motivation research: Lessons for practice." *Public Administration Review* 77, no. 4 (2017): 529-542.

Holt, Stephen B. "For those who care: The effect of public service motivation on sector selection." *Public Administration Review* 78, no. 3 (2018): 457-471.

Week 7: Accountability and Ethics (10/1)

Romzek, Barbara S., and Melvin J. Dubnick. "Accountability in the public sector: Lessons from the Challenger tragedy." *Public administration review* (1987): 227-238.

Adams, Guy B., Danny L. Balfour, and George E. Reed. "Abu Ghraib, administrative evil, and moral inversion: The value of "Putting Cruelty First"." *Public Administration Review* 66, no. 5 (2006): 680-693.

O'Leary, Rosemary. "Guerrilla employees: Should managers nurture, tolerate, or terminate them?." *Public Administration Review* 70, no. 1 (2010): 8-19.

Week 8: Exam 1 (10/8)

Week 9: Public vs. Private Management (10/15)

Rainey. Understanding and Managing Public Organizations. Ch. 3.

Meier, Kenneth J., and Laurence J. O'Toole Jr. "Comparing public and private management: Theoretical expectations." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 21, no. suppl_3 (2011): i283-i299.

Jilke, Sebastian, Wouter Van Dooren, and Sabine Rys. "Discrimination and administrative burden in public service markets: Does a public–private difference exist?." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 28, no. 3 (2018): 423-439.

Week 10: Administrative Burden (10/22)

Moynihan, Donald, Pamela Herd, and Hope Harvey. "Administrative burden: Learning, psychological, and compliance costs in citizen-state interactions." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 25, no. 1 (2015): 43-69.

Ray, Victor, Pamela Herd, and Donald Moynihan. "Racialized burdens: Applying racialized organization theory to the administrative state." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 33, no. 1 (2023): 139-152.

Herd, Pamela, and Donald Moynihan. "Gendered administrative burden: regulating gendered bodies, labor, and identity." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 35, no. 1 (2025): 45-57.

Week 11: Performance Management (10/29)

Moynihan, Donald P. The dynamics of performance management: Constructing information and reform. Georgetown University Press, 2008. Ch. 1-2.

Chun, Young Han, and Hal G. Rainey. "Goal ambiguity in US federal agencies." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 15, no. 1 (2005): 1-30.

Bohte, John, and Kenneth J. Meier. "Goal displacement: Assessing the motivation for organizational cheating." *Public Administration Review* 60, no. 2 (2000): 173-182.

Meier, Kenneth J., and Laurence J. O'toole. "Subjective organizational performance and measurement error: Common source bias and spurious relationships." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 23, no. 2 (2012): 429-456.

Week 12: Anti-Public Sector Bias (11/5)

Marvel, John D. "Unconscious bias in citizens' evaluations of public sector performance." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 26, no. 1 (2016): 143-158.

McCrea, Austin, Ricardo A. Bello-Gomez, and Sung-Wook Kwon. "Attribution framing and citizens' perceptions of bureaucracies, bureaucrats and public servants." *Public Performance & Management Review* 48, no. 4 (2025): 793-819.

Willems, Jurgen. "Public servant stereotypes: It is not (at) all about being lazy, greedy and corrupt." *Public Administration* 98, no. 4 (2020): 807-823.

Hendriks, Jessy, Koen Damhuis, and Sjors Overman. "From performance to morality: How politicians frame bureaucracy, its organizations, and public sector employees." *Public Administration Review* 85, no. 3 (2025): 846-861.

Week 13: Democratic Backsliding (11/12)

Moynihan, Donald, and Alasdair Roberts. "Dysfunction by design: Trumpism as administrative doctrine." *Public Administration Review* 81, no. 1 (2021): 152-156.

Cingolani, Luciana, and Gabriela Spanghero– Lotta. "A model of bureaucratic capacities against democratic backsliding." *Perspectives on Public Management and Governance* (2026): gvaf027.

Bauer, Michael W., and Stefan Becker. "Democratic backsliding, populism, and public administration." *Perspectives on public management and governance* 3, no. 1 (2020): 19-31.

Bauer, Michael W. "Administrative responses to democratic backsliding: When is bureaucratic resistance justified?." *Regulation & Governance* 18, no. 4 (2024): 1104-1117.

Week 14: Artificial Intelligence (11/19)

Anastasopoulos, L. Jason, and Jie Jason Lian. "The Limits of Authoritarian AI." *Journal of Democracy* 37, no. 2 (2026): 5-17.

Alon-Barkat, Saar, and Madalina Busuioc. "Human–AI interactions in public sector decision making: “automation bias” and “selective adherence” to algorithmic advice." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 33, no. 1 (2023): 153-169.

Gaozhao, Dongfang, James E. Wright, and Mylah K. Gainey. "Bureaucrat or artificial intelligence: people's preferences and perceptions of government service." *Public Management Review* 26, no. 6 (2024): 1498-1525.

Thanksgiving 11/23 – 11/27

Final Exam (TBD)

Course Statements & Policies

UGA Honor Code

"I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others." A Culture of Honesty, the University's policy and procedures for handling cases of suspected dishonesty, can be found at honesty.uga.edu.

Accommodation for disabilities

If you plan to request accommodations for a disability, please register with the *Accessibility & Testing*. They can be reached by visiting Clark Howell Hall, calling 706-542-8719 (voice) or 706-542-8778 (TTY), or by visiting <https://accessibility.uga.edu/>.

Use of AI in this Course

This class is interested in nailing down foundational concepts within public administration. Part of this requires students to meaningfully engage with the material and focus on acquiring a genuine knowledge base. As such, the use of generative AI is prohibited within this course. We are covering important ideas that require gestation and reflection—goals which are greatly compromised under the backdrop of artificial intelligence.

UGA Well-being 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](https://embark.uga.edu) 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 706-542-2273
- Health Promotion/ Fontaine Center: healthpromotion.uga.edu
- Accessibility & Testing: accessibility.uga.edu

Additional information, including free digital well-being resources, can be accessed through the UGA app or by visiting well-being.uga.edu.

Student Success Resources

The Office for Student Success and Achievement (OSSA) empowers students to achieve success throughout their academic journey. Through free peer tutoring, academic coaching, UNIV student success courses, Bulldog Basics, and first-generation student support, we promote well-being, student learning, and community building. To connect with OSSA, email ossa@uga.edu, call (706) 542-0163, or visit Milledge Hall (near Reed Hall and Sanford Stadium).

Disclaimer

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.