Public Organizations

Course Description

This course is designed to provide a mid-level introduction to American federalism and the intergovernmental system. The course presents theory, historical developments, major themes, and emerging issues in federalism and intergovernmental relations. The course also develops an understanding about public sector organizations, their environments, and the political subsystems in which they exist by exploring organizational theory and administrative behavior to understand and diagnose organizational problems and dynamics in the public sector.

Student Learning Objectives

At the completion of this course students will be able to:

- Analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions by demonstrating mastery of basic theories and concepts underlying American federalism and intergovernmental relationships and their historical development
- Participate in and contribute to the policy process by discussing environmental and political factors that affect managing human behavior in public organizations
- Articulate contemporary approaches to motivation and leadership and apply a public service perspective
- Lead and manage in public governance by demonstrating competency in critical management and leadership skills—that is, to exhibit the capacity to foster creativity and act effectively and responsibly under the stress, complexity, conflict, and uncertainty of the “real world” of public administration
- Communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry through application of teamwork and group projects

Required Readings


*If you do not wish to purchase a copy of the Chicago manual, a user-friendly online guide to Chicago style is available at the following:

http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html
http://libguides.wwu.edu/content.php?pid=123723&sid=1063051
https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/01/

Recommended or Supplemental Reading


Major Course Requirements

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<th>Percentage (Points)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam I</td>
<td>20 % (200 points)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam II</td>
<td>20 % (200 points)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam III</td>
<td>20 % (200 points)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Policy Project &amp; Presentation</td>
<td>40 % (400 points total)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Topic Selection</td>
<td>(25 points)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>(275 points)</td>
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<td>Peer and Self Assessments</td>
<td>(50 points)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>(50 points)</td>
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Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>895-1000 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>795-894 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>695-794 points</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>595-694 points</td>
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- Exams (200 points each; 600 points total): All exams will be in class and closed book. Each exam will be essay and short answer format, covering the key themes and materials of each major section of the course: *Intergovernmental Relations* and *Managing Human Behavior in Public Organizations*.

- Group Policy Project and Presentation (400 points total): The policy project is an intensive group project that includes student research, analysis, writing and presentation on the intergovernmental characteristics and implications of an important intergovernmental policy initiative. Topic selection [one-page description] will be due on Oct 19. The final policy project will be due on Dec 7, to include a 15-20 minute visual and oral presentation followed by Q&A, and include information that addresses the following items:

  - Nature and extent of the problem
    - General demographics, geography and political context of the issue
    - Specific demographics, geography and political context of the affected group
How the issue has been addressed so far in the context of intergovernmental relations
- Legal/constitutional responsibilities of different levels of government
- Fiscal relationships
- Administrative relationships including third parties
- How your issue fits into the logic and themes of federalism

Design and describe a solution for the problem
- What should be done, by whom, and how?
- How will success be defined and how will results be measured?
- What are the likely obstacles?
- How will your plan overcome those obstacles?

Format for the group policy project should include:
- Title page
- Abstract (250 words maximum)
- Text (20 pages minimum and 25 pages maximum)
- References (minimum of 15 scholarly sources NOT including laws and regulations)
- Appendix (list of attachments)
- Attachments (maps, charts, tables, etc.); each attachment will have a title and will be referenced in the text

NOTE: Although this is a group project, this is not necessarily a group grade. The final grade will be determined by each member’s contribution to the final policy project and presentation, and will include both peer- and self-assessments. If students are unable to work together, a student can be “fired” from their group with consensus from the other group members and instructor approval. The “fired” student will have to conduct his or her own policy project and presentation with a 15% (60 points) penalty.

Course Policies

Preferred Methods of Scholarly Citations

For written assignments, please use Times New Roman, 12-pitch font, 1-inch margins, and double-spacing. Double-sided printing is encouraged. Citations and note style should be consistent throughout, using Chicago Manual of Style 16th Edition (Author-Date referencing). Papers should be of professional quality, thoroughly proofread, and clear of spelling and grammatical errors. References or sources of information for papers must consist of scholarly articles or journals, government reports or legal citations, or the readings for the class. The use of Wikipedia or other Internet encyclopedia for any paper is not acceptable for graduate level work and will not be accepted.

Attendance/Tardiness

Attendance is vital to the success of this course, as material presented in lectures and discussed in class may not always appear in the assigned texts. Attendance will be taken during the class.
Students who miss more than three classes without a documented excuse (medical or family emergency) will lose two percentage points from their final grade per additional class that they miss. Attendance means attending the entire class! It means paying attention, taking notes, etc. It DOES NOT MEAN reading the newspaper, completing assignments for other courses, or engaging in any activity not directly related to the day’s topic. Students who do not attend the whole class or who engage in such inappropriate behavior as described above will not receive attendance credit for that class. Students should make every effort to arrive 5 minutes before the start of class.

Late Work and Make-up Exams

Final group policy project will not be accepted after the due date. No exceptions. Make-up exams will not be permitted except in cases of genuine medical emergency, upon production of appropriate documentation, and with the consent of the instructor. There will be no extra credit in this course.

Cell Phone/Electronic Device Usage

Over the past two decades there has been a dramatic expansion in electronic mail, cell phones and PDAs. While these devices are helpful they have also created some communications issues with which we are all familiar. Please utilize email first if you have any questions or concerns regarding this class. I check my email account every weekday (Mon-Fri) to answer emails, provide feedback to students and answer questions. If you do send emails in the evening or weekend, please be aware that they may not be read and no response provided until the next weekday at the earliest. Finally, do not assume that I have received an email because you sent one. There are numerous system problems in software and with Internet Service Providers that can cause an email to not reach their intended destination. I will acknowledge email when I receive it.

Important information for this course will be distributed via Blackboard. Class readings, discussion forums, and additional course resources are available on the Blackboard site for this course. It is your responsibility to monitor your Blackboard account regularly to obtain these materials.

Academic Misconduct

University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic integrity. Academic misconduct of any kind is unacceptable. THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS. Consequences for academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in an automatic F (0 points) for that assignment/test. If academic misconduct is suspected on any assessment, the instructor reserves the right to impose restrictions on future assessments for an individual or the entire class as needed. Please note that the university requires faculty members to formally report all instances of academic misconduct via an Academic Misconduct Incident Form.
Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, multiple submissions, collusion, and fabrication. **Cheating** is intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, notes, study aids or other devices or materials in any academic exercise. Cheating also includes: 1) the dependence of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments or 2) the possessing, using, buying, stealing, transporting, selling or soliciting in whole or in part items including, but not limited to, the contents of an un-administered test, test key, homework solutions or possession at any time of current or previous test materials without the instructor’s permission. **Plagiarism** is intentionally, knowingly, or carelessly presenting the work of another as one’s own without proper acknowledgement of the source, with the exception of information that is generally accepted as common knowledge. Plagiarism also includes: 1) the use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment or 2) the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling or distribution of term papers or other academic materials. **Multiple submissions** is the submission of substantial portions of the same work (including oral reports) for credit more than once without authorization from instructors of the class for which the student submits the work. **Collusion** is intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic dishonesty. This includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized collaboration with another individual in progressing forward on academic assignments. **Fabrication, falsification, or misrepresentation** is the intentional altering or inventing of any information or citation that is used in assessing academic work.

If you have questions about the university’s policy on academic misconduct, please see the *Student Code of Conduct and Procedure for Academic Misconduct Cases.*

**Dropping a Class**

I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. November 6 is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

**Classroom/Professional Behavior**

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.
**Statement of Civility**

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

**Grade Appeals Process**

Students who feel that they have not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, cla.tamucc.edu/students/studentinfo.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s Office.

**Disability Services**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**Statement of Academic Continuity**

In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.
Academic Advising

The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call (361) 825-3466.
Syllabus

1. Introduction

Aug 31  Course Overview
        Intro to Intergovernmental Relations (*O’Toole An Overview*)

Sep 7   No Class (Labor Day)

2. Federalism & Intergovernmental Relations

Sep 14  Conceptual and Theoretical Foundations (*O’Toole Part I & Chapters 1 - 4*)

Sep 21  Legal and Political Aspects of Intergovernmental Relations (*O’Toole Parts II and III & Chapters 7 – 10 and 12 - 13*)

Sep 28  Fiscal and Administrative Aspects of Intergovernmental Relations (*O’Toole Parts IV and V & Chapters 14 – 18 and 21 - 22*)

Oct 5   Exam I

3. Managing Critical Organizational Behaviors

Oct 12  Fostering Creativity (*Denhardt Chapter 3*)

Oct 19  Managing Stress (*Denhardt Chapters 4*)
        Decision-Making (*Denhardt Chapter 5*)
        **Topic Selection for Group Policy Project**

Oct 26  Motivation (*Denhardt Chapter 6*)

Nov 2   Exam II

Nov 9   Leadership (*Denhardt Chapter 7*)
        Power and Organizational Politics (*Denhardt Chapter 8*)

Nov 16  Effective Communication (*Denhardt Chapter 9*)
        Working in Groups and Teams (*Denhardt Chapter 10*)

Nov 23  Managing Conflict (*Denhardt Chapter 11*)
        Organizational Change (*Denhardt Chapter 12*)
        Representing the Organization (*Denhardt Chapter 13*)

Nov 30  Exam III
4. Group Policy Project

Dec 7 Due: Group Policy Project and Presentation

NOTE: Every attempt will be made to follow the guidelines outlined in this syllabus as closely as possible. However, I reserve the right to change the course from the guidelines outlined in this syllabus (e.g., the schedule of topics, etc.) if circumstances require it.

(Current as of: June 27, 2015)