

Syllabus for POLS 2180, Section 001
Introduction to Public Administration
Spring 2016
TTh 8:30 am – 10:20 am, F-206

Professor: Dr. Daniel J. Mallinson

Office:	K-125
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Class hashtag	#pols2180
Course Webpage	Link

Course Description

The political process does not end with the passage of a law. Public administrators are tasked with implementing the laws provided to them by legislators and executives. This course provides an overview of the field of Public Administration. We will not only discuss the nuts and bolts of public administration, but also the development of guiding theories of the bureaucratic state. We will see how these theories shaped the practice of public administration over time. Students interested in pursuing a Masters in Public Administration will find this course useful, but it should also be of interest to those intrigued by the policy process. Students will not only learn the core concepts administration, but they will also learn how to critically evaluate the design of public service institutions.

Prerequisites: There are no specific prerequisites for this course, however it will be very helpful to have a basic understanding of the structure and function of government in the United States.

Learning Goals and Objectives

- Goal 1: Understand the development of public administration theory
 - Objective 1a: Students will learn about the history of public administration in the United States
 - Objective 1b: Students will learn the theories justifying the provision of public goods and services

- Goal 2: Develop a broad understanding of the core concepts of public administration
 - Objective 2a: Students will compare and contrast competing organizational and bureaucratic theories
 - Objective 2b: Students will compare and contrast alternative methods of budgeting
 - Objective 2c: Students will understand the basic tenants of personnel management, evaluation, and accountability
- Goal 3: Develop critical thinking and problem solving skills
 - Objective 3: Students will critically evaluate the structure and function of a public administrative agency

Methods for Learning and Teaching: This course will contain a mix of lecture, class discussion, and in-class activities. It is vital for your own comprehension of the course material that you come to class prepared to discuss the readings and any relevant happenings in the news. Periodically, you will be tested on your comprehension of the core concepts of the class.

Reaching Our Goals

Attendance: Your attendance in class is always expected. Attending class will allow you to keep up with the course and provide for meaningful discussion as a class. I will be taking attendance in order to grade participation, but also as a way to get to know you. Please contact me via [e-mail](mailto:) if you are unable to attend class. I will follow the University's attendance policy when it comes to excused absences. See http://intraweb.stockton.edu/eyos/policypro/content/docs/2030_060414.pdf.

Preparation and Participation: I expect you to read the assigned material before class and be able to discuss what you read. Contributing to class discussion will make the course more interesting and will enhance your understanding of the material. Furthermore, it is helpful to keep up with current policy debates in the news, since they will be useful for reinforcing the concepts discussed in class.

Do Not Suffer in Silence: Please do not suffer in silence throughout the course if you are struggling. Instead, let me know — as soon as possible — what things are not making sense and we can work it out. If you are having a problem of any kind in the course, please talk to me about it as soon as possible.

Be Flexible: While the syllabus represents an agreement between us, I reserve the right to revise and modify it throughout the course, if it is necessary to achieve our goals. Situations

beyond either of our control can also emerge that require changes to the course. I will notify you right away when any changes are made.

Cell Phones and Laptops: Please be respectful of your fellow students and me by silencing your cell phone during class and limiting laptop use to only class-related activity.¹

Current Events: Politics happens in real time and the material we cover in class relates to these events. This is a great opportunity to become informed about political happenings nationally, in New Jersey, and in Atlantic City. We will regularly discuss current events that are related to the class. Please be aware of what is going on, particularly as it relates to government bureaucracy. I will regularly tweet news stories relevant to our class using the hashtag #pols2180.

E-mail Policy: I will work to respond to e-mails within 24 hours during the week and 48 hours on the weekend.

Readings

The following book is required for the course:

Kettl, Donald F. 2014. *Politics of the Administrative Process*. Sixth Edition. Washington, DC: Sage Publications. ISBN: 9781483332932.

Additional required readings that are not from the Kettl book will be made available on Blackboard.

Textbooks are expensive. Please feel free to buy the fifth edition of the Kettl text. In order to help you keep track of readings in the fifth edition, I have listed the page numbers for both the fifth and sixth editions in the course schedule below.

Lecture Slides

I will be using lecture slides throughout the course. These will be uploaded to the [course website](#) prior to each class period.

¹In fact, research demonstrates that students who take handwritten notes generally perform better than those that use laptops: Mueller, Pam A. and Daniel M. Oppenheimer. 2014. "The Pen Is Mightier Than the Keyboard: Advantages of Longhand Over Laptop Note Taking." *Psychological Science* 25(6): 1159-1168.

Assessing Your Progress Towards Our Goals

The following types of assessment will be used to track your progress towards meeting our course goals: topical essay assignments, a budget simulation, final project, attendance, and participation. Each component represents the following percentage of your final grade:

Topical Essays	40%
Budget Simulation	10%
Agency Contact	5%
Agency Research Project	35%
Attendance and Participation	10%

We will use the following grade scale:

Letter	Percent
A	94 to 100
A-	90 to 93
B+	87 to 89
B	83 to 86
B-	80 to 82
C+	77 to 79
C	73 to 76
C-	70 to 72
D	60 to 69
F	59 and below

Topical Essays: There will be a short (1-2 pages) writing assignment for each topic we discuss in the class (e.g., accountability). Each assignment can be found in [Appendix A](#) of this syllabus, so you can start working on them as soon as you would like. Recognizing we all have off weeks, I will drop the lowest essay grade at the end of the semester. The assignments should be uploaded to Blackboard by the start of the class period they are due. I will deduct 10% of the possible grade for each week an essay is late.

Budget Simulation: For our class on March 31, I will be asking you to balance the federal government's budget using the Council for Economic Education's [National Budget Simulation](#). Write 2-3 pages justifying the way in which you balanced the federal budget. Did you increase any spending categories? Did you choose to cut and/or eliminate certain categories? Explain why. Bring a printout of your balanced budget and justification to class.

Agency Research Project: I will be asking you to pick an public administrative agency at the state, county, municipality, or city-level in New Jersey. You will need to research the

history of that agency, what it does, who created it and why, how has it been reformed over time, its annual budget, and how it spends that money. You will also need to draft five questions to send to an administrator in that office about what their daily job is like. You will need to choose an agency and report it to me by February 4. You will then need to provide a draft of your questions and e-mail/letter/phone script by February 25. You must provide evidence that you sent them the inquiry, but will not be penalized if your agency does not respond. A final paper on the agency is due on May 3. See Appendix B for more instructions about the final paper.

Participation: Attending class is incredibly important. It not only enriches the learning experience for yourself and your classmates, but also prepares you for succeeding in the working world. Thus, attendance and participation will represent 10 percent of your final score. See Appendix C for participation grading guidelines.

Students also have an obligation to notify me within the first three weeks of the semester if they will miss any class session due to a religious observance. I am pleased to do this, but will need notification in order to plan make-up work.

Make-Up Grades: You are allowed to make-up academic work only in the case of excused absences. These absences may include missing class for a [University-sanctioned activity \(with proper documentation\)](#), [illness](#), [religious observance](#), or [family responsibilities](#). If you know in advance that you are going to miss class, please contact me before the absence to make arrangements for completing the work. If you are absent for an unexpected reason, please check in with me as soon as possible. You will have one week from the day of your return to class to make up a missed assignment.

Extra Credit: I will extend 1 percentage point of extra credit for attending certain events throughout the semester (one point for each event). I will announce to the class when these events occur and when a related extra credit assignment is due. You must submit a 2-3 page discussion of the event and how it applies to what we are learning in class to a dropbox on Blackboard.

Academic Honesty

Stockton University takes violations of academic dishonesty seriously and so do I. Observing basic honesty in one's work, words, ideas, and actions is a principle to which all members of the community are required to subscribe.

This course includes both individual and group assignments. All course work by students is to be done on an individual basis unless I clearly state that an alternative is acceptable. Any reference materials used in the preparation of any assignment must be explicitly cited. Students uncertain about proper citation should speak with me and review the following

website ([Link](#)) about conducting research and properly citing sources. Furthermore, please choose a [single citation style](#) and stick with it.

In an examination setting, unless I give explicit prior instructions to the contrary, whether the examination is in class or take home, violations of academic integrity shall consist but are not limited to any attempt to receive assistance from written or printed aids, or from any person or papers or electronic devices, or of any attempt to give assistance, whether the one so doing has completed his or her own work or not.

Lying to me also constitutes a violation of academic integrity.

In cases of any violation of academic integrity it is my policy to follow procedures established by the University. More information on academic integrity and procedures followed for violation can be found at <http://intraweb.stockton.edu/eyos/page.cfm?siteID=209&pageID=17>.

Disabilities

The Learning Access Program (LAP) ([Link](#)) provides services to students with disabilities. The services are meant to help students devise strategies for meeting college demands and to foster independence, responsibility, and self-advocacy. Registration for support services is strictly voluntary and on a confidential basis. Students MUST contact LAP immediately when they want to request reasonable accommodations for this course and can do so at any time during the semester, though earlier is better.

Course Schedule

We will attempt to follow this schedule as closely as possible, but we may take more time on some concepts and less time on others. For this reason, a digital version of this syllabus can be found on [my website](#). Slides used in class will also be posted on the online syllabus before class. All changes to the schedule will be announced in class or via e-mail and the online syllabus will be constantly up-to-date. Required course readings are listed and due dates for assignments are in bold. Links to some additional readings are included in the syllabus on my website, others will be uploaded to Blackboard. If you have trouble, please do not hesitate to [e-mail](#) me. Kettl 5 refers to where the required readings are located in the fifth edition of the textbook and Kettl 6 refers to where they are located in the sixth edition.

Week 1: Introduction

- January 19: Why Study Public Administration?
 - Kettl 5, Chapter 1
 - Kettl 6, Chapter 1
- January 21: Introduction to critical thinking
 - Review the [Elements and Standards of Critical Thinking](#)
 - Read [Defining Critical Thinking](#)

Week 2: The Administrative State

- January 26: The Administrative State
 - Kettl 5, pp. 29-37, 53-58
 - Kettl 6, Chapter 2
 - **Last Day of Add/Drop**
- January 28: Public Administration, Markets, and the Quasi-Market
 - Kettl 5, Chapter 3
 - Kettl 6, Chapter 3

Week 3: The Domain of Study

- February 2: The Executive Branch
 - Kettl 5, Chapter 5
 - Kettl 6, Chapter 5
- February 4: Regulation and the Courts
 - Kettl 5, Chapter 13
 - Kettl 6, Chapter 13
 - **Introductory Essay Due**
 - **Agency Choice Due**

Week 4: Organizational Theory

- February 9: Structure and Environment
 - Kettl 5, pp. 91-106
 - Kettl 6, pp. 75-89
- February 11: Humanism and Pluralism
 - Kettl 5, pp. 106-120
 - Kettl 6, pp. 89-109

Week 5: Administrative Reform

- February 16: Traditional Reform
 - Kamarck, Elaine C. 2002. [“Applying 21st-Century Government to the Challenge of Homeland Security.”](#) pp. 17-18.
 - National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States. (Philip Zelikow, Executive Director; Bonnie D. Jenkins, Counsel; Ernest R. May, Senior Advisor). 2004. [The 9/11 Commission Report](#). New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company. Chapter 13.
- February 18: Modern Reform
 - Kettl 5, Chapter 7
 - Kettl 6, Chapter 7
 - **Organizational Theory Essay Due**

Week 6: Personnel Management

- February 23: The Civil Service
 - Kettl 5, Chapter 8
 - Kettl 6, Chapter 8
- February 25: Human Capital and Leadership
 - Kettl 5, Chapter 9
 - Kettl 6, Chapter 9
 - **Draft administrator questions and contact due**

Week 7: Decision Making

- March 1: Rational Choice and Incrementalism
 - Kettl 5, pp. 317-332
 - Kettl 6, pp. 263-276
- March 3: Other Theories and Limits
 - Kettl 5, pp. 332-349
 - Kettl 6, pp. 276-291
 - **Administrative Reform Essay Due**

Week 8: The Most Important Decision: Budgeting

- March 8: How the U.S. Budget is Made
 - Kettl 5, Chapter 11
 - Kettl 6, Chapter 11
- March 10: Methods of Budgeting
 - Tyler, Charlie and Jennifer Willand. 1997. “[Public Budgeting in America: A Twentieth Century Retrospective](#).” *Journal of Public Budgeting, Accounting and Financial Management* 9(2): 189-219.
 - **Personnel Management Essay Due**

Week 9: Spring Break

- March 15: Spring Break
 - No Class
- March 17: Spring Break
 - No Class

Week 10: The Most Important Decision: Budgeting

- March 22: The Politics of Fiscal Austerity
 - Posner, Paul and Matthew Sommerfeld. 2012. “[The Politics of Fiscal Austerity: Implications for the United States](#).” *Public Budgeting & Finance* 32(3): 32-52.
- March 24: The Fiscal Ice Age
 - Kiewiet, D. Roderick and Matthew D. McCubbins. 2014. “[State and Local Government Finance: The New Fiscal Ice Age](#).” *Annual Review of Political Science* 17: 105-122.
 - **Decision Making Essay Due**

Week 11: The Most Important Decision: Budgeting

- March 29: No Class, Preceptorial Advising
- March 31: Budget Simulation
 - Complete the Council for Economic Education’s [National Budget Simulation](#). Write 2-3 pages justifying the way in which you balanced the federal budget. Bring printout of balanced budget and justification to class.

Week 12: Management

- April 5: The Management Problem
 - Kettl 5, Chapter 6
 - Kettl 6, Chapter 6

- April 7: The Nature of Public Management
 - Behn, Robert. 1996. “[Public Management: Should It Strive to be Art, Science, or Engineering?](#)” *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 6(1): 91-123.

Week 13: Implementation

- April 12: The Implementation Problem
 - Kettl 5, Chapter 12
 - Kettl 6, Chapter 12
- April 14: The Implementation Problem
 - Kettl 5, Chapter 12
 - Kettl 6, Chapter 12
 - **Management Essay Due**

Week 14: Bureaucratic Accountability

- April 19: The Problem of Accountability
 - Kettl 5, Chapter 14
 - Kettl 6, Chapter 14
- April 21: The Department of Veterans Affairs
 - U.S. Government Accountability Office. 2015. “[Managing Risks and Improving VA Health Care.](#)” Read the following sections: “Why It’s High Risk,” “What We Found,” and “What Remains to be Done.”
 - **Implementation Essay Due**

Week 15: The World of a Bureaucrat

- April 26: Cogs in the Machine?
 - Breton, Albert and Ronald Wintrobe. 1986. “[The Bureaucracy of Murder Revisited.](#)” *Journal of Political Economy* 94(5): 905-926.
- April 28: The Complex World of a Bureaucrat
 - Hill, Larry B. 1991. “[Who Governs the American Administrative State? A Bureaucratic-Centered Image of Governance.](#)” *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 1(3): 261-294.
 - **Accountability Essay Due**

Week 16: Finals Week

- May 3: Final Agency Paper Due via Blackboard Dropbox by 10:30 am

Appendices

A Topical Essays

Please only spend 1-2 single spaced pages on each question for each assignment (sometimes less than 1 full page works fine). Of course, note that some questions are multi-part. Be clear and succinct in your answers and label the start of each answer with the appropriate question number. Assignments should be uploaded to Blackboard by the start of the class they are due.

A.1 Introductory Essay (Due February 4)

1. How does the job of government vary by level (i.e., federal, state, and local), function, and who provides the goods and services?
2. What is the politics-administration dichotomy? Is it possible to keep the two separated?
3. Discuss how the following three values are in conflict and how they may be brought into harmony with each other:
 - Fair procedures
 - Sound decisions
 - Policy advancement
4. What agency will you be learning about during the semester?

A.2 Organizational Theory Essay (Due February 18)

1. Compare and contrast the structural, systems, humanist, and pluralist approaches to organizational theory. What are the strengths and weaknesses of each? What can we learn about government administration from each of them?

A.3 Administrative Reform Essay (Due March 3)

1. Begin by summarizing the core tenants of the traditional (i.e., coordination and bureaucracy) and modern (i.e., downsizing, reinventing government, continuous improvement,

and transparency) approaches to administrative reform. Then, discuss why they are so different. Which do you believe to be the most effective? Why? Should we *always* choose one over the other, or does the context of the situation affect which option we choose?

A.4 Personnel Management Essay (Due March 10)

1. What are the benefits and drawbacks of using political appointees to head an agency? What are the benefits and drawbacks of using a career leader? What contextual factors help you make a decision about which type of leader to use?
2. What are the benefits and drawbacks of a civil service system?

A.5 Decisionmaking Essay (Due March 24)

1. Describe the primary tenants and criticisms of the rational, bargaining, participative, and public choice theories of decision making. Provide your assessment for which of these theories is the best for designing bureaucratic decision making.

A.6 Management Essay (Due April 14)

1. Given what you read in Kettl Chapter 6 and Behn (1996), in what ways does public management resemble engineering? Why is a public manager's job part science and part art?

A.7 Accountability Essay (Due April 28)

1. What are the challenges we face in evaluating the effectiveness of bureaucratic agencies?
2. Is contracting out the answer to ineffective and costly government administration? Why or why not? Make sure you evaluate its advantages and disadvantages.

B Agency Report

The final project for this course is meant to orient you to the practical workings of a government agency that you find interesting. The first step in this project is to choose an agency. You must report that choice to me by **February 4**.

Contacting an Administrator

After choosing an agency, I would like you to develop five questions that you would like to ask an administrator at that agency about their job. You will also need to research how to contact a member of that agency – either by e-mail, web form, a written letter, or phone call. In addition to a draft of the five questions, I would like you to submit a draft of your contact on **February 26**. Once you receive feedback from me, you are free to contact the administrator.

Final Paper

For the final paper, I would like you to do a report on the history and workings of your chosen agency. Feel free to use whatever resources available to learn about what your agency does and how it works. If the agency has public meetings, consider attending a meeting to see first hand how the agency makes decisions. If it does not, you will need to read available materials on line to get a sense of what the agency does. Your questions can also provide information for the report.

I would like you to specifically report on the following things:

I Agency History

- i Who created the agency?
- ii Why?
- iii When?

II Agency Purpose

- i What does your agency actually do?

III Agency Structure

- i How is the agency structured?
- ii Is it hierarchical or something else?
- iii How many layers of hierarchy does it have?
- iv Who reports to whom?

IV Personnel

- i Describe the agency's leadership. Use what we have learned in class.
- ii Describe how the agency hires employees (civil service, non-civil service, etc)
- iii Given what we learned in class, what kinds of management challenges might your agency face?

V Accountability

- i Who keeps your agency accountable? Consider both formal and informal accountability inside and outside of government.
- ii Has your agency faced any scandals? Are there components of its design that make scandals more or less likely (in other words, is accountability easy or difficult)?

VI Implementation Challenges

- i Does your agency rely on any other public agencies, private firms, and/or non-profits to accomplish its purpose(s)?

VII Budget

- i Describe the agency's budget and how it allocates that money.

VIII Reform

- i Has the agency ever undergone any reforms?
- ii If so, what did those reforms look like?
- iii If not, could it benefit from being reformed? If so, how?

The final paper should be roughly 8-10 pages.

Due Date: May 3

C Participation Grading Guidelines

A = A student earning an A comes to nearly all classes prepared and can demonstrate superior comprehension of the material. They contribute to the class conversation, but don't dominate it. They make thoughtful contributions that advance conversation, showing interest in and respect for others views. They are demonstrably engaged in course material and content.

B = A student earning a B misses only a few classes, but attends having completed the readings and is able to demonstrate comprehension of the readings, perhaps lacking fully integrated views toward the material. They make thoughtful comments when called upon, show respect and interest in other students views, and occasionally contribute without prompting. This student is making a good-faith effort to participate in class, but may not have the integration of ideas of an A student or may not participate as often.

C = A student earning a C misses several classes, but arrives having completed the readings and able to discuss their most basic tenets. This student does not voluntarily contribute to class and gives only minimal answers when called upon. They are putting forward some effort, but appear to be uninterested in the material and do not participate much without prompting.

D = A student earning a D misses close to half of the classes, and when present has difficulty positively contributing. This student does not voluntarily contribute to class, and when prompted, gives responses that may be off-topic and demonstrate a lack of knowledge or preparedness. They are putting forth less than average effort in the course and may be having a negative impact on others.

F = A student earning an F misses over half of the classes, and when present, cannot demonstrate they have read the material or thought about the concepts. This student does not voluntarily contribute to class and does not give answers related to the question being asked when prompted. They do not appear to be interested in the content of the class and are putting forth a very minimal level of effort.²

²Adapted from [Dr. Zachary Baumann](#).