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Introduction
The main goals of this course are (1) to help you deepen your appreciation of the importance of public management in our democratic scheme of governance; (2) to enhance your ability to think analytically about problems of public management; and (3) to enhance your ability to make good arguments concerning how public management issues might be addressed. As a result of this course (combined with your own experience and skills), you should be able to recognize and define public management issues at all levels of government, to offer insightful analysis of public management issues that you encounter in practice, and to ask good questions, offer good suggestions, and make good arguments concerning how such issues might be addressed or solved.

The course materials include conceptual and analytic literature as well as case materials and examples drawn from a variety of sources. The general idea is that you should use the conceptual materials to analyze issues raised by the cases and examples.

Course Requirements
Students will need to fulfill the following requirements:

1. Complete all reading assignments. Come to class with questions/comments to ask of the instructor and fellow students. Class sessions will not summarize the reading but rather will provide the larger systemic context, integrate the materials and explore the implications of the readings.

2. Participate in class discussion. This means actively engaging in discussions of the reading and the cases. For all classes student participation will be a major component. In particular, any class with a case study assigned will focus on student debate of the case Read cases and be prepared to talk about them even if you do not complete a case memo. Feel free to bring up a discussion of public management in the news. To participate, you will need to be in class, so please do not schedule any events during class time, and let me know in advance if you cannot attend.

3. Complete grading requirements on time. Case memos must be submitted by the beginning of the class on the day the case is assigned in the syllabus. Email me all work as a Word document.

Readings
2. Other readings listed on the syllabus, including case material, will be provided at Learn@UW.

Note that we also use audio material from the radio show This American Life. You can find all episodes of the show online at thislife.org. You can purchase and download individual shows, stream the show for free, or buy an app that gives you access to all show archives.

Grading
Your maximum score for the entire course is 100 points. These points may be earned as follows:

- Supplementary readings 15%
- Case studies 40% - 4x10% - six are available throughout the semester – you may complete up to five, and your best four count
- Semester Project 35%
- Participation 10%

Grading Standard

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Supplementary readings: To facilitate discussion and learning, students will sign up to be discussion leaders. Sign up is by lottery on the first day of class. You should plan to work on this project for at least a couple of weeks before the scheduled presentation.

The discussion leader will be responsible for completing a supplemental reading, and presenting this to the class with a partner. The presentation should be between 5-10 minutes, and anticipate another 5 minutes for questions, discussion. If you go over your allotted time, you will be cut off, and your grade for the exercise will be adjusted downward.

On most days there will be two supplemental readings assigned, and therefore two sets of presenters. You may find it useful to read the other reading, since the readings may offer competing perspectives on the same topic, and thus will encourage a debate between presenters.

In presenting the reading, identify what you think the core point(s) is, and how you think it relates to the topic of the class, and how it might be presented. This sort of discussions will move you beyond a straightforward summary of the topic. As a general matter, focus on the overall content and conclusions within the articles instead of the critiquing the specific methodologies employed.

Assume your classmates will not have read the supplementary readings; thus, it is your job to provide the key management concepts from these readings. You have the option of using
PowerPoint, but think seriously about whether it is the best medium to convey your essential point. If you use powerpoint, no more than 5 slides, and email to the Professor at least an hour beforehand. You should also create a one to two-page summary each of the supplementary readings, which you and your classmates will use as a reference. Consistent with the electronic nature of distribution, please email to the class at least 24 hours before class. Make sure to include the full reference for the article on the memo.

One tip on writing style for the summary: resist the temptation to rely on bullet points as a means of summary. It’s a lazy approach that leads to a type of shorthand writing that can be opaque. As with all of your written work, utilize fully developed sentences that form coherent paragraphs.

Ensure that you relate the reading to the topic of the day. (If you are having trouble finding these connections, come and talk to me). To stimulate discussion you may, for instance, use a set of discussion questions, group work, or a class activity that complements the readings. I encourage you to be energetic and to be engaged with the materials. Creativity is encouraged.

Cases
There will be a number of cases memos scattered throughout the class. The goal of the case studies is to improve your ability to think about a complex scenario, and write a short and concise analysis of this situation – no more than 1 page, single spaced, 11 point font, 1 inch margins. The memos should display a critical analysis of the main issues of the case, not a summary. You can assume that I know the basic details of the case.

A typical teaching case tells a story (that is, something happened, then something else happened, then something else happened, and so on) about a problem or issue facing a public manager and brings the reader to a point at which a decision must be made. A good way to get to the heart of a case is to try and summarize the story in case in one sentence. You may be asked for such summaries during case discussions.

A quality of a good teaching case is that there is no obvious right answer. Rather, there are many possible answers (decisions, solutions), each of which has advantages and disadvantages and about which reasonable people may disagree. You will be asked to make a good argument for the answer that you believe is the best one. Each case is intended to force a decision of some kind, and if you complete a memo without making some sort of recommendation you will lose points. You must take account of the pros and cons of the approach you are recommending, supporting your answer with evidence from the case and theoretical insights from the readings. Good arguments usually require a close and insightful reading of the case (you should read Hill and Lynn, ch.3 for an extended discussion on how to construct an argument before attempting your first case).

Case discussions will generally focus on the actions or problems of public managers in the case as they are caused or influenced by contextual (structural or institutional) factors. You may be asked, “What would you do (and why)?” You may be asked to play the roles of actors in the case, and there may be brief, spontaneous, in-class “role plays.” You should take this role
playing (that is, the issues facing the actors in the case) seriously, but it is OK to have some fun with it.

Grading the Cases
My way of scoring the memos is that everyone starts with a maximum score, and I mark down where I observe a serious problem. The overall criterion is whether you make a strong and clear argument. A strong argument requires the use of evidence where possible, including theory and evidence from course readings, logical claims that are persuasively presented, an ability to meet counter-claims. More specifically, here are the major items I look for:

• Does it cover the major points? Or is there some major aspect of the case you overlooked? In practice, this means that you should deal with the central issue of the case, and when making a recommendation, demonstrate awareness of arguments against your point of view.

• Is there a significant flaw in the logic of your argument? If I think the flaw is so bad as to lead you to offer bad advice, the penalty is doubled.

• If you present the right conclusions, but do not support them with the level of analysis or detail to be really persuasive.

Any of the above failings will usually see you lose a point or more on a memo. Style, and basic errors will be included as considerations if you are on the borderline between a grade, unless they actually weaken your ability to deliver a coherent memo, in which case they will be counted for more. If you failed to fundamentally understand or answer the assignment question you are looking at a possible fail.

In drawing on materials to use you should look for support from the readings assigned for that topic, and other readings in the course. If you wish to look on the web for additional resources and arguments, by all means do so, but always cite any external source for quotation, fact, idea, etc.

Semester Project
For your semester project you will be asked to work with a group of other students. You have some choices in terms of what you may do.

This will be a group project. You will be asked to work with two/three other students. Think of yourselves as a team of consultants brought in to provide a frank assessment. Being in a group involves some additional coordination costs, but it has benefits – you can divide up and peer review each other work, and generally results in a more thoughtful analysis. The groups are expected to be self-managed, but I will ask all group members at the end of the semester to confidentially assess one another. Anyone regarded as shirking their responsibilities will be scored a grade level lower on the project than other members. It is therefore in your interests to create a team environment characterized by civility, mutual respect, fair allocation of effort, clear goals and deadlines, and follow-through. A good start would be to create a set time where you will meet every week to discuss the project.
Tip: the primary difference between groups that score well on the semester project, and those that do not, is organizing early, and meeting with your professor frequently. This will help you to quickly identify your project, narrow down a research question, and identify relevant literatures to draw on.

Fixing a Management Problem
Focus the paper on identifying a particular management problem. This may be a new reform being implemented, a merger between different units, or a workforce problem such as poor communication.

Identify a fairly specific research question (e.g., how do you get two organizational units to work together), and give in-depth attention to that issue. Consider alternative theoretical approaches, and to consider what evidence might be relevant. You should consult with your professor on how to frame the research question, and what sort of theories and evidence might be useful to answer it.

If you and your teammates wish to pursue another framework for the course, this is possible. But you will need to consult with your Professor with a specific proposal on what you want to do. Such a proposal would take a topic identified in the course, and examine it in greater depth, incorporating additional readings from outside the course syllabus.

Disclaimer
On the final page of your paper, write the following disclaimer: “This report was generated for the educational benefit of its student author(s) and the main purpose of the project was to learn managerial techniques. The opinions and suggestions in this report do not represent the views of the University of Wisconsin or its faculty.”

Guide to Interviewing for Course Paper
To complete your paper you will necessarily have to interview someone at the organization.
1. Start by introducing yourself. Explain who you are, what class this is for and what the project involves. Example: “I am a graduate student studying public management issues. For one of my classes I am writing a paper on workforce communication in prisons.”
2. Explain why they are being interviewed and the distribution of their comments. Example: “I want to interview you because you have experience managing a prison. Your comments will be used only for a class paper and will not be used or quoted outside of a classroom setting.” It is helpful if you have the name of someone they know who suggested you contact them. You should never do anything that violates the trust of an interviewee.
3. If you are taping their remarks seek their permission. Bear in mind that interviewees tend to more reticent if a tape recorder is running.
4. If you are not taping the interviewee keep careful notes. Use key words or phrases to get the general flow of conversation. Immediately upon finishing the interview write up your notes. You will be surprised how much additional information will come back to you. The longer you wait to write your interview notes, the less you will retain.
5. Have a list of questions written up in advance. For most research situations your interviewing style will be semi-structured. This means you have some specific topics you
want to cover, but that you are not administering a survey of standard questions. If the interviewee says something intriguing, you have the free

6. Try to know your questions so you do not have to read them out, but rely on your list of questions only if you lose your train of thought. The more the interview feels like a conversation, the better the exchange of information.

7. Ask questions your interviewee can answer. Do not talk about theory and do not use academic language. Figure out the simplest and shortest language needed to ask the question. If you have long or verbose questions you will alienate the interviewee, and reduce their time and ability to respond. The hard part of writing interview questions is to translate complex theoretical ideas to simple questions.

8. Do not have too many questions that you feel compelled to cover. A handful of broad questions can suffice for a very long interview, as long as you are ready with appropriate probes or follow-ups. Example “how might communication be improved in this organization?” can elicit lots of information about a) what problems the interviewee perceives and b) possible solutions. You should be ready to ask follow-up questions that delve their responses. Be ready to be flexible and pursue the insights the interviewee is giving you even if it is not what you expected, as long as it is consistent with the general topic you are trying to answer.

9. Try to make your questions, specially your follow-up questions, very grounded and very specific. For instance “How did the Governor react to that decision?” is better than “How did your environment react to that decision?” If you ask abstract questions you will tend to get more abstract answers. If you force interviewees to think about their daily activities as they answer questions, it is more likely they will give an accurate response. There are two ways to make this happen. First, when an interviewee makes a general point, always seek examples. Second, ask lots of other types of “probes” or follow-up question, e.g. “why do you think that happened?” “who benefits most from new reforms” “what do you think are the problems with the policy” “how does this problem impact your job?”

10. An interview should start gently and get the interviewee talking. A good opening is to ask the interviewee how they came to their current position, to give a short bio, or to describe their daily activities.

11. Try to find the least offensive way of asking a question. For instance, instead of saying “What are the major problems with the organization?” ask “what aspects of the organization do you think could be improved in the future?” A general rule of thumb for surveys or interviews is to hold the more contentious questions toward the end.

12. If you want to get more interviewees, you might ask your interviewee if they could name a couple of people that they think would be well-placed to answer the questions that you have.

**Expectations for Academic Integrity**

I expect a full adherence to UW’s code of academic integrity. I also expect that you will acknowledge all ideas that are not your own through proper citation. Any plagiarism (passing off as one’s own ideas, the words, writings, music, graphs/charts, etc. that were created by another), or other forms of cheating will be met with a failing grade for the course, and will be reported to the graduate school for additional disciplinary responses. I reserve the right to run all student memos and papers through the software that checks for academic violations.
Please put all direct quotes in quotations. Any accepted format for citation may be used as long as it is used consistently. You may want to follow the style format of a major public administration journal, such as, Public Administration Review or Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory.

Disabilities
The Americans with Disability 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 accommodation, please advise the instructor. The McBurney Center on campus can provide support to you, and work with your Professor to advise on appropriate accommodations.
Course Introduction – Class will meet for full time!

Hill and Lynn, ch.1, & .3

Assign Discussion Leaders

Assign Groups for Final Paper
Listen to the “Prologue” [or first ~14 minutes…but not Acts 1-3] of This American Life episode. These first 14 minutes of the show deal with new research regarding group dynamics. The full show aired on 12/19/08, and is called “Ruin it for the Rest of Us.” You should be able to stream the audio for free: http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/370/ruining-it-for-the-rest-of-us

Additional reading:
You will be asked to write a good number of memos through the course of the semester. Some helpful advice about how to structure an argument and write a memo can be found in the following readings.

From Electronic Hallway: “Memo Writing”; “Brief Guidelines for Writing Action Memos”, “Writing Effective Memoranda: Planning, Drafting, & Revising”.

Public Management’s Three Dimensions
Hill and Lynn Chap. 2

Case Memo:
Two Steps Back.
http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/275/two-steps-back
Transcript for the show is in your reading list
What are the management causes of the rise and decline of the Chicago public school presented in the show? What general public management principles can you draw from the case?

Supplemental readings:


On the web: For a short summary of some basic lessons on motivation by Dan Pink, see http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u6XAPnuFjJc&feature=player_embedded

9/16

*Public Management’s Backbone: The Rule of Law*
Hill and Lynn Chap. 4

In class case discussion (no memo):
Wyatt vs. Stickney (in Hill & Lynn, esp Q.6)

Supplemental readings:

9/23

*The Craft Dimension- Practitioner Perspective*

**Joint class with other section, Executive panel on leadership in public organizations**

Hill and Lynn, ch. 7

Case memo:
Leading an International Organization: The Fall of Wolfowitz.
Evaluate Wolfowitz as a craftsman? What should he have done differently at the World Bank in your view?

9/30

*The Structural Dimension*

Hill and Lynn Chap. 5


Case Memo:
Express Transit Maintenance Division, Part A;
What factors caused problems to occur for Express Transit? What can Jiles do to make things better?

Supplemental Reading:

10/7

*The Cultural Dimension*

Hill and Lynn Chap. 6


Supplemental Reading:

Submit description of the organization you wish to study, and whether you will follow the outline described in the syllabus

10/14

*Administrative Burdens in Bureaucratic Encounters*


Case Memo:
Congress passed a bill allowing 5000 slots per year for Iraqis who worked with the US. Only a fraction of those slots have been taken. http://thelistproject.org/10-years-on-the-failure-of-the-special-immigrant-visa-program/ Why? This show talks about the challenge for these refugees in working their way through the bureaucracy, and provides a specific example of one individual’s efforts. http://www.thisamericanlife.org/takingnames/
Transcript of the show is here: http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/499/transcript

Why did these burdens occur? How might they have been avoided or reduced?

Supplemental Readings:

A State of Agents

Supplemental Reading:

Case Memo:
Gawande lays out a series of problems that affect health care, using the community of McAllen as an example. To what extent are these managerial problems? Drawing from the three-part framework presented by Hill and Lynn, how would you diagnose the problems and what solutions might you offer.

**A State of Agents**


**Case:**

Stillman, Sarah. 2014. Get Out of Prison Inc. *The New Yorker*. Stillman portrays a troubling case of how public-private partnerships are working in practice. Is it possible to structure these partnerships in a way that removes the problems she identifies? If yes, what are the conditions that must be in place? If no, why not?

**Supplemental Readings**


**The Contract Game**


**Bring laptops!**

**Case Due:** Government/Nonprofit Contracting Exercise (mandatory)
The goal of the case is to develop a contract between a Local Mental Health Board (LMHB) and a nonprofit mental health services agency (Bridge). The case has its own instructions, which you should follow unless they contradict the instructions I lay out below. The following steps are involved:

1) You will be assigned one of three roles: Most students will be a) representative of Bridge, and b) representative of LMHB. You will be assigned two teammates to work with. A small number of students will be contract mediators.

2) Your team should prepare a contract for the provision of services. Your initial contract is intended to further the goals of the entity you represent and be at least minimally acceptable to the other party. It should be no more than 2-3 pages in length. Before class begins, you will be asked to email your contract to a group of three students who represent the other side.

3) In class, each side will spend about 20 minutes reviewing and discussing the contract sent to them.

4) Following that, the LMHB and Bridge will negotiate a final contract for 40 minutes. Some groups will be allocated a contract mediator, some will not. The job of a contract mediator is to facilitate discussion as a neutral third party, record the development of the negotiated contract, present the outcome to the class, and email this contract to Professor Moynihan and the class.

5) This will be followed by a discussion period.

11/11

Performance and Organizational Learning
Hill and Lynn Chap. 9
Arygris, Chris and Donald Schon, chapter 1, What Is An Organization That It May Learn?

Case memo:
NUMMI
http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/403/nummi

What can public and nonprofit organizations learn from the NUMMI experience, if anything? In addressing this question, consider what made the NUMMI plant work as a learning organization, and what prevented GM from transforming itself to exploit NUMMI.

Supplemental reading:
11/18  

*Accountability and Blame*

Hill and Lynn Chap. 8  

**In class-case discussions:**  

**Student presentations sign-up**

**Supplemental reading:**  

11/25  

No class for Thanksgiving week

12/2  

Student Presentations 1

12/9  

Student Presentations 2

12/18  

Final papers emailed to Professor by 9am