

GRADUATE PROGRAM in PUBLIC and NONPROFIT ADMINISTRATION

Fall Semester 2006

PADM 7600 -- SEMINAR IN ADMINISTRATIVE THEORY AND ETHICS

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Class Schedule: Tuesdays, 5:30-8:20 PM

Class Location: McCord Hall, Room 100

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Generally, public administrators accomplish their missions in organizations. The size and complexity of these organizations in both governmental and nonprofit sectors vary a great deal and range from highly bureaucratic, large and geographically disperse organizations like the Department of Veterans Affairs and Girl Scouts to smaller organizations like the local District 11 Homeland Security Office and local Memphis Area Women's Council. But, just because organizational structures can get more done, does not mean that collective action in organizations occurs without frustration and worker alienation. Working with others means that one's work requires balancing worker independence with needed levels of coordination and communication, generalists with needed specialization, flexibility with standardization, efficiency with responsiveness, and risk taking with accountability. Direct and indirect management and leadership by political leaders in governmental organizations and board members in nonprofit organizations further add to the complexity and difficulties of leading public organizations.

So, how should public service agencies be designed, strictly hierarchical or flat in structure? Can we empower workers and does that really increase worker loyalty and productivity? Although we live in a democracy, can we have democracy in the workplace? What should be an agency's priority, efficiency, effectiveness, citizen involvement, stakeholder involvement, or what? How does this affect organizational design? Since researchers first began wrestling with how to deal with these thorny issues, they have developed a variety of solutions to improve organizational functioning, including total quality management, performance management, quality circles, MBO, slogans and job redesign. Each of these solutions reflect a particular and favored perspective on organizational life, a perspective that focuses on organizational structures, human relationships, political processes, or organizational symbols.

Course Purpose:

The purpose of this course is to help students understand the complexities of organizations by exposing them to theories of organizations, important organizational issues and processes, and a variety of strategies that can be used to lead and manage organizations. Additionally, and very importantly, all of this public organizational work must be done within an ethical frame. All too often ethical issues are treated as secondary issues, not treated consciously, and even avoided in the workplace. Since public organizations are to be good stewards of public dollars and serve the public interest, integration of ethical thinking into your growing understanding of human behavior and organizational life warrants attention. To better understand public organizations, students also need to understand program planning and design. Public programs are the organizational vehicle by which public administrators implement public policy. Thus, to fully understand the work of public organizations, students need to better understand how public programs are planned, designed, and implemented.

Individually, students will develop their own personal, intellectual insights as they reflect upon, analyze, and critique the readings and discussions. The assignments are intended to reinforce the critical thinking process and begin to develop an understanding of the some important intellectual foundations of your discipline and profession, public administration.

Course Objectives:

- A. Examine and apply administrative theory concepts to the practice of public administration and the design of government and nonprofit agencies/programs.
- B. Critically examine organizations using six different frames: structural, human resources, political, symbolic, ethical, and excellence; understand when to use/integrate the frames; and grow in your professional ability to handle ambiguity.
- C. Know the stages and tasks of program planning and the ways in which they can be carried out.
- D. Demonstrate awareness of and sensitivity to the interactive and political aspects of the planning process and organizational life.
- E. Assure the development of professional presentation/communication skills that are increasingly needed by public administrators.

Texts:

- Lee G. Bolman and Terrence E. Deal. *Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice, and Leadership*. 3rd edition. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2003. ISBN: 0-7879-6427-1. **RO**
- H. George Frederickson and Richard K. Ghere, eds. *Ethics in Public Management*. Paperback edition. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2005. ISBN: 0-7656-1461-8. **ETH**
- Leonard I. Ruchelman. *A Workbook in Program Design for Public Managers*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1985. ISBN: 0-88706-025-0. **WKB**

Electronic Hallway Cases: *Babcock Place, Rural Democracy, Ellen Schall and the Department of Juvenile Justice, Donald Rumsfeld and Prisoner Abuse at Abu Gharib, and Express Transit Maintenance Division* available on the WEBCT course page.

Student Resources from Hallway Talk: *Presentation Checklist, Brief Guidelines for Writing Action Memos, Memo Writing, A Note on Mapping Organizational Environments: Understanding Who Can Influence Your Success, and MORETOOLS—A Framework for Analyzing Management Dilemmas* available on the WEBCT course page.

Highly Recommended:

American Psychological Association, *Publication Manual*. 5th edition, paper, 2001. ISBN: 1-55798-791-2.

Class Requirements:

This course will use a web-enhanced format (access the course at <http://webct.memphis.edu>, using your University of Memphis UUID and password.) Participation requires that students complete

reading assignments and demonstrate understanding of topics, adding personal insight and examples appropriately. Your reflective comments are essential to this course. Please come to class prepared to discuss what you learned from assigned readings and to present relevant philosophical, theoretical or practical questions for class consideration. Assignments focus on the student's abilities to analyze issues/situations and demonstrate integration of course readings and discussions. Assignments submitted online must be created in Microsoft Word. Written assignments should be submitted on or before the due date. Please label the file with your name and assignment (example: JClaylifecycle.doc); also remember to put your name on your assignment (penalties will be imposed for not following this instruction).

Each member of the class will be required to:

- a. Read all assigned materials prior to each class session and complete class preparation assignments.
- b. Submit the written papers as assigned on time. Papers are expected to be thoughtful, well written and error free. The ethics paper and program design paper should use the American Psychological Association (APA) style (see www.apastyle.org). The use of a computer word processing package is required to assure that they are professional in presentation. Citations and reference pages for all assignments should use the APA style.
- c. Present the results of assignments in the designated class sessions. Special dispensation is granted in exceptional circumstances involving sickness, injury, or extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control. I, however, reserve the right to reduce your grade by one letter grade for every 24 hours that the assignment is late. Prior approval must be received for any late assignment and no work more than two days late will be accepted.
- d. Although the analysis and/or case development conducted for this class could build on the student's work from prior or concurrent classes, the work for this class should be original.
- e. This course is offered in a web enhanced format. The on-line discussions form an important vehicle for student insight, analysis, reflection, and engagement. Postings on WEBCT should be focused, thoughtful, carefully edited, add value to the discussion and enhance student learning.

Class Attendance and Participation

Attendance, engagement, and participation are essential in a graduate seminar and critical to creating a dynamic learning environment. As specified in the syllabus, students are expected to attend all in-class sessions. I will record attendance in each class. Your overall grade will not be affected by the first absence. Three "tardies" or "early exits" equal one absence. On the second absence from class, your grade will be lowered by one grade level. According to division policy, any student missing three or more classes must be given an "F" in the course. I encourage you to withdraw from the course if attendance becomes an issue.

Attendance, however, is not the same as participation. Students vary in their comfort levels about participating in class. At the same time, effective communication (verbal and written) skills are important characteristics of professional public administrators. In this class, students have multiple ways to participate in order to demonstrate and develop their communication and critical thinking

skills. For each in-class session, an “A” on class participation will be based on the student's full and thoughtful participation in the class discussions.

Overview of Written Assignments:

All of the assignments are designed to encourage students to develop their critical thinking skills and skills in professional discourse. The course syllabus is quite detailed regarding assignment requirements; however, students should review the WEBCT course page to see if further specific assignment information is provided. Be sure to ask the instructor if you need clarification on any of the assignments.

1. Abstracts (2)

Students will locate two peer-reviewed articles (one on organization structure and one on organizational change) and write abstracts in an expanded format.

2. Case Studies (4)

Respond directly to the case discussion questions or case assignment available on the Weekly Course Schedule. Demonstrate critical thinking skills and logical analysis. Explicitly make **linkages** between the features of the case and class readings, including relevant citations. Generally, case studies are between 4-6 pages in length, double-spaced (see each case for specific guidance). Cases can be single-spaced if organized into sections.

3. Ethics Paper

Students will review at least five issues of **PA Times** or **Public Manager** or **Nonprofit Quarterly** for real world examples of ethical concerns to identify ethical traps and dilemmas faced by public administrators. Reflecting on the readings from class materials, students will examine the ethical questions posed by public ethicists and then write a five page paper, double-spaced, identifying key insights about the kinds of questions asked and the answers given. The paper should make explicit linkages to the class materials (with citations).

4. Public Organization Program Design Project Presentation and Paper

Each student will identify a government or nonprofit agency to propose an appropriate program to their respective agency.