

Doing the Public's Business – Preliminary Syllabus (as of August 16, 2011)*

Fall Quarter 2011 (2 credits)

Special Expenses: Approx. \$35 for text: Mark H. Moore, Creating Public Value: Strategic Management in Government. Case studies and additional readings provided electronically.

Instructor: Stephen Buxbaum, email: buxbaums@evergreen.edu

Class location: Seminar II, Building A, Room 3109

Description: This course explores how public programs, projects and services are conceived, approved, funded and financed; using case studies about environmental, infrastructure and affordable housing projects and activities. Students will learn about how resource allocation decisions are made, how public value is determined and how levels of government work with and sometimes against each other as they take action to meet public needs. Course is intended for MPA students. If space is available, upper division undergraduates may participate upon approval of the instructor.

Learning Objectives:

- Investigate the political systems and processes used to decide how public resources are allocated.
- Examine the role of the public administrator in determining how the public's resources are deployed at different stages in carrying out the public's business.
- Explore methods used to articulate the need for public resources.
- Explore methods for assessing the ability and capability of an organization to complete a transaction that is in the interest of the public.
- Investigate how public projects, services and programs are determined to be ready to proceed.
- Investigate how the performance of a public investment is measured.
- Consider and practice using a framework for making resource allocation decisions using concepts that assess need, capacity, agreement and results.

Methods and Assignments

We will draw from readings, case studies and internet resources as we work together to intensively review how the public's business is accomplished. Class sessions will be interactive, combining presentations by the instructor and guests with seminar style discussions. Please check your schedule and your calendar to be certain you can participate fully at every class. **There is no option for partial credit or an incomplete.** Students will provide a short paragraph addressing their background and interests relative to the course material to be shared verbally during the first class and provided in advance by email to Stephen no later than COB Tuesday, September 27th. The first paper assignment is due Sunday October 23rd by email to Stephen (written assignments are one to two pages).

Please note: there is quite a bit of reading before the first Monday class. Students are required to use Moodle and email for assignments and distribution of class materials - including case studies.

* There may be minor changes to accommodate the needs of one of our speakers. Our Moodle sight will have the most up to date information on schedules and assignments. Look for Moodle availability by September 23, 2011.

Doing the Public's - Business Credit Requirements (2 credits)

For credit in this class, students are required to:

1. Complete all the assigned readings.
2. Attend all five Monday evening classes, October 3 through 31, from 6 to 10 p.m.
3. Actively participate in class discussions, exercises and triad/seminar team work.
4. Complete all written assignments – including worksheets to be completed during classroom exercises and seminars. Evaluation sheets will be provided to students and are to be completed and turned in at the end of each class.
5. All students are required to complete a short paper about a public program, project or service of the student's choice. Papers should incorporate lessons learned from class discussions, instructor presentations and reading. Papers must be emailed to Stephen by Sunday, October 23rd.
6. Consistent with MPA program requirements, students will prepare a self-evaluation and an evaluation of the instructor. Students should include in their self evaluation at least one important lesson or idea that has influenced their thinking relative to the course's learning objectives. Student/faculty evaluations can be completed in person, over the phone or via email exchange as per a mutually agreed upon approach in keeping with the college's established evaluation deadlines. It's the responsibility of the student to schedule and come to agreement with the instructor regarding the method for conducting the evaluation by end of class on October 31st.

MPA Standards of Conduct: *Having respect for others is fundamental to an open, free, and educational dialogue. All students are expected to support and contribute to a well functioning MPA classroom learning community. Behavior that disrupts the learning community may be grounds for disciplinary action, including dismissal from the MPA program. All students will be held accountable for maintaining the highest of academic standards – plagiarism will result in a full loss of credit for the class.*

About the Instructor:

Stephen Buxbaum has more than thirty years of management experience in the non-profit and public sectors focusing on community and economic development programs and policy. His background includes extensive work on farmland preservation, sustainable agriculture and water conservation beginning in the 1970's and '80's. He has worked at local, state and federal levels of government both in Washington State and Washington, D.C. He believes deeply in experiential learning and multi-disciplinary education and has been an active sponsor of Evergreen State College interns in his work in the Pacific Northwest. As an executive manager for the state of Washington, he oversaw financing of hundreds of affordable housing, community facilities and public works projects. During his career he has managed some of Washington State's most successful grant and loan programs, including the Housing Trust Fund and the Community Development Block Grant program. In 2005, he received a fellowship to attend Harvard University's program for senior executives in state and local government. In 2006, he was appointed to chair the Governor's Interagency Council on Homelessness. Now, in addition to managing his consulting business, he teaches part-time for Evergreen's Masters of Public Administration program. In November 2009 he was elected to serve on Olympia, Washington's City Council. Since April 2010 he has served as Olympia's Mayor Pro Tem (Deputy Mayor).

Doing the Public's Business (2 credits)

Fall Quarter, 2011 **Draft** Daily Schedule

Final Syllabus and Moodle access will be provided to registered students the week of September 19th.

Tuesday, September 27 - Pre-class work assignment:

Write a short paragraph describing your background and interests relative to the course material. Email due to Stephen by close of business.

Monday, October 3, 6-10 p.m.

Introductions, subject overview and expectations presented by instructor. Instructor presentation: Defining terms and becoming familiar with the landscape of doing the public's business through programs, projects and services. Short seminar covering assigned reading (Mark H. Moore, [Creating Public Value: Strategic Management in Government](#); Introduction and Parts 1 and 2).

Assignment handed out in class: short paragraph to be reviewed in preparation of seminar discussion on October 10th.

Monday, October 10, 6-10 p.m.

Instructor presentations and class discussion on: 1) Authorizing environments, 2) Steps in the process of concept development, approval and implementation of projects, programs and services – using a framework for analysis and decision making (Need, Capacity, Agreement and Results). Guest presentation about the politics of Washington State's budget process. Instructions for completing the short paper assignment provided by instructor.

Monday, October 17, 6-9 p.m.

Reading to be completed: "Million Dollar Murray." Instructor presentation and brief review of policy framework in the context of case study (Need, Capacity, Agreement and Results). Class seminar focused on case study.

PLEASE NOTE: Infrastructure and environmental issues case studies may vary from those listed depending on availability of presenters. All case studies will be available electronically to class participants by October 3rd.

Assignment due Sunday, October 23 to Stephen via email: One to two page analysis of a program, project or service of the student's choosing using the Need/Capacity/Agreement/Results framework as previously presented in class.

Monday, October 24, 6-9 p.m.

Reading to be completed: final two case studies. Instructor presentation and brief review of policy framework in the context of case studies (Need, Capacity, Agreement and Results). Class seminar on case studies: Cowichee/Tieton waste water treatment and Willapa Bay Spartina Mitigation.

Monday, 31, 6-10 p.m.

Reading to be completed: Part 3 of Moore's [Public Value](#).

Instructor and guest presentations and class discussion: 1) Resource streams: fees, general revenues, financing, 2) Budget cycles: local, federal, state, philanthropic and private. Class seminar: What is public value? Class discussion drawing from case studies and student papers.

By end of class, all evaluation conferences must be scheduled.