



Policy, Finance and Budgeting for Public Administration Spring 2016

Lecture meets in SEM 2 E1105

See Canvas for seminar rooms

See Canvas for up-to-date schedule and assignment information

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TESC MPA MISSION STATEMENT

“Be the Change”

Our students, faculty and staff create learning communities to explore and implement socially just, democratic public service. We *think* critically and creatively; *communicate* effectively; *work* collaboratively; *embrace* diversity; we *value* fairness and equity; *advocate* powerfully on behalf of the public; and *imagine* new possibilities to accomplish positive change in our workplaces and in our communities.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This academic year, as we indicated in Fall Quarter, we take as our basic premise, in the words of the people behind The Next System Project (<http://www.thenextsystem.org>), that “the challenging realities of growing inequality (economics), political stalemate (governing), and climate disruption (environment) prompt an important insight. When the old ways no longer produce the outcomes we are looking for, something deeper is occurring.” As we examine over the year, public administration is practiced in a wide arena and encompasses a multitude of approaches to serving the public; these approaches are now failing us.

This quarter we explore what it takes to move a policy and budget agenda for the public good in a democracy. This quarter is, in part, a continuation of last quarter’s “Public Administration-Management 101” survey of the challenges faced by administrators in the public, nonprofit or private sectors, and the knowledge and skills needed to administer/manage in diverse organizations that work toward the public good. In this course, we build on those skills and insights, exploring frameworks for making sense of the policy process in democracies, with an emphasis on budget and finance. As with the previous quarters, our over-arching theme is how to advance creative responses to change in a world where “Everything is Different.”

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Examine, place in context, and evaluate contemporary ideas about, and practices in, budget, finance and policy processes in a world facing fundamental paradigm shifts.
- Understand the special role of public administrators within the complex systems of politics, economics and the environment.
- Develop and improve basic policy and budget development skills and capacities, including the visual depiction of data and/or complex ideas and information.
- Further our understanding, through case studies, of complex policy environments that capture the lessons of The Next Systems Project approach to current events.
- Improve skills in critical thinking, writing, speaking, visualizing and presenting.

EXPECTATIONS

Review Assignment Requirements Thoroughly Before Drafting Submissions: This may sound obvious, but it is vitally important that you read and understand assignments before you begin to write. The pressure to just start writing can be irresistible at times. Don't! Canvas is used for course documents specifically because it enables changes as the course evolves during the quarter. Some assignments have very specific requirements. Some are intentionally a bit more open to interpretation and creative responses. Clear understanding of your goals is important to avoiding frustration – yours and the faculty's.

Format of Assignment Submissions: All papers will be submitted as requested by your seminar faculty member. All papers must meet assignment parameters and cite works using the American Psychological Association style (<http://www.apastyle.org/>) All written work will be of high quality, grammatically correct, clear and without spelling errors. If you require it, please contact the Graduate Writing Assistant. Sometimes your faculty will ask you to work with the Graduate Writing Assistant; if so, you are required to do so to the satisfaction of your faculty member.

Late assignments: Are not accepted without prior (to deadline) approval by your seminar faculty member. Multiple late assignments put you at risk for no credit.

Participation & Attendance: Students are required to attend each class meeting. Participation includes focusing on class content, being engaged in class and seminar, listening to others, taking notes, completing class interactive exercises, avoiding distractions, and listening to and dialoging with the guest speakers. If an absence is unavoidable, *faculty must be notified prior to a class and/or seminar absence. After one absence per quarter, make-up work may be assigned at faculty discretion, case-by-case.* Make-up work must be completed by the end of the quarter in question for course credit. Multiple absences put you at risk for no credit.

Use of Electronic Devices: The class is participatory and the learning community is dependent upon people being present to what is happening in class. Research shows that using electronic devices can be distracting and deleterious to the learning experience and to the learning community. Further, research suggests that typing notes on a keyboard rather than writing out longhand results in shallower processing of the concepts. Yet we acknowledge the limited, key situations where these devices are necessary. These situations include: accessing the Canvas site when course materials are being explained; workshops where laptops help teams track requirements and output; practical exercises in class where spreadsheets or other templates are needed; and individual situations where accommodation must be made through technology. In short, put away your devices (laptops, phones, tablets) except when otherwise instructed (we recognize that some may be accessing readings electronically and will use a device in seminar).

Credit: Students will receive 6 graduate credits at the completion of the quarter if all course requirements have been satisfactorily completed to meet course objectives. No partial credit will be awarded. Academic dishonesty and plagiarism (i.e., using other peoples' work as your own, see [MPA Handbook](#) for

more), failing to complete one or more assignments, completing more than one assignment late, or multiple absences may constitute denial of credit and/or dismissal from the MPA program. Students will be evaluated based upon their progress toward the learning goals, assessed from classroom, seminar, and assignment performance. Students at risk of losing credit will receive written notification prior to the end of the term.

Evaluation: Written self-evaluations and your evaluations of faculty are required for credit at the end of each quarter, along with faculty evaluations of students. During evaluation week, you will schedule an evaluation conference with your seminar faculty member. *Self-evaluations are due at the end of Week 10.* Evaluations are considered “submitted” only when posted through the College portal.

Accommodations: are provided for any student who desires them through Access Services, the Graduate Writing Assistant, and the Quantitative and Symbolic Reasoning Center. To request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact the office of Access Services for Students with Disabilities (867-6348 or 6364). Information about a disability or health condition is regarded as confidential. Please refer to TESC’s Students With Disabilities Policy [here](#).

Other Expectations of Students and Faculty: We commit to promoting a cooperative, supportive atmosphere within the community; give everyone opportunity for self-reflection and expression; use high standards in reading the text and preparing our papers, lectures, and comments in seminar; handle all disputes in a spirit of goodwill; respect our differences; and, discuss any problems involving others in the learning community directly with the individuals involved.

We abide by the [social contract](#), the [student conduct code](#) and the [non-discrimination policies and procedures at TESC](#). See the college’s [Student Conduct webpage](#) for more.

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, up to and including dismissal from the MPA program.

Guest Policy: Guests are welcome as long as they are not disruptive; please notify faculty if you are bringing a guest and be prepared to introduce your guest.

Inclement Weather: In the event of bad weather or emergencies students should check with television, web pages, and radio stations for announcements of campus closures. Students can also call the main campus line 867-6000 to get the latest news regarding a campus closure or delay. Since many students in the program travel from relatively distant locations, faculty may decide to cancel class even if campus is open. If we do this we will send an all-class email by 3:00 pm. If you've not already done so, sign up to receive alerts about campus closing or other emergencies [here](#).

Communicating with Each Other: Email and Canvas are our primary means of communication. You are responsible for checking your Evergreen email and Canvas regularly.

READINGS

- Stone, Deborah (2011) *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making* (3rd Edition) W.W. Norton & Company. ISBN-13: 978-0393912722. ~\$50
- Machiavelli, Nikolo (Author) & Robert Adams (Editor) (2014/1513) *The Prince (Norton Critical Editions, 2nd Edition)*. ISBN: 9780393962208. ~\$5. You can either buy/borrow a copy or get it for free online: <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/1232/1232-h/1232-h.htm>
- Bardach, Eugene & Eric Patashink (2015). *Practical Guide to Policy Analysis: The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving*. (5th Edition) CQ Press. **ISBN-13:** 978-1483359465 ~\$25.00
- Lott, Trent, Tom Daschle & Jon Sternfeld (2016). *Crisis Point: Why We Must – and How We Can – Overcome Our Broken Politics in Washington and Across America*. Bloomsbury Press. ISBN-13: 978-1632864611. ~\$20.
- Chen, Greg G., Lynne A. Weikart & Daniel W. Williams (Editors) (2014). *Budget Tools: Financial Methods in the Public Sector 2nd Edition*. CQ Press. ISBN: 978-1483307701. ~\$50

From Fall/Winter Quarters:

- *Public Administration: An Action Orientation (7th Edition)* (2013) Robert Denhardt, Janet Denhardt, and Tara Blanc. **ISBN-13:** 978-1133939214.

Excerpted Chapters (you need not buy these books; PDFs will be posted on Canvas):

- Kingdon, John (2010) *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies* (2nd Edition). Longman Classics.
- Schneider, Anne L. & Helen Ingram (2005) *Deserving and Entitled: Social Constructions and Public Policy*. Suny Press.

Other readings posted to Canvas, TBA

ASSIGNMENTS

Seminar papers. Weeks 1, 2 & 8. Write seminar papers following the format used Fall & Winter quarters. Use the guiding questions from “Learning from Discussion,” as you did last quarter. Maximum of 2 pages, doubled-spaced.

State Budget Analysis. Research and interpretation of budget information is an important skill this quarter. Students are expected to produce two documents related to a state budget of their choosing (NOT Washington). Cite your sources. Each of these assignments is

- **Assignment One, Due Week 5:** For your chosen state, explain the **revenue** sources being spent by state government. This can be a graph or table with some explanation. It can be done in text with numbers and percentages. By whatever means, inform the reader about revenue available to state decision-makers. In the same document, but a separate section, describe the most pressing budget issue or issues in your chosen state. This may be one issue that is impacting all other decisions or it may be several issues that are dividing parties, branches, or constituencies in your chosen state. Maximum two pages, double-spaced.
- **Assignment Two, Due Week 9:** Research and report the major categories of **spending** in your chosen state and define the percentages of total spending that each represents. How does spending relate to, or reflect, the major budget issues noted in Assignment #1? Finally, what are the future budget challenges for this state? Again, you may be reporting the information in a concise graphic, a table or other visualization, and enough description that an unfamiliar reader will understand the categories. Maximum two pages, double-spaced.

Policy Memos. Weeks 4 & 7. Use all of the materials from the case studies to develop policy memo to a decision maker (you choose) on the case study topic.

Policy memos are like action memos, with a few changes. Like action memos, they are written to a specific decision-maker and guide the decision maker on taking a particular action in response to a particular problem.

Like action memos, policy memos begin with a summary paragraph that briefly defines the situation, provides a summary of three recommended actions (of which one is “do nothing”), and makes a recommendation on which option to take.

The body of the memo develops the arguments for and against all possible options, making a clear case for your recommendation. The body of a policy memo (as different from an action memo) includes two additional elements: 1) what are the risks (including opposition) to your recommendation and how might those risks be mitigated (if at all); and 2) finish with next steps.

Maximum two pages, double-spaced.

Policy-Making Fieldwork. Field notes due Week 10. For this assignment, you are required to do policy-making “fieldwork” by attending (in person) two meetings of the same public policy-making body. Policy making bodies include the Legislature (if still in session), school boards, city councils, county councils or boards, etc. In short, any board or council that governs in the public realm (in Washington state, these are legion!). If you have any questions about your choice, talk it over with your seminar leader. Attend meetings, observe, take field notes. Submit your field notes (electronic submission – if you use a notebook, submit (legible) photos of your notes).

Visualization Example – Due Saturday, Week 10. Visual communication is an increasingly important aspect of policy development and advocacy. For this assignment, review existing visualizations (graphics, data visualizations, infographics, etc) you believe powerfully captures new system thinking applied to a

policy issue of your choosing. Choose your favorite to share with your colleagues in your seminar group. In addition, submit a one-page, double-spaced summary of your impressions of the visualization, addressing why the visualization works.

Policy Analysis. In class, we will analyze three policy case studies (the McCleary decision in Washington State, the Flint water crisis, and carbon pollution pricing in Washington State) that reflect the three crisis arenas forming the current confluence leading to systemic change: economic, governing and environmental. For this assignment, you get to select a policy situation to analyze, using next systems perspectives and the policy analysis tools you learn this quarter (e.g. situation analysis; power analysis; stakeholder analysis; Kingdon's framework of policy streams/windows/policy entrepreneurs, etc.; Bardach's and Patashnik's Eight Fold Path).

There are three outputs of your analysis:

- Policy Analysis Proposal Due Week 3. The proposal is a short summary of your chosen policy arena/situation and your proposed analytical approach. Maximum one page, double-spaced.
- Policy Overview, Due Week 6. This overview is a short document outlining your policy situation and your analysis. Maximum two pages, double-spaced.
- Poster Due Saturday, Week 10. Summarize your analysis in a professional poster and be prepared to talk about your poster in an all-class poster session (not a formal presentation). Posters will be displayed on the final Saturday and students and faculty will circulate to comment on the products.