

Introduction to Public Administration  
Department of Public and International Affairs  
University of North Carolina Wilmington  
PLS 308, Section 001 – Fall 2014  
MW: 3:30-4:45pm; Leutze Hall 110

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Office Hours: By appointment

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### **Course Description**

The course is designed to provide an introductory overview of public administration. Public administration is, essentially, the execution of the public laws, regulations, court decisions, and public policies that form the core of our constitutional form of government. The course will examine the foundations, organization, financing, and management of this administrative responsibility.

The course will also examine the profound impact of public administrative processes and procedures on the daily lives of citizens. Public administrators direct, supervise, and manage virtually every aspect of public services. For example:

- Federal Level: taxing salaries/wages, protecting the food and water supply, insuring bank deposits, and maintaining responsibility for domestic security.
- State Level: managing the welfare system, supervising highway construction, overseeing public education, operating prisons, and licensing career professionals.
- Local Level: providing fire and police protection, running utilities and public transportation, administering hospitals, managing garbage collection and disposal, providing parks and recreation facilities, and supervising elections.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course students will be able to demonstrate:

- An understanding of the institutional, political, and legal processes of the United States, and articulate the functions of public administration in terms of historical roots, structure, and contemporary issues.
- An understanding of the theoretical knowledge for developing and implementing public policy and how to integrate this into applied practice.
- An understanding of the social, political, economic, cultural, and ethical factors that influence public administration.
- The ability to effectively communicate, both in writing and orally, using the terminology, facts, concepts, and theories used in the field of public administration.

### Required Books

Ashworth, Kenneth. 2001. *Caught Between the Dog and the Fireplug, or, How to Survive Public Service*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.

Shafritz, Jay, E.W. Russell, & Christopher Borick. 2013. *Introducing Public Administration*, 8<sup>th</sup> Ed. New York: Pearson Longman.

Additional readings will be handed out in class, via email, or on Blackboard. **All readings are required** and pop-quizzes may be administered on any assigned reading.

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### Course Requirements

**Exams:** There are two exams, each worth 20% toward the final course grade. All exams are administered in the classroom and must be finished during the allotted time. If there are any conflicts with taking the exam at the appointed time, it is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor **before** the exam. No make-up exam will be granted unless the student emails the instructor **prior** to the scheduled exam time, regardless the reason, and there **must** be documentation.

**Research Paper:** Write a research paper addressing a contemporary public administration topic (8-10 pages, double-spaced).

**Short Writing Assignment:** Write a letter to your Congressperson detailing a current public administration issue or concern of interest (3 pages, double-spaced).

**Homework:** Submit a paper on Blackboard each week to include (1) a summary of the readings' top points, and (2) an integrative discussion question tying the readings into the larger course context (2 pages, single-spaced).

**Class Participation:** This course requires active participation. It is expected that each student will actively participate in the course through discussions, group assignments, and class participation. Participation is determined upon two factors:

- **Attendance:** Students are expected to attend all classes. Only a reasonable number of excused absences will be accepted. Unexcused absences will result in a reduction in the student's grade.
- **Discussion:** Students are expected to keep abreast of current public administration issues and controversies. In order to stay current it is strongly advised that you read a daily newspaper (*The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* provide good coverage of national government and *The Charlotte Observer*, *The News and Observer*, and *Star News* report state and local government news).

**Basis for Grade:** The following table summarizes the value of each assignment as a percent of the final grade.

Assignment	Value
Exams (2)	40%
Research Paper	25%
Short Writing Assignment	5%
Homework	15%
Class Participation	15%
Total	100%

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### Course Policies

**Academic Assistance:** The University Learning Center (ULC) provides free services to all UNCW students. Those services include: learning services, math services, study sessions, supplemental instruction, and writing services. For more information refer to their website: [www.uncw.edu/ulc](http://www.uncw.edu/ulc)

**Students with Disabilities:** Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with disabilities. Students with diagnosed disabilities should register with UNCW Disability Services. Please provide me a copy of the letter you receive from Disability Services detailing class accommodations you may need. If you require accommodation for test-taking, please make sure I have the referral letter no less than one week before the test. For more information refer to their website: [www.uncw.edu/disability](http://www.uncw.edu/disability)

**Academic Integrity:** All members of UNCW's community are expected to follow the academic Honor Code. Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated in this class. All academic integrity violations will result in a failing grade for the course and will be reported to the University. Please read the UNCW Honor Code carefully (as covered in the UNCW Student Handbook): [www.uncw.edu/odos/honorcode](http://www.uncw.edu/odos/honorcode). Please be familiar with UNCW's position on plagiarism as outlined in the UNCW Student Handbook. Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty in which you take someone else's ideas and represent them as your own. Please note it is also possible to plagiarize yourself. If you use your work from a previous class or assignment in this class without proper citation, it is plagiarism (i.e., using the same paper, or substantial portions of the same paper, for two classes or assignments is not acceptable). It is always best to speak to the instructor prior to submitting a paper if there is a question regarding academic integrity.

**Violence and Harassment:** UNCW practices a zero tolerance policy for any kind of violent or harassing behavior. If you are experiencing an emergency of this type contact the police at 911 or UNCW CARE at 910-962-2273. Resources for individuals concerned with a violent

or harassing situation can be located at [www.uncw.edu/wsrc/crisis.html](http://www.uncw.edu/wsrc/crisis.html)

**Campus Respect Compact:** UNCW has instituted a Seahawk Respect Compact to affirm our commitment to a civil community characterized by mutual respect. All students are expected to uphold these standards in the classroom and beyond. Please read the Compact: [www.uncw.edu/diversity/documents/ApprovedSeahawkRespectCompact8x10.08.09.pdf](http://www.uncw.edu/diversity/documents/ApprovedSeahawkRespectCompact8x10.08.09.pdf)

**Personal Electronics:** Cell phone use will not be tolerated in this class. Please turn off your cell phones prior to class and refrain from texting during class. Laptops may only be used for class related activity and only during lecture. Laptops must remain closed during the discussion of course readings. Laptops will be banned from the classroom for the rest of the semester if any laptop user is seen engaging in non-class related activity.

**Grading Policy:** The following percentages represent the letter grade equivalent. Please note that percentages do not round up (i.e., 89.99% is a B+ and does not round up to 90%).

A	93 - 100%	C	73 - 76%
A-	90 - 92%	C-	70 - 72%
B+	87 - 89%	D+	67 - 69%
B	83 - 86%	D	63 - 66%
B-	80 - 82%	D-	60 - 62%
C+	77 - 79%	F	59 or less

**Submission of Assignments:** All written assignments must be submitted electronically in a .docx format on Blackboard at the beginning of the class in which the assignment is due. All assignments must be in Times New Roman or Cambria 12-pt font, with 1-inch margins or points will be deducted.

**Late Assignments:** Assignments not in the instructor's possession by the specified time on the due date are immediately subject to a ten point deduction. Each subsequent day (i.e., calendar day - including weekends and holidays) an assignment is late will be an additional deduction of ten points. If you are aware of possible conflicts before they occur, please notify the instructor at least one week in advance of any due dates to arrange alternate accommodations. Informing the instructor of your intention to be absent does not waive your obligation to submit the work that is due, even where an excused absence is granted.

### Semester Schedule (Subject to Change):

Date	Topic	Readings	Activities	Assignments
Aug 20	Course Introduction	US Constitution	Review syllabus and course requirements	
Aug 25	Defining PA	Shafritz, Ch.1 Ashworth, Preface	<i>PA in the News</i>	Homework
Aug 27	Defining PA		<i>PA in the News</i>	
Sep 1	<b>NO CLASS - Labor Day Holiday</b>			
Sep 3	Public Policy	Shafritz, Ch.2 Ashworth, Ch.1	<i>PA in the News</i>	Homework
Sep 8	The Federal System & The Machinery of Government	Shafritz, Ch.3 & 4 Ashworth, Ch. 9 & 10	<i>PA in the News</i>	Homework
Sep 10	The Federal System & The Machinery of Government		<i>PA in the News</i>	
Sep 15	Ethics & Accountability	Shafritz, Ch. 5 Ashworth, Ch. 2 & 14	<i>PA in the News</i>	Homework
Sep 17	Ethics & Accountability		<i>PA in the News Share &amp; Discuss Letters</i>	Short Writing Assignment Due
Sep 22	Management & Organization Theory	Shafritz, Ch. 6 Ashworth, Ch. 11	<i>PA in the News</i>	Homework
Sep 24	Management & Organization Theory		<i>PA in the News</i>	
Sep 29	Organizational Behavior	Shafritz, Ch. 7	<i>PA in the News</i>	Homework
Oct 1	Organizational Behavior		<i>PA in the News</i>	
Oct 6	Flex Day		<i>Catch Up Discuss Midterm</i>	
Oct 8	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>			
Oct 13	<b>NO CLASS - Fall Break</b>			
Oct 15	<b>NO CLASS - Poli Sci Days</b>			
Oct 20	Performance Management	Shafritz, Ch. 8 & 9 Ashworth, Ch. 7	<i>PA in the News Midterm Recap</i>	Homework
Oct 22	Performance Management		<i>PA in the News</i>	
Oct 27	Leadership	Shafritz, Ch. 10 Ashworth, Ch. 6, 12 & 15	<i>PA in the News</i>	Homework
Oct 29	Leadership		<i>PA in the News</i>	

Nov 3	Personnel Management	Shafritz, Ch. 11 Ashworth, Ch. 3, 4 & 5	<i>PA in the News</i>	Homework
Nov 5	Personnel Management		<i>PA in the News</i>	
Nov 10	Public Financial Management	Shafritz, Ch. 13	<i>PA in the News</i>	Homework
Nov 12	Public Financial Management		<i>PA in the News</i>	
Nov 17	Program Audit & Evaluation	Shafritz, Ch. 14	<i>PA in the News</i>	Homework
Nov 19	Program Audit & Evaluation		<i>PA in the News</i>	
Nov 24	Social Equity	Shafritz, Ch. 12 Ashworth, Ch. 16	<i>PA in the News</i>	Homework
Nov 26	<b><i>NO CLASS: Thanksgiving Holiday</i></b>			
Dec 1	Flex Day		<i>Catch Up Discuss Final</i>	Research Paper Due
Dec 3	<b><i>NO CLASS: Exam Study Day</i></b>			
Dec 5	<b>FINAL EXAM (3-6pm)</b>			