Public Administration Professionalism

Description of the course

The goal of this course is to explore and appraise a variety of practical and philosophical issues pertaining to administrative professionals and the daily environment in which they work. The first three modules in the course introduce and elaborate on some core ideas and considerations associated with professionalism in public administration, specifically local government administration. The fourth and final module explores the pursuit and promotion of continuing professional development and lifelong learning on the part of local government administrators (a subject also discussed in the course Human Resource Development).

Learning Objectives

- Be able to illustrate and contrast static and dynamic concepts of professionalism
- Discuss the utility of the two concepts of professionalism to public administration in general and local government administration in particular
- Discuss the practical limits of applying concepts of professionalism to local government administration
- Explain the traditional values of public administration
- Understand how traditional values have manifested themselves at the local and provincial/federal levels
- Describe the New Public Management (NPM) movement and the values associated with it
- Understand the impact of NPM values at the local, provincial and federal levels
- Identify and discuss various conflicts that arise between traditional and NPM values
- Understand the distinctions between policy ethics, organizational ethics and individual ethics
- Understand the enduring and emerging ethical and values issues facing local administrators
- Recognize the ethical and value dimensions of issues that arise during the conduct of your official responsibilities
- Reflect in an informed manner on how you now deal—and how you should deal—with these issues
- Exercise improved skills in analyzing and managing ethical and values issues
- Describe the nature of the administrator's professional relationships with members of council, municipal staff, local residents and ratepayers, the media, the provincial and federal governments, and international trade organizations and agreements
- Suggest ways to improve the administrator's professional relationships with these various other players

- Provide examples of how the values discussed in Modules 2 and 3 affect, and are affected by, the various professional relationships referred to in Learning Objectives 1 and 2.
- Explain how your competence in pursuing continuing professional development and lifelong learning is dependent on your understanding of the nature of professionalism and professionalization—as well as on your understanding of local government administrators as persons, leaders, peers, and continuing learners
- List, and elaborate on, attributes or characteristics of professionalization that can guide a comprehensive, coherent and integrated approach to your continuing professional development and lifelong learning
- Describe how your pursuit of continuing professional development and lifelong learning is guided by your understanding of the nature of adult learning and lifelong learning for professionals
- Explain how your understanding of the dynamic, multi-dimensional concepts of professionalization and professionalism and the processes and conditions of learning implies a deep level and wide range of expectations, aspirations, goals, and approaches for your continuing professional education, learning, development, and performance

Course Outline

Module 1 "Introduction to Local Government Administration" asks the following questions: to what extent can those employed by local government be considered public service professionals, and what are the implications of such professionalism? To answer these questions, this module examines two key components of professionalism—expert competence in a field of practice and adherence to a service ideal. It also examines the role and changing values that define the operating environment in public administration, and the current extent and nature of professionalism in local government administration. Professionalism is considered in the context of how it was introduced, how it evolved, how its value systems have changed, and the consequences of these changes on local public servants and the public that they serve.

Module 2 "The Administrator's Roles and Relationships" focuses on the nature and ways of improving the relationships created by the diverse roles, responsibilities and context in which local government administrators work. Internal relationships with other staff and councillors, and external relationships with the public, interest groups and other governments are explored. Just as the values examined in Module 1 can conflict with each other, so can they conflict within these various relationships.

Module 3 "Ethics, Values and Local Government Administration" is primarily concerned with ethical values. It examines the nature and importance of the interactions between ethics and values in local government administration. In addition to a discussion of ethical issues important to the public administrative domain, the module provides the Code of Ethics of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), which is designed largely to provide advice to senior managers, and a model code of ethics developed by the Maritime Municipal Training and Development Board, which covers a broad range of municipal employees.

Module 4 "Pursuing and Promoting Continuing Professional Development and Lifelong Learning" aims to further develop the competence of public administrative professionals for pursuing and promoting continuing professional development and lifelong learning—for themselves as a local government administrator and for others with whom they work.

Module 5 "The Administrators Role and Relationship" will examine relationships important to the local government policy process. It will discuss various perspectives from which local government interacts with other groups.

Required Readings

Textbooks

The Responsible Public Servant. Kernaghan, Kenneth and John W. Langford. Halifax, NS: Institute for Research on Public Policy, 2014.

Readings

Plunkett, T.J. and G.M. Betts, *The Management of Canadian Urban Government*, Kingston, ON: Queen's University, 1978, pp. 100-106, 122-125.

Siegel, David, "Politics, Politicians and Public Servants in Non-Partisan Local Governments," *Canadian Public Administration*, Spring 1994, pp. 7-30.

Kernaghan, Kenneth. "East Block and Westminster: Conventions, Values and the Public Service," in Christopher Dunn (ed), The Handbook of Canadian Public Administration. Toronto, ON: Oxford University Press, 2002, pp. 104–119.

Government of Canada Privy Council Office, "Guidance for Deputy Ministers," http://www.pcobcp.gc.ca/index.asp?lang=eng&page=information&sub=publications&doc= gdm-gsm/doc-eng.htm#TOC2_1

Charih, Mohamed and Lucie Rouillard, "The New Public Management," in Mohamed Charih and Arthur Daniels (eds), *New Public Management and Public Administration in Canada*, Toronto, ON: Institute of Public Administration of Canada, 1997, pp. 27-45.

Tindal, C. Richard and Susan Nobes Tindal, *Local Government in Canada*, 5th ed.; Toronto, ON: Nelson Canada, 2000, pp. 87-90, 308-310, 304-307, 207-253.

Aucoin, Peter. "Beyond the 'New' in Public Management Reform: Catching the Next Wave?" in C. Dunn (ed.), Handbook of Canadian Public Administration. Toronto, ON: Oxford University Press, 2002, pp. 37–52.

LeSage, Edward C. Jr. "The Problem of How 'New Public Organizations' Choose Their Priorities" in Michael McConkey & Patrice Dutil (eds.), Making Connections: Municipal Government Priorities Today. Toronto, ON: Institute of Public Administration of Canada, 2004, pp 10–21.

Plunkett, T.J. "The Challenge." City Management in Canada: The Role of the Chief Administrative Officer. Toronto, ON: The Institute of Public Administration of Canada, 1992, pp. 56–60.

Thom, Bruce E. "Problems with Running Cities in the New Millennium: Godzilla v. Mr. Bean," Municipal World (April 2004), pp 5–passim.

LeSage, Edward C. Jr. and Jack Masson. Alberta's Local Governments: Politics and Democracy. Edmonton, AB: University of Alberta Press, 1994, 189–194, 221–223, 228–236.

Tindal, Richard C. and Susan Nobes Tindal. Local Government in Canada, 5 th ed. Toronto, ON: Nelson Canada, 2000, pp. 87–90, 308–310.

Tindal, Richard C. and Susan Nobes Tindal. Local Government in Canada, 5 th ed. Toronto, ON: Nelson Canada, 2000, pp. 304-307.

LeSage, Edward C. Jr. and Jack Masson. Alberta's Local Governments: Politics and Democracy. Edmonton, AB: University of Alberta Press, 1994, pp 265–271.

Tindal, Richard C. and Susan Nobes Tindal. Local Government in Canada, 5th ed. Toronto, ON: Nelson Canada, 2000, pp. 226-233.

LeSage, Edward C. Jr. and Jack Masson. Alberta's Local Governments: Politics and Democracy. Edmonton, AB: University of Alberta Press, 1994, pp. 57–66.

Graham, Katherine A., Allan M. Maslove and Susan D. Phillips. "Intergovernmental Relations." Urban Governance in Canada: Representation, Resources and Restructuring. Toronto, ON: Harcourt Brace, 1998, pp 171–201.

Graded Assignments

Discussion Boards:

Grade Value: 8%

Students are required to participate in all 5 online discussions. Each online discussion will consist of an initial posting on the discussion topic and response postings (comments) either in response to a classmate's posting or as an augmentation of your initial posting. Students will have approximately one week to meet the requirements of each discussion board. Focused online discussions allow students to express their understanding of information that is covered in each of the modules, to discuss that information with classmates and their instructor, and to integrate the results of those discussions into their own learning.

Essay 1:

Grade Value: 25%
Requirements: 800-1000 words, double spaced and 12 pt font

Final Assignment:

The final assignment is cumulative. Students are given one week to complete the assignment.
Grade Value: 35%

<u>**Evaluation Criteria**</u>
Essays

Essays in all courses are evaluated according to the following criteria:

Thesis (Grade Weight = 20%)

Excellent (A: 86–100)	Good (B: 72–85)	Satisfactory (C: 60–71)	Poor (D–F: 0–59)
• thesis is clearly stated, creative, original and insightful • presents a Point of View (POV) based on a critical analysis of factual evidence and relevant theory	• thesis is clearly stated and insightful • presents a POV based on an assessment of factual evidence and may refer to relevant theory	• thesis is lacking in clarity and precision • presents a POV based on a limited assessment of factual evidence and on common knowledge, generalizations and some theory	• thesis is poorly stated, ambiguous or absent • fails to present a POV or presents a POV that is not based on analysis of factual evidence relevant theory or any other viable form of support

Background and Course Content (Grade Weight = 20%)

Excellent (A: 86–100)	Good (B: 72–85)	Satisfactory (C: 60–71)	Poor (D–F: 0–59)
• elaboration of the thesis is concise, focused explicitly situated (relevant to the community of learners and practitioners), contextualized (related to real life scenarios for practitioners) and draws on the student's personal experiences	• elaboration of the thesis is clear and somewhat situated and contextualized • the essay contains some background information that is not central to the thesis so the focus on the thesis sometimes waivers	• elaboration of the thesis is somewhat clear, but too much time is given to contextualizing and situating the thesis • the extra emphasis on the background and context tends to draw the focus of the essay away from the central thesis	• the thesis is neither situated nor contextualized in terms of practical professional experiences and/or situations • focus on the thesis is poor or absent

Research, Supporting Data and Analysis (Grade Weight = 25%)

Excellent (A: 86–100)	Good (B: 72–85)	Satisfactory (C: 60–71)	Poor (D–F: 0–59)
• demonstrates a clear grasp of the complexity of the issues arising from the thesis • refers to a full range of relevant current resources (course materials, external sources), and contemporary research findings • uses relevant data, analyses and conclusions to conduct a thoroughly and objective examination of the validity of the thesis • includes a critical analysis of the sources used	• demonstrates an understanding of the central issues arising from the thesis • refers to current sources, including contemporary research findings • draws on related analyses and conclusions that support the thesis • uses a somewhat uncritical analysis of this information to examine the validity of the thesis	• demonstrates an appreciation for some of the issues arising from the thesis • refers to current sources, research, opinions, and observations that support the thesis • the resources, evidence, and analyses used are somewhat limited in scope • information is used in an uncritical way to examine the validity of the thesis	• fails to indicate an appreciation or understanding of issues that arise from the thesis • makes limited or no reference to current sources, contemporary research or other forms of factual evidence, opinions or analyses to support the thesis • does not use the information that is presented to assess the validity of the thesis

Conclusions (Grade Weight = 15%)

Excellent (A: 86–100)	Good (B: 72–85)	Satisfactory (C: 60–71)	Poor (D–F: 0–59)
• conclusions are clear, creative and insightful • contain a clear, cogent reiteration of and support for the central points of the thesis • thorough careful analysis confirms the superiority of this POV over other POVs. • the conclusions are based on arguments that are developed throughout the essay and offer a convincing defense of thesis and a compelling, insightful closure	• conclusions are clear and valid • contain a cogent reiteration of the central points of the thesis • a careful analysis tends to support the superiority of this POV over a competing POV • the conclusions support the main hypothesis of the essay and provide a convincing sense of closure	• conclusions are offered but in a disorganized way • the central points of the thesis are reiterated • analysis supports the thesis but little consideration is given to other POVs. • the thesis defense is somewhat successful but there is only a limited sense of closure	• conclusions are vague or absent • there is little or no reiteration of the central points of the thesis • analysis is weak and offers limited support for the thesis and does not consider alternative POVs • fails to defend the thesis adequately and provides no sense of closure

Writing Style and Essay Structure (Grade Weight = 10%)

Excellent (A: 86–100)	Good (B: 72–85)	Satisfactory (C: 60–71)	Poor (D–F: 0–59)
• essay is very well organized • central ideas are presented very clearly, cogently and effectively • thesis is insightful and creative and functions as a unifying factor throughout the paper • there is a critical analysis and integration of ideas throughout the paper	• essay is well organized • central ideas are presented clearly, and effectively • thesis is sound and imaginative and is referred back to frequently throughout the paper • paper is analytical and relationships between ideas are clearly developed	• some parts of the essay are less well organized • central ideas are fairly clear, but could be presented more effectively and consistently • thesis is generally sound but utilized inconsistently as a unifying factor in the paper • paper presents some analysis and integration of ideas	• essay lacks organization • central ideas are unclear and poorly presented • thesis is unclear and lacking in insight, creativity and soundness • paper is neither analytical nor integrative

Grammar and Mechanics (Grade Weight = 10%)

Excellent (A: 86–100)	Good (B: 72–85)	Satisfactory (C: 60–71)	Poor (D–F: 0–59)
• all sources are cited accurately • minimal spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors • essay submitted on time (or delayed, with instructor permission)	• most sources are cited correctly • a few spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors • essay submitted late (marks deducted at instructor's discretion)	• some sources are cited incorrectly or inappropriately • some spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors • essay submitted late (marks deducted at instructors discretion)	• sources not cited or cited incorrectly or inappropriately • excessive spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors • essay submitted very late

Thesis   (Grade Weight = 20%)
Background and Course Content   (Grade Weight = 20%)
Research, Supporting Data and Analysis   (Grade Weight = 25%)
Conclusions   (Grade Weight = 15%)
Writing Style and Essay Structure   (Grade Weight = 10%)
Grammar and Mechanics   (Grade Weight = 10%)

Discussion Boards

Discussion Postings (includes initial and response postings) in all courses are evaluated according to the following criteria:

1. Demonstrates an understanding of a course concept. This applies to your initial and response posts, and includes the following elements:

  a. Are your posts relevant to the assigned topic and question?
  b. Do your posts demonstrate accurate understanding of course material?

c. Does the subject field convey the essence of your post (in less than 10 words)?

Important Note for Quality Posts: While your posts will often draw on past experiences and informed opinions, the most successful posts will support personal opinions with reference to the course material.

2. Advances the discussion by adding new knowledge. This applies to your response posts, in which you should try to broaden the perspective presented in another post by building on their ideas or pushing those ideas in a new direction. Some possible ways to do this are:

a. Apply references to course material/theoretical concepts.
b. Provide a comparable example from your own work experience thereby extending the original idea, but with a new 'twist'.
c. Provide a counter-example based on personal experiences that refute or weaken the position taken by the initial author (e.g. I hear you say this...., but my experience suggests this...)
d. Apply a related concept from the course that the initial post did not refer to.
e. Apply a related example from current events or some other resource.

Basic Requirements for Course Assignments

File Types: assignments must be submitted on the Course Site in MS Word .doc, .docx, or in .rft format.(These files types can be opened in Blackboard Learn and receive comments; other formats such as .wpd cannot).

All assignments should be in 12 Times New Roman (TNR) font, double-spaced with a 1" margin on each side. Each assignment should be approximately 10 pages in length.

Each page should include the student's name and page numbers in the header or footer.

Each assignment should have a cover sheet as part of the document that has the following: course name, student's full name, instructor's name and essay title (ie. Essay Assignment #1).

Software and Technology Requirements

This course will use Blackboard Learn S-14 (BBLearn) learning management system for class communications, content distribution, and assessments.

Log on to**www.dal.ca/bblearn**

To access the course:

Username: Your College of Continuing Education username cXXXX.cce

Initial Password: Your College of Continuing Education password (it is recommended that you change this password and keep it in a safe place as we are unable to reset it at the College).

For this course, you will need a reliable and frequent access to a computer and to the Internet. You might also need a headset with a microphone or speakers and a microphone to be able to listen to online resources and conduct other activities in the course (not needed in all courses).

Blackboard supports the most common operating systems:

PC: Windows 8, Windows 7, Windows Vista

Mac: Mac OS X Mavericks

Note: computers using Windows XP, Windows 8 RT and OS X 10.6 or lower are no longer supported. Also please ensure that you have the most recent Adobe program downloaded to be able to access certain types of files on Blackboard.

To check browser and computer compatibility follow the link that can be found on the course site under 'Student Supports':
https://help.blackboard.com/en-us/Learn/9.1_SP_14/Administrator/030_Browser_Support/010_Browser_Support_SP14

Technology issues are not an excuse for missing a course requirement – make sure your computer is configured correctly and address issues well in advance of deadlines.

Help Desk Information

For technology or computer issues, you should contact the Help Desk at Dalhousie University.

Phone: 902-494-2376   Toll-free: 1-800-869-3931   Email: helpdesk@dal.ca

Operating Hours

Fall & Winter Hours	**Summer Hours (May – Aug)**
08:00am - 12:00am Monday - Friday	08:00am - 09:00pm Monday - Friday
10:00am - 12:00am Saturday - Sunday	08:00am - 06:00pm Friday
	10:00am - 06:00pm Saturday – Sunday

You will find tutorials online under 'Student Supports' that will familiarize you with various aspects of BbLearn.

For issues related to course content and requirements, please contact your instructor.

Student-Instructor Interaction

Instructors are committed to providing a learning experience through thoughtful planning, implementation and assessment of course activities. They are committed to being readily available to students throughout the course by:

1. Replying to emails within 24-48 hours.
2. Returning graded course work with feedback within 7-10 days of each assignment due date.

Blackboard and Privacy

While connected to Dalhousie University's Learning Management System (Blackboard), students may be tracked for their use of the features and tools. For the life of the online course/program, all administrators and instructors with access to the course can request full or partial reports of tracked data for any student(s). Instructors may use tracked information to help determine grades−specifically date stamps on discussion postings and assignment file uploads are used to determine if activities were completed by a specific deadline, and to calculate late penalties if applicable.

Aggregate class and data is used by administrators to study usability, access, and pedagogical issues in the online learning environment.

Blackboard tracks each student's use of all course tools and features, including:
- entry time into each tool and feature
- exit time from each tool and feature
- time spent in each tool and feature per session
- time spent in each tool and feature during the entire course
- total time in Blackboard
- number of Blackboard sessions
- discussion messages read
- discussion messages posted
- mail messages read
- mail messages sent
- calendar entries viewed
- calendar entries added
- assignments read
- assignments submitted
- content files viewed
- web links viewed
- media Library collections viewed
- media Library entries viewed

Academic Integrity

The commitment of the College of Continuing Education is to graduate future leaders of business, government and society who manage and lead with integrity. So when you submit any work for evaluation in this course or any other, please ensure that you are familiar with your obligations under Dalhousie University's Academic Integrity Policies. Dalhousie offers many ways to learn about academic writing and presentations so that all members of the University community may acknowledge the intellectual property of others. Knowing how to find, evaluate, select, synthesize and cite information for use in assignments is called being "information literate." Information literacy is taught by Dalhousie University Librarians in classes and through online tutorials. See guides and tutorials at http://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity/student-resources.html

Do not plagiarize any materials for this course. Further guidance on what constitutes plagiarism, how to avoid it, and proper methods for attributing sources, ***please see*** http://plagiarism.dal.ca/Student%20Resources/

Furthermore, the University's Senate has affirmed the right of any instructor to require that student papers be submitted in both written and computer readable format, and to submit any paper to a check such as that performed by Safe Assign anti-plagiarism software. As a student in this class, you are to keep an electronic copy of any paper you submit, and the course instructor may require you to submit that electronic copy on demand.

Diversity and Nondiscrimination

Dalhousie University is committed to maintaining a community that recognizes and values the worth and dignity of every person. The University recognizes the diversity of its students and is committed to providing a learning experience in which students are able to participate, without discrimination on grounds prohibited by the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act. In particular, the University is committed to facilitating students' access to the University's academic programs, activities, facilities and services.

The University seeks to develop and nurture diversity and encourages each individual to reach his or her own potential. Dalhousie University prohibits discrimination against any member of the university community on the basis of race, religion, color, age, gender, ethnic, national or aboriginal origin, marital status, parental status, disability, source of income, political belief and sexual orientation.

The University is obliged to make every reasonable effort short of undue hardship to take substantial, timely and meaningful measures to eliminate or reduce the discriminatory effects of the learning and community environment.

Course Evaluation

At the end of each course, you will be invited and encouraged to complete a formal course evaluation. Evaluations provide an opportunity to provide honest and anonymous feedback on course content and instruction quality. Your feedback contributes to continuous improvement of our courses. We would appreciate hearing your thoughts and opinions on the course/program. Thank you for engaging in this process. All responses will be held in strictest confidence.

Special Needs and Accommodation

It is the student's responsibility to self-identify and make a request for accommodation. The request for accommodation must be made reasonably in advance of the course or program in relation to which accommodation is being sought so that a decision can be made. The University will consider a request for accommodation made by a third party (physician, family member, caregiver, advocate or other representative) only where the student has provided prior written consent.

A request for accommodation must include the reasons for the accommodation, supporting documentation, the accommodation being requested and suggestions as to how the accommodation can be achieved, copies of medical reports (if applicable) to substantiate the request and where the request relates to a learning disability, a report describing the nature of the disability.

Disability Statement

In an effort to create a classroom environment that maximizes the success of all students, we encourage you to make us aware of any barriers that may inhibit your learning. Please feel free to ask any time about concerns or questions you may have about assignments, activities, or examinations.

The material in this syllabus and on the course site are fully copyrighted.