POLI 3250: Canadian Public Administration - Fall 2014/2015

Instructor: Mohammad Ehsan
Class Time: Mondays and Wednesdays, 5:35-6:55 pm
Class Room: McCain Arts & Social Science 2176
Office Hours: After class, or by Appointment
E-mail: mehsan@dal.ca

Course Overview
This class provides an introduction to Canadian public administration, focusing mainly at the federal level. In doing so, it will explore the actors, institutions and mechanisms involved in the processes of governing, and analyze the dynamic relationship among civil servants, politicians, and citizens. Before going to the Canadian context, it will begin with an overview of the evolving theoretical underpinnings dominating the current literature of public administration. In comprehending public administration in Canadian context, the course thereafter focuses on a number of significant themes relevant to the public sector.

Course Format
Even though this course consists primarily of lectures, student contributions and presentations throughout the course will be an important component.

Course Readings
There is no specific text assigned to this course. Students are required to obtain their readings from Killam library. Most of the readings are reserved in the library, whereas many are available electronically through the library.

Course Requirements and Evaluation

Participation
Students in this course are encouraged to participate in class discussions and raise relevant questions. Therefore, it is expected that you would come to class having read the required readings and be prepared to discuss those topics. Further to these, debates and group presentations would provide ample opportunities to the rest of the class to participate in the course. Quality of participation is always preferred than quantity.
Class Debates
Students in this course will be divided into several groups for class debates on various aspects of public administration. You will be given the option to sign up for your preferred topic on the first day of class. Readings assigned for these debates are mandatory readings for all and will be covered in the exam.

Critical Review Paper
Students in the course are required to write a critical review paper of 4 pages (maximum) on an article of their choice published in Canadian Public Administration during the past 14 years. This paper should explore the major arguments and findings of the article and evaluate whether the author(s) succeed in his/her assertions. With the support of other resources, you will assess the conclusions made in the article.

Class Exams
There are two (2) in-class exams in the course which would cover all the course materials including the lectures and readings.

First exam; October 15; Weeks 1-5
Second exam; November 19; Weeks 7-11

Blueprint 2020 + Paper/Presentations
Students, in groups, will work on preparing critical assessment reports/final essays on selective aspects of Canadian government’s latest reform efforts, Blueprint 2020. In exceptional cases, groups will be allowed to work on a different topic. For assessment of this work, members of a group would formally be allowed to comment/mark on other members’ contributions (participation in group activities & presentation) to the project (10%) which will be counted towards the final grade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Critical Review</th>
<th>Debates</th>
<th>Exams (Two)</th>
<th>Blueprint 2020 Group Paper &amp; Presentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight (%)</td>
<td>Throughout</td>
<td>Sept 29</td>
<td>October 20 &amp; 22</td>
<td>Oct 15, Nov 19</td>
<td>Oct 26 &amp; Dec 2</td>
<td>(20 + 10) 30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ground Rules

Note the following points which are expected to be adhered to by all the students:

First, please DO NOT approach the instructor with a request to change the course schedule. Under no circumstances can this be done.

Second, late submissions will be subject to a penalty of 5% per day, including Saturdays and Sundays.

Third, only hard copies of submissions are accepted. Electronic submissions alone would warrant a penalty of 10%. Submissions are only accepted in class.

Fourth, absence in debates and Blueprint+ presentations cannot be accommodated. Absence will result in losing full points for the component.

Fifth, absence from class will result in decreased participation marks.

Sixth, switch off your mobile phone before entering the class; laptop use is permitted for only class purposes.

The final evaluation that the participants receive in this course will be submitted as a letter grade. Dalhousie University employs the following interpretative grading scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>Numeric Range</th>
<th>GPA</th>
<th>Norm-Referenced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>85-89</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>80-84</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>65-69</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>55-59</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>50-54</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Marginal Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-49</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>Inadequate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Outside Resources

Following are some of the organizations where you would find excellent reports on public administration in general:

- Institute of Public Administration of Canada: http://www.ipac-canada.org/
- Canada School of Public Service: http://www.csps-efpc.gc.ca/index-eng.aspx
- Public Policy Forum: http://www.ppforum.ca/
- Institute on Governance: http://www.iog.ca/
- Optimum Online: http://optimumonline.ca/frontpage.phtml
- Institute for Research on Public Policy: http://irpp.org/research/
- The United Nations Public Administration Network: http://www.unpan.org/

Course Outline

Week 1 Introduction and Theoretical Overview

September 8 & 10

Required Readings:


Week 2 – Theoretical Overview

September 15 & 17

Required Readings:

Week 3 – Government Structure

September 22 & 24

Required Readings:


Optional Readings:


Week 4 - Canadian Public Service

September 29 & October 1

Required Readings:


Optional Readings:


**Week 5 - Ministerial Responsibility and Political Neutrality**

**October 6 & 8**

*Required Readings:*


*Optional Readings:*


**Week 6**

October 13 (Thanksgiving – University closed)

October 15 - First In-Class Exam

**Week 7**

October 20 & 22 – Class Debates
Week 8 – Policy Environment in Canada

October 27 & 29

Required Readings:

Week 9 – Financial and Human Resources Management

November 3 & 5

Required Readings:

Week 10 – E-Government in Canada

November 10 – Study Day (No Class)

November 12

Required Readings:

Optional Reading:

Week 11 - Managing Ethics and Accountability

November 17

November 19 – Second In-Class Exam
**Required Readings:**


**Optional Readings:**

Kenneth Kernaghan (2007), *A Special Calling: Values, Ethics and Professional Public Service*, Ottawa: PSHRMAC.


**Weeks 12 & 13**

**November 24 – Open Session**

**November 26 & December 2 – Blueprint 2020 + Presentations**

**Miscellaneous**

There are a number of administrative items on which students need to keep themselves apprized, among them the following:

- The university’s policies and procedures on accessibility for students with any disabilities can also be found in the academic calendar: http://www.dal.ca/campus_life/student_services/academic-support/accessibility.html

- Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. Be cautious of the rules of writing expectations when you submit any work. University website has details on this: http://academicintegrity.dal.ca/

- Familiarize yourself with the following offices/regulations:
  - Academic calendar: http://www.dal.ca/academics/academic_calendars.html
  - Important dates: http://www.dal.ca/academics/important_dates.html
  - Advising and Access Services: http://www.dal.ca/access