POLI 3250
Canadian Public Administration
Department of Political Science
Dalhousie University
Fall 2015

Instructor: Michelle Coffin
michelle.coffin@dal.ca
Class Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 5:35-6:55
Location: McCain Arts and Social Science Building, Room 1170
Office Hours: By appointment only

Course Description, Objectives and Outcomes

This is an introductory course to the study of Canadian public administration. The main objective of the course is to introduce students to the theories, institutions and actors at play in the practice and study of public administration. Although this course might be the first time students are encountering the subject matter it is designed for senior undergraduates with a solid background in the discipline of political science.

The course will cover topics such as:
- the organization and structure of the public service
- the public policy cycle
- the constitutional and legal environment in which public servants operate
- the management of human resources
- public administration reforms
- ethics and accountability in the public service
- the relationships between the public service and politicians, the public, the media and interest groups

At the end of the course students should be able to:
- articulate the dominating theories influencing the practice and decision-making of public administration in Canada
- identify and describe the institutions of public administration and their function within the Canadian context
- identify and describe the various influences and actors present in the practice and decision-making of public administration in Canada
- make independent and informed determinations on the dominating theories, institutional roles and practices of the public service and the relationships between the public service and politicians, the public, the media and interest groups
Required Readings

- Most assigned readings will be available on BBL, however it is the responsibility of students to locate assigned readings. All material not posted by the instructor is available online.

Course Evaluation

- **Assignments and Grading**
  - Discussion lead: 15 per cent
  - FOIPOP/ATIP submissions: 10 per cent
  - Group Project: 30 per cent
  - Roundtable Discussions: 15 per cent
  - Final Exam or Learning Opportunities: 20 per cent
  - Attendance/Participation: 10 per cent

Assignment Details

  - **Discussion Lead**
    Each student is required to lead a class discussion during the term via the preparation and presentation of a synopsis of one of the required course readings. The formal presentations are to be approximately 15 minutes and must conclude with three questions intended to spark class discussion and debate. Students are required to submit hard copies of the synopsis and questions to the instructor on the day of the presentation. Presentations will take place throughout the term between the Oct 6 and Nov 26 classes.

  - **FOIPOP/ATIP Applications**
    Each student must prepare either a Government of Canada Access to Information and Privacy application or a Government of Nova Scotia Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy application. Democratic governments have a responsibility to provide citizens with the information they require to make informed judgments on the activities of their governments, while also protecting the privacy of citizens. It is the role of public servants to document their activity and to provide such information to citizens upon request in accordance to relevant law(s). Students are not required to submit the application, but it is highly encouraged to do so as application responses provide a great deal of insight into the workings of the public service. Hard Copies of the applications must be submitted to the instructor on Oct 1.

  - **Group Project**
    Students will organize into small groups to complete a project similar to one that would be conducted in public service. Groups will assume the functions of communications and policy specialists and will work together to resolve a contemporary public policy issue. Group topics must be approved in advance by the instructor. Hard copies of the project must be submitted to the instructor on Nov 26. Students will be evaluated on their individual performance (75% [62.5% from instructor, 12.5% from group peers]) as well as for the overall group performance (25% [12.5 from instructor, 12.5% from peer group]). Details of the project and corresponding documents will be posted to the course BBL site and discussed in class.
• **Roundtable Discussions**
  Two classes at the end of the term will be dedicated to organized discussions on major themes discussed in class and in the readings. As the term progresses we will discuss the particulars of this assignment and agree to its structure, content and expectations.

• **Final Exam or Learning Opportunities**
  If, by the end of the Oct 8 class, the instructor determines that students have not fully experienced the objectives and outcomes provided by the course, there will be four learning opportunities for students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the course material covered to date. These unannounced and impromptu learning opportunities will take place between the Oct 13 and Nov 26 classes. If the instructor makes this determination it will be announced on BBL on Oct 9. Each learning opportunity will be worth 5% of the final mark. Factors to be considered by the instructor in making this decision include:
  • students’ participation in class discussions
  • respect for discussion leaders and active participation in their discussions
  • attendance
  • overall respect for peers, post-secondary education and the learning environment created by both the instructor and students

If the instructor determines that students have fully experienced the objectives and outcomes provided by the course a final exam will take place during the last class. The exam will focus on the major themes of the course. If there is no exam as a result of learning opportunities, the class time dedicated to roundtable discussions will take place on Dec 3 and 8.

• **Attendance and Participation**
  The instructor will take attendance during every class. Students with low attendance will be referred to the Assistant Dean, Student Matters. Participation points will be heavily, but not solely, determined by students’ performance in their Group Project and Roundtable Discussions.

**Grading scheme**

As per the Dalhousie undergraduate academic calendar.

Deadline to drop a course **without a W** is **Oct 9**
Deadline to drop a course **with a W** is **Nov 6**
**Student Accessibility and Accommodation**

Students may request accommodation as a result of barriers experienced related to disability, religious obligation, or any characteristic protected under Canadian human rights legislation. Students who require academic accommodation for either classroom participation or the writing of tests and exams should make their request to the Advising and Access Services Center (AASC) prior to or at the outset of the regular academic year. Please visit www.dal.ca/access for more information and to obtain the Request for Accommodation form.

A note taker may be required as part of a student’s accommodation. There is an honorarium of $75/course/term (with some exceptions). If you are interested, please contact AASC at 494-2836 for more information or send an email to notetaking@dal.ca

**Academic Integrity and Plagiarism**

All students in this class are to read and understand the policies on academic integrity and plagiarism referenced on the Dalhousie University website. Ignorance of such policies is no excuse for violations. The policies can be found at the below links.

http://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity/plagiarism-cheating.html
http://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity/student-resources.html

Any assignment submitted by a student at Dalhousie University may be checked for originality to confirm that the student has not plagiarized from other sources. Plagiarism is considered a serious academic offence which may lead to loss of credit, suspension or expulsion from the University, or even to the revocation of a degree. It is essential that there be correct attribution of authorities from which facts and opinions have been derived. At Dalhousie there are University Regulations which deal with plagiarism and, prior to submitting any paper in a course, students should read the Code of Student Conduct contained in the Calendar or online at:

http://www.dal.ca/content/dam/dalhousie/pdf/university_secretariat/policy-repository/CodeofStudentConduct.pdf

**Additional On-line Services for Students**

http://www.dal.ca/current_students.html
### Course Organization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics and Assigned Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept 10</td>
<td>Review of course material and assignments</td>
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</table>
| Sept 15 | *Introduction: The Nature of Public Administration*  
Chapter 1  
*Public Administration and Democracy*  
Chapter 2  
*Theories of Organization*  
Chapter 3  
*Organization Theory and Canadian Public Administration*  
Chapter 4  
*Public Administration and Institutions: The Real World of Organizations and the Machinery of Government*  
Chapter 5  
**Class Discussion - preparing ATIP/FOIPOP requests**  
Class Discussion - preparing ATIP/FOIPOP requests  
*Public Administration, the Constitution, and Law*  
Chapter 6  
*Public Administration and Public Policy*  
Chapter 7  
*Public Administration and the Management of Human Resources*  
Chapter 8  
*Public Administration, Management Reform, and Financial Management*  
Chapter 9  
*Public Administration and Ethics*  
Chapter 10  
*Public Administration and Accountability*  
Chapter 11  
**FOIPOP/ATIP APPLICATIONS DUE**  
**FOIPOP/ATIP APPLICATIONS DUE**  
*Public Administration and Democracy Revisited*  
*Theories of Organization Revisited*  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Authors/Books</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prime Minister’s Office Official Website</td>
<td><a href="http://pm.gc.ca/eng">http://pm.gc.ca/eng</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Treasury Board Secretariat Official Website</td>
<td><a href="http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/tbs-sct/index-eng.asp">http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/tbs-sct/index-eng.asp</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 22</td>
<td>Class discussion – Group Project (5:35-6:00)</td>
<td>GUEST SPEAKER – Former Political Staffer (6:00-6:55)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public Policy (and Public Engagement) Revisited</td>
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<td>Oct 29</td>
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<td>Nov 3</td>
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|  |  | *Management and Financial Reform Revisited*  
| Nov 5 |  |  
| Nov 10 |  |  
|  |  | *Group Project Preparation & Preliminary Agreement - Roundtable Discussions*  
| Nov 12 |  |  
|  |  | *STUDY DAY – NO CLASS*  
| Nov 17 |  |  
|  |  | *Public Administration Ethics and Accountability Revisited*  


**Class Discussion - Finalizing structure, content and expectations of Roundtable Discussions**


**GROUP PROJECTS DUE**

| Dec 1  | Roundtable Discussion 1 |
| Dec 3  | Roundtable Discussion 2 |
| Dec 8  | In Class Final Exam |