

Public Organizations in a Political World **PUBA 644 or 621?**

Overview: This is a graduate-level seminar for students interested in the unique challenges that arise when managing public sector organizations, especially within a highly charged political environment. Graduate students should be familiar with the basics of public administration and policy (e.g. completion of PUBA 600 and PUBA 601 is strongly encouraged, although not required). The course examines the structure of government and how this affects the implementation of public policies after elected officials have delegated responsibility to agencies. The course follows the historical development of organizations in this area, outlines the models constructed to enhance our understanding of the process, and examines the pitfalls and successes of current administration practices within Hawai'i and beyond. The course pays special attention to the differences that arise across levels of government, federal, state, and local, and the role played by a powerful private sector in helping or hindering government actions.

Learning Objectives: By the end of the course, students should feel competent in the following areas:

- Understanding the historical development of relationships between public organizations, their political masters, and the general public within the U.S.;
- Understanding the different lenses through which public organizations have been studied: administrative, political, cultural, and systemic;
- Understanding group coordination in public management practice, and the development of management "strategies"; and
- Wielding tools that will render them more effective and better-informed public managers.

Course Readings:

There is only one book that you must purchase for the course. It will be available the first night of class for \$89.00 (yes, it's really that much, but there's only one!). Checks can be made out to "Modern Times".

- Kenneth J. Meier and John Bohte. 2007. *Politics and the Bureaucracy: Policymaking in the Fourth Branch of Government*. 5th ed. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

In order to keep the cost of books down, we will be using parts of books that will be available on-line through the UHM library.

Requirements: Come to class prepared to discuss the readings in some detail. You also have a challenging assignment to complete.

Assignment: You (and, if you so choose, two of your colleagues) are now the head(s) of a public service provider in the year 2019. You are not happy with your organization's current web portal, which explains to the public how your organization accomplishes its mission, and so you've called for a complete overhaul. You are drafting a NEW web portal, one which

better summarizes the mission of your organization and how it accomplishes that mission. Your newly designed portal is due to the web team via Lualima no later than May 12.

In order to complete this assignment, you will have to map out what services your agency provides in order to meet its mission. The important components to consider are the following:

Which publics do you serve? What do you provide them?

With whom do you need to communicate in order to provide those services?

What information do you need to provide to which publics?

How plausible (based on data sources from the year 2009) are the services that you will be providing in 2019?

Your web page should have functioning links to items that help you flesh out the components listed above. This is fairly easy to do using a word processing program that lets you create webpages, such as Word. However, your portal will be judged primarily on content, and not on "flair". If you would like extra assistance with some basic tools available in Word, contact Jill no later than Thursday evening's class and we will arrange a tutorial session.

Course Requirements: The assignments have two major objectives: 1) to ensure that the readings come together in a cohesive manner for students; and 2) to provide students with practice in using the tools introduced throughout the course.

Four critical essays (topics assigned by professor):	60% (or 15% each)
Group management strategy and presentation:	25%
<u>Power vs. Management Story and presentation:</u>	<u>15%</u>
Total:	100%

Critical Essays:

Students will submit four separate papers between five and seven pages in length on a topic drawn from the readings. Each paper will ask the students to solve a managerial problem using a particular lens from theory as a basis for the proposed solution. The theoretical lens will be drawn directly from course readings. Students will be evaluated according to how well they apply the theory to the problem at hand.

Group Management Strategy and Presentation: Due on April 28

Students will be divided into groups. Each group will work together to identify a federal, state or local agency in need of some managerial assistance and under political pressure to act. The group will identify a problem that can be addressed using managerial tools. The group will then develop a strategy to "pitch" to the organizational leadership in a presentation.

Power vs. Management Story and Presentation: Due on May 5

Each student will develop a "story" that highlights a problem arising from a conflict between a political entity and an agency. The problem does not have to involve external actors (e.g. an elected politician and a manager), but it should center on a conflict of perceptions (which public is to be served? Or is there a disagreement over problem definition?) In writing, each student will tell the story, and then present alternative means for resolving the conflict, with a final explanation as to which means would be best and why. Each student will present their story and alternative resolutions to the rest of the class, and the class will try and determine which resolution is best.

Course Schedule:

Week One: January 14,

Topic: What Makes the Public Sector Different? Roots of PA and the creation of public

Readings: Chapters 1-4, Nakamura and Smallwood (Sinclair Reserves) Chapter I, Gormley and Balla (Sinclair Reserves)

"Late Bloomer" article by Christopher Swope (WebCT) Distribute topic for first critical essay with example.

Week Two: January 21

MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY-HOLIDAY!

Topic: Time to get ahead with your reading!

Readings: Chapters 6 & 7, Nakamura and Smallwood

Week Three: January 28

Topic: Implementation Linkages and Policy Environments: Consequences and Links to Questions of Accountability.

Readings: Chapter 2, Gormley and Balla (Sinclair Reserves) Rational Decision-Making Exercise.

Week Four: February 4

Topic: What's Your Motivation? The Language of Incentives and Costs.

Readings: Chapters 6-9, Anthony Downs (Sinclair Reserves) DUE: First critical essay Distribute second critical essay topic.

Week Five: February 11

Topic: In the Trenches: How to Run a State Agency.

Readings: Chapters 1-5, Anthony Downs (Sinclair Reserves)

First Speaker: Susan Chandler, Former Director, Department of Human Services, State of Hawai'i.

Week Six: February 18

PRESIDENT'S DAY-HOLIDAY!

Topic: Keep working on that essay!

Readings: Gormley and Balla, Chapter 3. (Sinclair Reserves) Wilson, Chapter 7 (Sinclair Reserves)

Week Seven: February 25

Topic: Managing the Public Sector: Constraints on Behavior and Results.

Readings: Wilson, Chapters 8 & 9. DUE: Second critical essay.

Distribute third critical essay topic. CPM Exercise.

Week Eight: March 3

Topic: Which Public Do We Serve? We Serve Them All!

Readings: Meier and Bohte, Chapters 1-3. •

Guest Appearance: Chris Grandy, formerly of the Hawai'i Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT)

Week Nine: March 10

Topic: Types of Policies: Public Agencies as Policymakers.

Readings: Meier and Bohte, Chapters 4 & 5.

Second Speaker: Susan Jones, Program Manager, Solid Waste Refuse and Recycling Program, City and County of Honolulu

Week Ten: March 17

Topic: Principals and Agents with Checks and Balances.

Readings: Meier and Bohte, Chapter 6 DUE: Third critical essay.

Distribute fourth critical essay.

Week Eleven: March 24

SPRING BREAK-HOLIDAY!

Week Twelve: March 31

Topic: Ethics, Culture, and Diagnosing Problems.

Readings: Meier and Bohte, Chapters 7 & 8.

Schein, Chapters 5 & 6, WebCT Wichita Case Study

Week Thirteen: April 7

Topic: Leading, Maneuvering, and Reading the Organizational Tea Leaves.

Readings: Gulick, WebCT Schein, Chapters 9 & 10, WebCT

Third Speaker: Dick Pratt, Director, PUBA DUE: Fourth critical essay.

Week Fourteen: April 14

Topic: Is the Public Sector Different? Politics, External Scrutiny (the "Fishbowl") and Values.

Readings: Chase and Reveal, Chapter 4, WebCT Rainey, Chapters 6 & 9, WebCT

Week Fifteen: April 21

Topic: How to Be the Change You Want to See in Your Organization: Not All Change is Created Equal.

Readings: Rainey, Chapters 13 & 14, WebCT.

Week Sixteen: April 28

Topic: Group Presentations and Some Penultimate Thoughts.

Readings: Rainey, Chapter 12, WebCT

Week Seventeen: May 5

Topic: Individual Presentations: Tell That Story! And the Final Word Goes to...