This course seeks to enhance student understanding of the role of government’s administrative agents in a democracy. These agents possess vast discretion and do much to shape who gets what, when, and how from government. They are major players in the conflicts that inevitably mark governance and political life more generally. No one who cares about democracy (least of all students of public administration) can afford to ignore the empirical and normative issues generated by the rise of the administrative state.

Issues of public administration and democratic governance assume myriad forms. One important set of issues focuses on political accountability and responsiveness. Democratic theory holds that civil servants and private contractors ought to be law abiding and generally responsive to the legitimate directives of key political principals (e.g., elected officials, the courts). At times, however, administrative agents fail to meet this democratic test. The readings of this course will partly address the degree to which this appears to be a serious problem, especially in the United States. Another important cluster of issues deals with performance. Democracy depends in part on the capacity of public and private agents to deliver some service or product efficiently and effectively. If government cannot achieve some level of competence citizens may grow disillusioned and support for democracy may erode. This course will also focus on the perennial public administration question of the degree to which trade-offs exist between performance and accountability/responsiveness.

Students with prior degrees in political science, public policy, or public administration should have no problem with the subject matter of this course. Those without this background would be well advised to read one of the following books: James Q. Wilson, Bureaucracy, Don Kettl and James Fesler, The Politics of the Administrative Process, or Guy Peters, The Politics of Bureaucracy.

I expect students to come to class prepared to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the readings. These discussions will not only focus on the substantive thrust of the course materials, but their methodological underpinnings as well. At the end of the course, students should have a better sense of where the frontiers of knowledge are in the study of governance and politics. What knowledge gaps persist? What research can be conducted to help fill these lacunae?

I am requiring the following paperbacks for the course.
Robert Behn, *Rethinking Democratic Accountability*

Martha Derthick, *Agency Under Stress*

David Lewis, *The Politics of Presidential Appointments*

Paul Light, *Tides of Reform*

I am also requiring certain journal articles, which are available electronically through the University library or through Blackboard.

Students will be graded on a 20 point scale weighted as follows:

*participation – 4 points

*term paper – 8 points (1 point for satisfactory prospectus, 1 point for oral presentation, 6 points for final paper)

*analysis of readings – 8 points

Each assignment will be clarified in class.

**Session Topics and Readings**

**Administration and Democracy: An Overview**

September 6: The Meaning of Democratic Governance

September 13: Can Performance and Accountability Be Reconciled?

Robert Behn, *Rethinking Democratic Accountability*

September 20: Governance and Principal Agent Perspectives


September 27: Some Empirical Perspectives on Principals and Agents


**Collateral Reading**

John Brehm and Scott Gates, *Working, Shirking, and Sabotage: Bureaucratic Response To a Democratic Public*

Robert Dahl, *A Preface to Democratic Theory*

Judith Gruber, *Controlling Bureaucracies*

Michael Lipsky, *Street-Level Bureaucracy*

Laurence Lynn and Tony Bertelli, *Madison’s Managers: Public Administration and The Constitution*

Laurence Lynn and Carolyn Heindrich, *Governance and Performance*

Jerry L. Mashaw, *Creating The Administrative Constitution*

Ian Shapiro, *The State of Democratic Theory*

William West, *Controlling The Bureaucracy*

James Q. Wilson, *Bureaucracy*

**Administration, the Separation of Powers, and Democracy**

October 4: Chief Executives and Administrative Agencies


October 11: Chief Executives continued


October 18: Legislative Bodies: Statutes, Oversight, Casework


John Huber et al., “Legislatures and Statutory Control of the Bureaucracy,” *American


October 25: The Courts: Administrative Constraint and Empowerment

Martha Derthick, Agency Under Stress, pp. 131-152.


Collateral Reading

Joel Aberbach, Keeping A Watchful Eye
Daniel Carpenter, The Forging of Bureaucratic Autonomy
Daniel Carpenter, Reputation and Power (about the Food and Drug Administration)
Phil Cooper, Hard Judicial Choices
David Epstein and Sharon O’Halloran, Delegating Powers
Hugh Heclo, A Government of Strangers
William Howell, Power Without Persuasion
John Huber and Charles Shipan, Deliberate Discretion? The Institutional Foundations Of Bureaucratic Autonomy
John Hudak, Presidential Pork
Anne Khademian, Checking on Banks: Autonomy and Accountability In Three Federal Agencies
Richard Nathan, The Administrative Presidency
Eric A. Posner and Adrian Vermeule, The Executive Unbound
Peter Shane, Madison’s Nightmare
Charles Shipan, Designing Administrative Review
Richard Waterman, Presidential Influence and the Administrative State

Federalism and Administration

November 1: Intergovernmental Implementation


November 8: Capacity, Commitment and State Variation


Collateral Reading

David and George Frederickson, *Measuring the Performance of the Hollow State*

Thomas Koontz, *Federalism in the Forest*

Paul Peterson et al., *When Federalism Works*

Denise Scheberle, *Federalism and Environmental Policy*

Frank Thompson, *Medicaid Politics: Federalism, Policy Durability and Health Reform*

**Private Administrative Agents and Democracy**

November 15: Challenges and the Special Case of Nonprofits


Collateral Reading:

John Donahue, The Privatization Decision
Don Kettl, Sharing Power
Lester Salamon, America’s Nonprofit Sector: A Primer
Bryna Sanger, The Welfare Marketplace
P.W. Singer, Corporate Warriors: The Rise of Privatized Military Industries

Civic Culture, Interest Representation, and Governance

November 29: Implications for Performance and Responsiveness


Collateral Reading:

Daniel Carpenter and David Moss, eds., Preventing Regulatory Capture: Special Interest Influence and How to Limit It
Cornelius Kerwin and Scott Furlong, Rulemaking: How Government Agencies Write Law and Make Policy
Robert Putnam, Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community

Administrative Reform and Governance

December 6: Performance, Accountability and the Dynamics of Reform

Paul Light, The Tides of Reform, pp. 1-178

December 13: Reform, Recapitulation, and Conclusion

Paul Light, The Tides of Reform, pp. 179-240.

Martha Derthick, Agency Under Stress, pp.175-206
Collateral Reading:
Albert Hirschman, Exit, Voice, and Loyalty
Steven Kelman, Unleashing Change
Helen Ladd and Edward Fiske, When School Compete: A Cautionary Tale
Mark Schneider et al., Choosing Schools
Amy Zegart, Spying Blind