Managing Public Organizations
School of Public Affairs and Administration
Rutgers University – Newark Campus

Fall 2015

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Introduction:
Theories of organizational behavior and performance as applied to public and nonprofit sector agencies; includes organizational authority systems, relationships between public and private organizations, development and fulfillment of organizational mandates in the public sector, and use of resources within organizations.

Course Overview:
This course focuses on developing managers and leaders of public and nonprofit organizations and the methods they use to mobilize public resources to achieve important public objectives. The objective for public leaders is to comprehend and master the management of public organizations and to seize any potential opportunities. As such, it is critical for public managers to understand the integrative, interdependent nature of organizations, their environments, the public policy process, the rule of law and their stakeholders. To success in their tasks, public managers should master organizational technics. Additionally, public managers are required to comprehend and master managerial tools, such as strategic planning, performance management, and contracting.

Managers make decisions in increasingly networked contexts that are characterized by uncertainty, resources scarcity, limited cooperation and coordination within the public sector as well as by the political, legal, and regulatory challenges. To this regard, public managers must consider and integrate these issues to find opportunities to productively and creatively lead, manage, adapt, learn, innovate, and enact strategic decisions and change in the organizations.

With this framework in consideration, the role of public managers has become central to the success of public organizations. Therefore, this course will expose students to management theories and frameworks as well as strategies, tools, and heuristics for managing public organizations in their current environments. Theory and research is used to bridge, expand, seizing windows of opportunities, and anticipating and managing challenges public organizations may encounter.

Students will learn to think, anticipate, and act as transformational leaders and managers.
Course Objectives:

- Provide students with a clear understanding of the characteristics of public organizations.
- Enhance students’ understanding of core competencies required to comprehend public organizations’ environment and strategically manage their stakeholders and their operations.
- Increase students’ awareness and expertise of managerial strategies, tools and practices they may enact to reach public organizations’ objectives and to improve their performance.

Policies:

✓ Syllabus: This syllabus serves as general outline. I reserve the right to deviate from any part of the plan as necessary. Students will be notified of any such modifications.

✓ Late Assignments: Submitting the required assignments is a prerequisite for this class. As such, late assignments will be applied a penalty, namely 10 percent of the assignment for each day between the due date and the submission date.

✓ Grade Disputes: If students have a grade dispute, they should submit a one-page memo to the instructor presenting evidence for their case. The instructor will review and reconsider the original assignment. This review may lead to a grade increase but equally may lead to a grade decrease based on the new overall evaluation.

Academic Integrity:

All students are expected to work independently. All assignments should be the student’s own work – unauthorized collaboration, plagiarism, copying from previous semester answer keys or assignments, and other forms of academic dishonesty are expressly prohibited. Rutgers University’s Office of Academic Integrity maintains a website explaining the university’s academic honesty procedures:

http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/

The website also provides resources for students. It is the student’s responsibility to understand the definition of academic honesty, but if you are ever in doubt, please ask me before you do something that could put your academic career in jeopardy.

The following websites provides basic guidelines regarding the APA citation style:

http://www.lcc.edu/library/help/citation/apaonline.aspx

http://www.landmark.edu/library/citation-guides/landmark-college-citation-guides/apa-citation-style-guide/

For any further help with reading, writing or even research skills, students may reach out to the Rutgers, Newark Writing Center, which provides writing tutoring and writing workshops to all undergraduate students currently enrolled in classes on the Rutgers University, Newark Campus. The Newark Writing Center is located in Conklin 126. Contact information may be found on their website:

http://www.ncas.rutgers.edu/writingcenter
Disability Services:

Students who are in need of disability-related academic accommodations must register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS). Students with authorized disability-related accommodations should provide me with a current Accommodation Authorization Letter from ODS. Accommodations are not provided retroactively, so please let me know about them as early as possible. Further information is available at the ODS web site:

http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/

Book & Materials:

- All other material will be available on the course’s Blackboard

Grading

Weekly Discussion Board – 20%
Case Study – 15%
Final Exam – 20%
Debate Presentation – 45%

Weekly Discussion Board

The purpose of this assignment is for students working as a group to relate the theoretical principles and elements that will be discussed to a real public or nonprofit organization. On a weekly basis, students will investigate and summarize the attributes and the characteristics in relation to the theme of the class for the organization they will have selected. Although this exercise intends to familiarize students with a real case of managing public organizations, the students should understand and apprehend the specifics of the organization and its environment that make its management unique in comparison to other organizations. In addition, students should demonstrate the ability to evaluate the strengths and the weaknesses of arguments made not only from the readings assigned but also from other participants in the class. This exercise should enable student to learn how to analyze argument, to critique them, and therefore to build upon in order to improve the decision-making process.

Case Study

The purpose of this assignment is for each student to develop and implement a thoughtful strategy to the issue(s) raised in the case using the theories and the tools and/or practices mentioned in class. Acting as a manager of a public organization, students will provide guidance, feedback, and recommendations to the issue in the case.

The strategy and/or recommendations should be not only realistic but also feasible and implementable. As such, each student should develop and justify his/her recommendation. Part of this justification
should include the potential, positive or negative, outputs and/or outcomes of pursuing the strategy and/or recommendations presented.

Although this assignment intends to stay as realistic as possible, the strategy and/or recommendations presented should be an opportunity for students to be innovative or to take risks. This process requires students to think through tradeoffs, the implications of pursuing one option over another, and prioritizing the strategy and/or the recommendations against other choices. Ultimately, this exercise will demonstrate that students comprehend the concepts mentioned in class and are capable to apply them to a real situation.

The purpose by using case study is to stimulate students to be analytic, to approach current public organizations’ issues with a practical perspective, to develop a unique and coherent strategy, and to encourage classroom participation. It is important to remember that for this kind of exercise there are no right answers, but there are strategies and recommendations that are likely to be more effective than others.

In many situations, public managers will have in their organizations to present their recommendations and/or strategy through a presentation. Indeed, communicating complex information quickly and effectively is as important as being capable to analyze and develop an effective strategy to a particular issue. Therefore, this exercise will allow students to acquire the necessary skills to communicate effectively strategy within the context of a public organization.

Each case study will be discussed in class in which the context, the actors and participants, and the issues/problems/challenges and opportunities should be addressed. Although each case study may apprehend diverse themes we will address throughout the class, the presentation should focus on the topic of the class the case will be discussed. Each presentation should include several elements, as following: (1) briefly review the facts of the case; (2) expose the theoretical elements and framework associated with the case; (3) present the recommendations and/or strategy developed and their potential implications; (4) engage in a discussion with the rest of the class.

Debate Presentation

One of the most important things a public managers should know-how is learn how to speak about their ideas to others. Being able to sum up unique aspects of an organization, a program, a service, a strategy, a recommendation, or an idea in a way that excites others should be a fundamental skill. Yet many executives pay little attention to develop an adequate process to promote the diverse perspectives; and therefore, to understand how the decisions made within their organization influence the implementation of public policies and the outcomes produced. As such debate is a real opportunity for public managers to reveal to their stakeholders their intellectual, analytical, managerial and communications strengths.

The primary purpose of this assignment is for students to generate effective critical thinking into the development of a tactic in relation to the management of public and nonprofit organizations to address a public issue and improve the delivery of the services as currently performed. The use of debate also allows students to learn to apply to a specific actual issue the conceptual frameworks for managing public and nonprofit organizations seen in class. Students should demonstrate an understanding of the issue as well as be persuasive about the effectiveness of his/her action(s)/recommendation(s). A
significant part of the challenge this exercise presents lies in framing and communicating the issue and then recommending a coherent and effective course of action.

In this informal simulation, two groups of students compete in developing their own tactic to address the same issue. Within this framework, this assignment is composed of three general steps, (1) group presentation, (2) a “debate”, and (3) the selection of the final solution. Concerning the presentation, each group of students would present their recommendations to the issues they are to address. This presentation should contain three major components, namely, (1) the presentation of the public issues and its characteristics, (2) the current system in place to address that issue, e.g. current policies enacted, products and services provided, stakeholders involved, and (3) the recommendations to improve the current system and the supports that justify them. On the other hand, the debate stage offers the opportunity for each of students to contest and controvert the other team’s arguments and recommendations. The final stage of this exercise require both team to wrap up the arguments made from both group and to come up with a middle-of-the-road solution that would attempt to satisfy both side.

Each group of student will be evaluated on their ability to master a complex set of facts and communicate them clearly and succinctly; make clear recommendations and establish an effective course of actions; underline the adequate justifications associated with their recommendation(s) as well as their potential impacts; and prevailingly and realistically develop support for their recommendation(s) as well as controversy for other groups’ argument(s).
### Schedule:

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|  | • Bolman, L. G., & T. E. Deal, *Reframing Organizations*, Chap. 2  
| **Week 3** | **The Environment of Public Management** |
|  | • Bolman, L. G., & T. E. Deal, *Reframing Organizations*, Chap. 10  
  • Bolman, L. G., & T. E. Deal, *Reframing Organizations*, Chap. 11 |
| **Week 4** | **Organizational Structure** |
|  | • Bolman, L. G., & T. E. Deal, *Reframing Organizations*, Chap. 4  
| **Week 5** | **Organizational Culture** |
  • Bolman, L. G., & T. E. Deal, *Reframing Organizations*, Chap. 13  
| **Week 6** | **Managing and Motivating People** |
|  | • Bolman, L. G., & T. E. Deal, *Reframing Organizations*, Chap. 6  
  • Bolman, L. G., & T. E. Deal, *Reframing Organizations*, Chap. 7  
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| Week 12 | **Managing Organizational Change & Innovation**  
|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------|  
|         | - Bolman, L. G., & T. E. Deal, *Reframing Organizations*, Chap. 18  
|         | - Bolman, L. G., & T. E. Deal, *Reframing Organizations*, Chap. 20  
| Week 13 | **Debate Part I**  
|         | ✓ *Debate Presentations*  
| Week 14 | **Debate Part II**  
|         | ✓ *Debate Presentations*  