MPPA 5315 Current Issues in Public Policy and Administration
Fall 2016

Dr. Jon R. Taylor
Meeting Time: 5:30pm – 6:45pm MW Political Science House, Room 104
Office: Political Science House, Room 203
Phone: (713) 525-3856
Office Hours: MW: 7:00am – 8:00AM; 9:00am – 5:00pm; TTH: 7:00am – 8:00am;
9:30am – 10:30am; 12:30pm – 3:00pm; F: 7:00am – 8:00AM; 9:00am – 12:00pm
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Required Text:

None – You will provide me with a flash drive. In return, I will provide you with readings, lecture notes, and supplementary materials.

Course Description:

This is a core course in the Master of Public Policy and Administration Program. The course states, "The course will examine various selected current edge topics in public management." What exactly does that mean? We will investigate the historical and contemporary literature in the institutional and intellectual development of public policy and public administration.

Course Learning Objectives:

At the end of the semester, students should be able to:

- Identify, understand, and synthesize the historical ideas, schools of thought and literature in American public administration, and its relationship with public policy, with a focus on the classic works in the field.
- Compare and contrast the various schools of thought within public administration and identify their pros and cons, from both a scholarly and practical perspective.
- Illuminate many of the most significant current issues and debates in public administration theory and practice, using the classic writings and authors in the field.
- Appreciate the major intellectual traditions in public administration and possess a broad understanding of the theoretical approaches that have defined the field.
- Analyze the scholarly and practical contribution of the important authors and schools of thought in the field.

As a practical matter, the material discussed in the course will form the basis for the literature relating to the theoretical and historical foundations of public policy.
and public administration that students are expected to have mastered for the MPPA degree.

Exams and Grading:

There will be a comprehensive final exam, an analytical essay, and book/literature review for the class. The following is the grading breakdown for the course:

- Analytical essay: 30%
- Attendance and participation: 20%
- Literature Review: 15%
- Comprehensive exam: 35%

Students are expected to prepare thoroughly for each class session, to submit written materials on time, and to participate actively and constructively in class. Attendance is critical. All written work is expected to be of high quality. That is, it should be logically organized, complete, and lead the reader to a conclusion. Spelling, grammar, punctuation, proper referencing, and organization will be graded as well as content and presentation. All quotations and significant paraphrases should be properly cited.

Analytical Essay:

An analytical essay is required. The research will be due at the end of the term. A short summary of the essay topic and partial bibliography will be due by October 14, 2016. The completed analytical essay is due on December 5, 2016.

All work submitted must be typewritten and double spaced, using a 12 point font, with 1 inch margins on all four sides and properly footnoted. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade. The grading of the essay will be based on:

- Your ability to provide an analytical viewpoint on the topic to back up your opinions provided with research materials.
- Clarity and organization of the essay.
- Appropriate citations and reference throughout the essay (footnotes, bibliography, etc.).
- Correct grammar, spelling and form.
- Unexcused late essays will be reduced by one-half a grade per day.
- The analytical essay should be between 15 – 20 pages in length.

Literature Review:

Each student will provide a summary of two of the articles that we will read over the semester. These will be chosen by you and will be due on December 5, 2016.
The summary will be 2 – 3 pages in length, typewritten and double spaced, using a 12 point font, with 1 inch margins on all four sides.

**Class Rules:**

As a graduate-level course, this course expects full, active and relevant participation from every student throughout the semester.

- **Attendance and participation is required and worth 20% of your overall grade.**
- Arriving late is strongly discouraged.
- Reading course assignments is expected.
- **Please mute all Electronic devices during class.**
- Showing respect to other students and the professor is expected.
- Make up work will be limited to special circumstances (and with prior notification only).
- Plagiarism and other forms of cheating will result in a failing grade.

**Attendance and Miscellaneous:**

I rarely, if ever, take roll in class. That does not mean I fail to notice the lack of your presence in the classroom. On the contrary. With such intimate classes as offered at the University of St. Thomas, your absence is quite noticeable. I like to have you in class. I value your input. But I make the presumption that since you are in college that you are a reasonably responsible adult. It bothers me very little if you have found someone or something better than attending my class. Of course, it bothers me very little to flunk you as result of your finding that someone/something better. If you don’t show up for class and/or blow-off or do extraordinarily poor on the homework assignments, exams, and the article review, you may be looking at crime or a job in the fast food industry as a succinct alternative to the stresses of higher education.

**Academic Integrity:**

“It would have been better if he had never been born” – Mark 14:21.

All of the work you do in this course is expected to be your own. Absolutely no cheating or plagiarism (using someone else’s words or ideas without proper attribution) will be tolerated. Any cases of cheating or plagiarism will be handled according to university policy and reported to the University’s Academic Misconduct Committee.

As stated in the Academic Misconduct Code for the University of St. Thomas, academic misconduct includes: (a) cheating (using an authorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise), plagiarism, falsification of records, unauthorized possession of examinations, intimidation, and any and all
other actions that may improperly affect the evaluation of a student’s academic performance or achievement; (b) assisting others in any such act; or (c) attempting to engage in such acts.

Plagiarism is using the work or another person and claiming it as your own. The most common types of plagiarism include:

- Using a paper or portion of a paper prepared by someone else;
- Quoting someone else’s language or words without proper quotation or citation; and
- Paraphrasing someone else’s ideas, framework, or insights without giving credit to the original author in a citation.

Academic misconduct in any form is unacceptable and suspected violations will be pursued aggressively.

**Students with Disabilities:**

If you have any condition, such as a physical, psychiatric/emotional, medical or learning disability, which will make it difficult for you to carry out the work as outlined in this syllabus, please notify me and the Office for Counseling and Testing Services in the first week of the course so that we may make appropriate arrangements. All information and documentation of disability is confidential. Course materials are available in alternative formats upon request.

**Schedule of Events (Subject to Change):**

Course Overview
Development of the Administrative State
Reconsidering the Administrative State
Toward a Science of Public Administration
Early Challenges to Orthodox PA
The Orthodoxy in Retreat and the Rediscovery of Politics

**Fall Break October 10 – 11th**

**Analytical Essay Topic Due October 14th**

Constitutionalism and Legal Approaches to PA
Public Policy and Public Administration
Political Economy and Public Choice
Implementation, Networks, and Network Theory

**Thanksgiving Break November 23 – 25th**

Contemporary Issues—The New Public Management
Contemporary Issues—The New Public Service
Old Public Administration, New Public Management and New Public Service in action

**Analytical Essay and Book/Literature Review due December 5th**

**Final Examination December 7th 4:30pm – 7:00pm**