

CANADIAN PUBLIC SECTOR MANAGEMENT
POLSCI 3Z03
Winter 2023

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Course Description

This course introduces students to the structures and processes of management in the Canadian public sector. The purpose is to highlight the role played by administrative personnel and institutions in governing Canada. The course provides an exposure to the organizational and operational arrangements in the federal public service, and critically examines the governing framework of the country.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course students should be able to:

- identify and describe the structures and operations of public sector organizations in Canada;
- understand and explain the role and significance of the public service in Canada;
- critically analyze issues related to public policy and administration;
- appreciate competing views and debates; and
- present analyses of public administration issues in both oral and written forms.

Required Materials and Texts

- Johnson, D. *Thinking Government: Public Administration and Politics in Canada*, 5th edition. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2022 (for lectures).
- Leone, R. and F. Ohemeng. *Approaching Public Administration: Core Debates and Emerging Issues*. Toronto: Emond Montgomery Publications, 2011 (for debates).

Class Format

The class will meet for two hours (12:30-2:20 PM) on Monday and one hour (12:30-1:20 PM) on Wednesday every week. The sessions on Monday will be devoted to lectures/discussions. The course will begin with an introduction to the concept of the public sector. This will be followed by discussions on public policy and administration, and the nature of society and government in Canada. The remaining lectures will focus on ideologies and institutions of governance, structure and operation of the Cabinet, financial and human resources management, representativeness, equity, accountability and responsibility in the public service. Finally, the course will explore contemporary issues in public sector management.

The Wednesday sessions will be devoted to debates on critical issues in public sector management. Each group will debate issues identified in the assigned readings. The entire class is expected to participate actively in the process by discussing assigned questions, making comments and raising points of importance. The exercise will help build a sound knowledge base and develop analytical skills on relevant concepts and their meaningful application. It will also help establish relevance of the course material to actual

developments in the public sector. Groups will be formed and topics will be assigned for debates during class on Wednesday, January 18.

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. **Statement on Research (20%), due 10 PM, Monday, January 30, 2023**
2. **Participation and Debates (25%) – to be scheduled**
3. **Research Essay (25%), due 10 PM, Wednesday, March 15, 2023**
4. **Take-Home Exam (30%), due 10 PM, Tuesday, April 4, 2023**

Course Evaluation – Details

Statement on Research (20%)

Students will submit a 2-3 page statement on the topic to be pursued in the research essay. The statement will include information on the problem to be investigated, research questions, key argument(s) and expected conclusions. It should be submitted to Avenue by 10 PM on **Monday, January 30, 2023**.

Research Essay (25%)

The research essay must be on a topic relevant to the course. It should be approximately 2,000 words in length, with appropriate citations and references. It should demonstrate an advanced level of understanding and analysis of the topic. The essay must include an introductory section stating the topic of the paper and research question(s); a clear and concise thesis statement; supporting evidence; and a conclusion summarizing the arguments presented in the paper. The essay should be analytical (not just descriptive) and present a critical analysis of an issue of management in the public sector

A bibliography with a minimum of five scholarly sources (not including the course texts) must be included. The due date is firm, and it is the responsibility of students to plan ahead and submit their paper on time. Late papers will not be accepted without documentation. All essays are to be written in formal academic style and must be fully referenced. Papers should be submitted to Avenue by 10 PM on the due date.

The final research paper is due by 10 PM on **Wednesday, March 15, 2023**.

Participation and Debates (25%)

Students are expected to actively participate in class. They may form or raise questions or add comments, insight and examples to the issues presented in lectures.

Students will work in groups to participate in debates on a number of issues related to management in the public sector. Each group will present their points of view for approximately 15-20 minutes. This will be followed by feedback, questions and comments from the class. Marks will be awarded on the relevance of issues, quality of information in the presentation, and initiation of class interaction. Group formation and selection of topics will be completed in class on January 18.

Take-Home Exam (30%)

Questions will be released on Avenue to Learn at 1 PM on March 31. Students should demonstrate the ability to analyze and synthesize the material covered in the course. Answers must be submitted through Avenue by 10 PM on **April 4, 2023**.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

LECTURES

Week 1, January 9: Introduction to the Course

No assigned reading

Week 2, January 16: Administration in the Public Sector

Reading: Johnson, Chapter 5

Week 3, January 23: Government and Society in Canada

Reading: Johnson, Chapter 1

Week 4, January 30: Ideologies and the Public Service

Reading: Johnson, Chapter 2

Note: Statement on Research due

Week 5, February 6: Institutions of Governance

Reading: Johnson, Chapter 3

Week 6, February 13: Cabinet and Decision Making

Reading: Johnson, Chapter 4

Week 7, February 20: Mid-term Recess

Week 8, February 27: Financial Resource Management in the Public Sector

Reading: Johnson, Chapter 6

Week 9, March 6: Human Resource Management in the Public Sector

Reading: Johnson, Chapter 8

Week 10, March 13: Representativeness and Equity in the Public Service

Reading: Eddie Ng and Greg Sears, 'Toward Representative Bureaucracy: Predicting Public service attraction among underrepresented groups in Canada,' *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, Vol. 35, 2015, pp. 367-385.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0734371X14544546>

Note: Research Essay due Wednesday, March 15, 2023

Week 11, March 20: Accountability and Responsibility in the Public Service

Reading: Johnson, Chapter 9

Week 12, March 27: Issues in Public Sector Management

Reading: Johnson, Chapter 8

Week 13, April 3: Take-Home Exam

Week 14, April 10: Review

No assigned Reading

DEBATES

Week 1, January 11: No Meeting

Week 2, January 18: Introduction and Organization

Week 3, January 25: Do Politicians Control Government?

Reading: Leone and Ohemeng, Chapter 2, Groups A, B

Week 4, February 1: Should the Bureaucracy Be Politically Neutral?

Reading: Leone and Ohemeng, Chapter 3, Groups C, D

Week 5, February 8: Should the Public Service Be Run Like a Business?

Reading: Leone and Ohemeng, Chapter 4, Groups E, F

Week 6, February 15: Is Ministerial Responsibility a Dead Concept

Reading: Leone and Ohemeng, Chapter 5, Groups G, H

Week 7, February 22: Mid-Term Recess

Week 8, March 1: Should Governments Use the Private Sector to Deliver Public Services?

Reading: Leone and Ohemeng, Chapter 10, Groups A, B

Week 9, March 8: Is employment equity fair and necessary?

Reading: Leone and Ohemeng, Chapter 11, Groups C, D

Week 10, March 15: Should Whistleblowing Be Encouraged in the Public Service?

Reading: Leone and Ohemeng, Chapter 8, Groups E, F

Week 11, March 22: Is E-government Radically Transforming Public Administration?

Reading: Leone and Othemeng, Chapter 12, Groups G, H

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

The statement on research and essay should be uploaded to Avenue to Learn on the scheduled dates. The statement on research is due on January 30, and the essay on March 22, 2023. Scripts of the tests on February 27 and April 3 must be submitted to the instructor in class.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

Late Assignments

Late assignments will be accepted, subject to a penalty of 5 percent per day to a maximum of 7 days. After that point, assignments will not be accepted and a mark of zero (0) will be recorded. In the interest of fairness to all students, there will be no exception to this arrangement. Papers submitted after deadlines (including late papers) will be marked, but comments will not be provided.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF): In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”.

Courses With An On-Line Element

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this

disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Online Proctoring

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

Authenticity / Plagiarism Detection

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software.

All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office **normally within 10 working days** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their

instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. **It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.**

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/), located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online.**

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make

arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University's [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Course Modification

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.