



POSC 521: MPA Capstone Seminar: Public Administration Theory Spring 2026

Faculty Information

Instructor: David P. Adams, Ph.D.

Office: Gordon Hall 521

Phone/Text: (657) 278-4770

Website: dadams.io

Email: dpadams@fullerton.edu

Zoom ID: 334 750 2639

Office hours: Mondays at 12:30–1:30, Tuesdays at 5:30–6:30, and by [appointment](#) throughout the week. Meetings can be in-person or virtual via Zoom.

Course Communication

All course announcements and communications will be sent via *Canvas* and university email. Students are responsible for regularly checking their *Canvas* notifications and email. Students are also responsible for ensuring that their *Canvas* notifications are set to receive messages from the course. Students are expected to check *Canvas* and their email at least once daily.

Technical Problems

If you encounter any technical difficulties, contact the instructor immediately to document the problem. Then, contact: [student IT help desk](#), [email](#), phone (657) 278-8888, walk-in [student genius center](#), online chat - log into [portal](#); click “Online IT Help”; click “Live Chat.”

For issues with Canvas: Canvas Support Hotline = (657) 278-8888, [search the CSUF Canvas Guides with AI Assistant](#), or [report a problem](#).

Alternative plan for submitting work: Students are expected to submit all assignments via *Canvas*. If you cannot submit an assignment via *Canvas*, please contact the professor to discuss alternative submission procedures.

Response time: I will strive to respond to all student emails and *Canvas* messages within 24 hours, except on weekends and holidays. If you do not receive a response within 24 hours, please send a follow-up message. If you do not receive a response within 48 hours, please send another follow-up message and contact me via phone or SMS text at (657) 278-4770.

Course Information

Prefix, number, title: POSC 521, *MPA Capstone Seminar: Public Administration Theory*
Meeting times with modality, day(s), time(s), and location (if synchronous): Hybrid (in-person + asynchronous), Mondays, 7:00–9:45 p.m., Gordon Hall (GH) 248

Zoom: fullerton.zoom.us/j/3347502639

Course requisite(s): POSC 509; POSC 523; POSC 526; POSC 571; POSC 572

Catalog description: Concepts, models and ideologies of public administration within the larger political system. Course restricted to students in their final six units of graduate work.

Additional description: The capstone seminar in the Master of Public Administration program at Cal State Fullerton examines concepts, models, and ideologies of public administration within the larger political system. This course is designed for students in their final six units of graduate work and serves as a culminating experience that integrates theoretical knowledge with practical applications in public administration. Through critical analysis of foundational and contemporary theories, students will explore the complexities of public administration and its role in shaping public policy and governance. The course emphasizes the development of advanced research, writing, and analytical skills necessary for effective public service leadership.

Course Format

This course meets in person on Mondays. Some weeks include asynchronous or independent work as noted in the schedule.

Course Materials

Required Texts

- Denhardt, Janet V., and Robert B. Denhardt. 2015. *The New Public Service: Serving, Not Steering*. 4th ed. Routledge.
- Lipsky, Michael. 2010. *Street-Level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services*. Russell Sage Foundation.
- Guy, Mary E., Meredith A. Newman, and Sharon H. Mastracci. 2008. *Emotional Labor: Putting the Service in Public Service*. New York: Routledge.
- McGhee, Heather. 2021. *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together*. New York: One World.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. **Analyze and evaluate public administration theories and literature:** Demonstrate a deep understanding of foundational and contemporary theories in public administration and their application within the larger political system.
2. **Conduct a literature review in a concentration area:** Synthesize and critically evaluate scholarly literature to develop expertise in a specific aspect of public administration.
3. **Develop advanced writing skills:** Produce clear, concise, and effective written communication tailored to academic and professional contexts in public administration.
4. **Apply critical thinking skills:** Analyze and evaluate complex arguments, theories, and practices in public administration to address real-world challenges.
5. **Demonstrate professional readiness:** Integrate knowledge of trends, issues, and ethical considerations in public administration to prepare for a successful career in public service.

Grading Policies and Standards

a. Grading scale:

Table 1: Grade scale

| Grade | Percent | Grade | Percent |
|-------|------------|-------|-----------|
| A+ | 98.0–100.0 | C+ | 77.0–79.9 |
| A | 93.0–97.9 | C | 73.0–76.9 |
| A- | 90.0–92.9 | C- | 70.0–72.9 |
| B+ | 87.0–89.9 | D+ | 67.0–69.9 |
| B | 83.0–86.9 | D | 63.0–66.9 |
| B- | 80.0–82.9 | D- | 60.0–62.9 |
| | | F | 0.0–59.9 |

b. Required Course Assignments:

The due dates for the course requirements are as follows:

- Weekly Readings Assignments:
 - Annotated Bibliography: Due Mondays by class time (Weeks 2–9)
 - Rough Draft Synthesis Paper: Due Mondays by class time (Weeks 2–9)
 - Final Synthesis Paper or Book Alternative: Due Wednesdays by 11:59 p.m. (Weeks 2–9)
 - Personal Reflection: Due Fridays by 11:59 p.m. (Weeks 2–9)
 - Week 1 Alternative Assignment: Due Friday, 1/23
- Practice Comprehensive Exam Response:
 - Distributed in Week 10 (Sunday, 3/22)
 - Due on Saturday, 3/28 by 11:59 p.m.
- MPA Comprehensive General Area Essay Exam:
 - Distributed on Friday, 4/10 at 8:00 a.m.
 - Due on Thursday, 4/16 by 4:59 p.m.
- Concentration Area Paper:
 - Topic Selection: Due Week 14 (Sunday, 4/19)
 - Literature Review Draft: Due Week 15 (Sunday, 5/3)
 - Workshop Participation: Week 15 (Monday, 4/27)
 - Final Draft: Due Tuesday, 5/5 by 9:00 p.m.

c. Attendance and Participation policy: Students are expected to attend all in-person

Table 2: Assignment weighting

| Assignment | Weight |
|---|--------|
| Weekly Readings Assignments | 35% |
| Reading Discussion Facilitation | 5% |
| Practice Comprehensive Exam Response | 5% |
| MPA Comprehensive General Area Essay Exam | 35% |
| Concentration Area Paper | 20% |
| Total | 100% |

sessions. If you are unable to attend a session, please notify the professor in advance. If you miss a session, you are responsible for obtaining the information and materials covered in the session. If you miss a session, you will not be able to participate in mandatory class activities. This may have an impact on your graded materials.

d. Examination dates: Practice comprehensive exam due Saturday, 3/28. Comprehensive general area essay exam due Thursday, 4/16.

e. Make-up and late submission policy: All assignments are due on the date specified in the course schedule. Late assignments will only be accepted if prior arrangements have been made with the professor. Students must submit all assignments on time and in the correct format. Failure to submit an assignment on time may result in a grade penalty.

f. Authentication of student work: Students may be required to submit their work to a plagiarism detection service. This may include submitting drafts and final versions of assignments. Students should be aware that their work may be checked for authenticity and originality. Cal State Fullerton uses Turnitin®.

g. Extra credit: Extra credit opportunities will not be offered in this course. All students will be graded based on the same criteria and standards.

h. Retention of student work: Students are responsible for retaining copies of all assignments submitted in this course. Students should keep copies of all assignments until the end of the semester and verify that their assignments have been graded and returned before discarding them.

Detailed Course Requirements

1) Weekly Readings Assignment

Important Note: Beginning in Week 2, all students are required to include copies of their AI feedback as an *appendix* to their final weekly submission. AI feedback is:

- **Required** for final synthesis papers every week.
- **Optional** for annotated bibliographies after Week 4.

The capstone course is designed to integrate key theories and practices in public administration through weekly assignments culminating in a comprehensive capstone synthesis paper. Students will engage with foundational readings, participate in in-person discussions, and produce critical analyses that connect theory to practice.

Weekly Assignment Workflow (Weeks 2–9)

Each week includes the following components:

1. Annotated Bibliography (Due Monday Before Class)

- **Purpose:** Prepare for in-class discussion by summarizing key ideas and evaluating the relevance of assigned readings.
- **Instructions:**
 - For each assigned reading:
 - * Provide a citation in APA or Chicago author-date style.
 - * Write a 150-word annotation that includes:
 - A brief summary of the central argument and key points.
 - Relevance to the week’s topic and implications for public administration.
 - **Optional AI Feedback (Weeks 2–4 Required; Week 5+ Optional):** Students may use tools such as OpenAI’s [ChatGPT](#), Anthropic’s [Claude](#), Google’s [Gemini](#), or the university’s [TitanGPT](#) to request feedback.
 - **Sample Prompt:**

```
``You are my writing coach for a graduate PA seminar. Please review one annotated bibliography entry. Check for accuracy of the summary, clarity of the relevance statement, and any missing concepts from the reading.
```

Return: (1) 3 bullet critiques, (2) 1 suggestion for improvement, and (3) 1 discussion question. Do not rewrite my text.'

2. Rough Draft Synthesis Paper (Due Monday Before Class)

- **Purpose:** Develop an initial critical analysis integrating insights from the readings to facilitate in-class discussion.
- **Instructions:**
 - Write a 3-page rough draft synthesis paper that:
 - * Identifies patterns, connections, and contradictions across the readings.
 - * Highlights implications for public administration theory and practice.
 - This draft should be substantive but will be refined based on class discussion and further reflection.

3. In-Person Class Discussion and Peer Review Studio (Monday)

- **Purpose:** Deepen understanding of the week's readings through collaborative discussion and refine synthesis thinking.
- **Activity:** Analyze key themes, patterns, and contradictions in the readings; discuss insights from rough drafts.
- **Peer Review Studio (30 minutes):** Students work in rotating pairs to give targeted feedback using a short checklist. Each student submits two actionable suggestions and one question to Canvas by the end of class.

4. Final Synthesis Paper (Due Wednesday Night) and Reflection (Due Friday Night)

- **Purpose:** Produce a polished critical analysis incorporating insights from class discussion.
- **Instructions:**
 - Write a 4- to 5-page final synthesis paper that:
 - * Refines and expands the rough draft based on class discussion.
 - * Demonstrates sophisticated integration of readings with deeper analysis.
 - * Connects theory to practice in public administration.
 - **AI Feedback (Required):** Students must use an AI tool for feedback and copy/paste the AI response into the appendix of their final submission.

``Act as a critical reviewer for my synthesis paper. Identify 3 strengths, 3 gaps in reasoning or evidence, 2 counterarguments I should address, and 2 additional connections across readings. Do not rewrite my paper or add new content.''

- Write a brief personal reflection (250–300 words) on your learning process and insights gained from the week’s work.
- Include all AI feedback used during the week in an appendix.

Week 1 Alternative Assignment (MLK Week)

- **Purpose:** Launch the semester with a shared conceptual foundation while acknowledging the holiday schedule.
- **Deliverables:**
 - A 2-page concept map or outline that connects key claims from *The New Public Service* Chapters 1–6.
 - A 300-word reflection identifying one tension you see between traditional PA and the New Public Service approach.
 - Two discussion questions to bring to Week 2.
- **Due:** Friday, 1/23 by 11:59 p.m.

Book Deep-Dive Alternative (Weeks 6 and 9)

For the *Street-Level Bureaucracy* and *Emotional Labor* weeks, students complete an alternative assignment in place of the standard synthesis paper.

- **Part A: Concept Application Memo (Due Monday Before Class)**
 - 2 pages identifying 3 core concepts from the book and applying them to a real or hypothetical public service setting.
 - Include one explicit dilemma or tradeoff a public servant faces in that setting.
- **Part B: Decision and Practice Memo (Due Wednesday Night)**
 - 3–4 pages proposing a response to the dilemma using course theory and evidence from the book.
 - Include one paragraph on equity implications and one paragraph on implementation constraints.
- **Reflection (Due Friday Night)**

- 250–300 words on how the book reshaped your view of frontline public service or emotional labor.
- **AI Feedback (Required):** Use an AI tool for critique on Part B and include the response in your appendix.

``Review my decision and practice memo for clarity, feasibility, and use of evidence. Identify 2 strengths, 2 weak spots, and 1 alternative approach I should consider. Do not rewrite the memo.''

AI Use and Academic Integrity: AI may be used to provide feedback, raise questions, or suggest additional angles for analysis. It may **not** be used to draft or rewrite your work. All writing must remain your own. Please read the **Policy on the Use of Generative AI and Other Technology** section of this syllabus for more details on how to use AI responsibly in this course and refer to Table 3 and the more detailed guidelines provided below.

Table 3: Guidelines for Responsible AI Use in the Course

| AI Use: Do's | AI Use: Don'ts |
|---|--|
| Use AI to give feedback on your writing (clarity, gaps, connections). | Use AI to write or rewrite your assignments. |
| Ask AI to suggest questions for discussion or reflection. | Copy/paste AI text and submit it as your own work. |
| Cite AI when it meaningfully shaped your thinking (e.g., "ChatGPT feedback, 2/9/26"). | Omit citation when AI influenced your work. |
| Use AI to check organization, coherence, or flow . | Rely on AI without engaging critically with course readings. |
| Be mindful of biases and sustainability impacts . | Treat AI outputs as authoritative without evaluation. |
| Remember: Your voice, analysis, and synthesis must remain central . | Assume AI can replace your own critical thinking. |

2) Practice Comprehensive Exam Response

Week 10: Comprehensive Exam Response

- **In-Person Class:** Question opens on Sunday. In class we'll have a final preparation.
 - **Activities:**
 - * Review key theoretical frameworks.
 - * Discuss strategies for integrating course materials into a comprehensive argument.
- **Comprehensive Exam Response:**
 - **Objective:** Demonstrate mastery of key themes by critically engaging with classical public administration theory, New Public Service, and New Public Management.
 - **Requirements:**
 - * Length: 1,000 words.
 - * Address the provided exam question with clear argumentation and citations.
 - * Use APA or Chicago author-date citation style.
 - * Engage deeply with course readings.
 - **Assignment:** Final Exam Response Submission (due Saturday night).

3) Reading Discussion Facilitation

Students will facilitate class discussions in pairs for Weeks 2 through 9 (skipping Week 1). With 9 students, most weeks will have facilitator pairs, with one week requiring a group of three. Facilitators will lead integrated discussions that build on their collaborative preparation and the rough draft synthesis papers submitted prior to class, creating a dynamic learning environment that bridges individual preparation with collaborative analysis.

Facilitator Responsibilities

Pre-Class Preparation:

- Collaborate with your partner(s) to share and discuss your annotated bibliographies, identifying complementary perspectives and areas of disagreement
- Prepare 6–8 discussion questions that connect readings to broader public administration theory and practice
- Design activities that encourage synthesis across readings and connection to current events or case studies
- Divide facilitation responsibilities and plan your collaborative approach

Class Facilitation (45 minutes):

- **Opening synthesis (10 minutes):** Collaboratively present key themes and tensions across the week's readings, drawing on your joint analysis
- **Facilitated discussion (25 minutes):** Guide analysis through prepared questions, ensuring all students contribute and connecting individual insights from rough drafts
- **Practical connections (10 minutes):** Lead discussion on implications for public administration practice, current policy issues, or professional scenarios

Post-Class Reflection:

- Each facilitator submits an individual brief (250-word) reflection on Canvas within 24 hours, analyzing what worked well, partnership dynamics, and what insights emerged from the discussion

Assessment Criteria

Facilitator pairs will be evaluated on:

- **Preparation and Collaboration:** Demonstrates thorough understanding of readings and effective partnership in synthesizing different perspectives from their joint preparation
- **Discussion Leadership:** Creates inclusive environment, manages extended class time effectively, and guides productive dialogue without dominating
- **Critical Inquiry:** Poses thought-provoking questions that push beyond summary to analysis, evaluation, and application within their 45-minute segment
- **Integration:** Successfully connects readings to broader course themes, current events, and professional practice in public administration
- **Adaptability:** Responds effectively to unexpected directions in discussion and incorporates diverse student perspectives within their facilitation time
- **Professional Communication:** Maintains respectful, scholarly discourse while encouraging risk-taking in thinking and effectively shares facilitation responsibilities

Note: Facilitator assignments will be distributed at the beginning of the semester. The instructor will handle all peer review studio activities during class.

4) MPA Comprehensive General Area Essay Exam

Students will complete a comprehensive general area essay exam as part of the MPA program's comprehensive exam requirement. The exam will consist of two questions from

which students will choose one to answer. The questions will be based on the course readings and discussions and will require students to demonstrate their understanding of public administration's key concepts, theories, and debates. The exam will allow students to synthesize their learning in the course and demonstrate their ability to think critically and write clearly about complex issues in public administration. Students who do not pass the exam on the first attempt will have the opportunity to retake the exam once during finals week. The grade for the exam is pass/fail. Students who do not pass on the second attempt will be required to retake the course.

5) Concentration Area Writing Project

Note: The specific focus of this project will vary depending on your concentration area (Public Finance, Human Resource Management, Local Government Management, or Public Policy). Detailed assignment sheets for each concentration provide tailored prompts and options. This syllabus outlines the shared structure, requirements, and grading criteria for all students.

Assignment Overview

This capstone project allows students to deepen their understanding of their MPA concentration area by integrating theoretical frameworks with real-world challenges. Using **Heather McGhee's *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together* (2021)** as a central text, students will explore how exclusionary policies and inequitable governance affect their concentration area, such as public finance, human resources, local government management, or public policy. The assignment is scaffolded into stages to guide students toward producing a polished, analytical final paper.

Objectives:

- Develop expertise in a specific public administration concentration area.
- Enhance research, analytical, and writing skills.
- Synthesize theoretical frameworks with practical case studies.
- Critically examine how equity and exclusion affect public administration.

Assignment Stages and Requirements:

1. Topic Selection (10% of assignment grade):

- Submit a one-page proposal outlining your topic, research question, and how you will integrate *The Sum of Us* into your analysis.

2. Literature Review (20% of assignment grade):

- Draft a literature review that synthesizes key themes from *The Sum of Us*, course readings, and additional scholarly materials.
- Discuss how McGhee's arguments about exclusion, equity, and shared prosperity connect to themes in your concentration area.

3. Peer Review Workshop (20% of assignment grade):

- Participate in a peer review workshop to provide and receive feedback on your literature review and paper outline.

4. Final Paper (50% of assignment grade):

- Submit a polished final paper that integrates feedback from earlier stages.
- Analyze an issue relevant to your concentration through the lens of equity and shared prosperity, connecting theoretical frameworks to practical lessons.
- Ensure the paper is 9–12 pages (excluding references), double-spaced, and formatted in APA or Chicago author-date style.

Submission Timeline:

- **Topic Outline:** Due Week 14
- **Literature Review:** Due Week 15
- **Peer Review Workshop:** Due Week 15
- **Final Paper:** Due Week 16

General Guidelines:

- **Grounding:** Papers must be firmly rooted in *The Sum of Us* and assigned concentration literature, demonstrating a deep understanding of both. Students may also incorporate relevant literature from the capstone or other MPA courses.
- **Length:** 9–12 pages, double-spaced (excluding references).
- **Formatting:** Use 12-point Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins. APA or Chicago author-date citation style is required.
- **Citations:** Provide in-text citations and a comprehensive references page.

- **Structure:** Organize the paper with a clear introduction, body, and conclusion. Use descriptive headings to guide the reader.
- **Writing Quality:** Papers should be polished, professional, and free of grammatical errors.

Grading Criteria:

- **Depth of Analysis (30%):** Engagement with *The Sum of Us* and the broader literature.
- **Use of Sources (20%):** Relevance and critical evaluation of sources.
- **Clarity and Organization (20%):** Logical structure and coherent arguments.
- **Writing Quality (15%):** Grammar, style, and proper formatting.
- **Completeness and Accuracy (15%):** Adherence to assignment requirements and deadlines.

This assignment is designed to help you synthesize your learning in the MPA program and apply it to a specific area of public administration. By engaging with *The Sum of Us* and other relevant literature, you will develop a deeper understanding of how equity and exclusion affect public administration and how you can contribute to creating a more equitable and inclusive society.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity. Any student found to have engaged in academic dishonesty will be subject to the sanctions described in the [Academic Dishonesty Policy](#) (UPS 300.021). Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, and submitting previously graded work without prior authorization. Students are expected to be familiar with the university's policy on academic dishonesty and to adhere to this policy in all aspects of this course. Any student who has questions about the policy should ask the professor for clarification.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious violation of academic integrity and will not be tolerated in this course. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, copying and pasting text from sources

without proper citation, paraphrasing text from sources without proper citation, and submitting work that is not your own. Students are expected to properly cite all sources used in their work and to submit original work. Failure to do so may result in a failing grade for the assignment and further disciplinary action.

Written Work

All written work must be submitted in a professional format, including proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Written work must also be properly cited using the appropriate citation style. Students are expected to follow the guidelines for written work provided by the professor and to seek clarification if they have questions about the requirements.

Policy on the Use of Generative AI and Other Technology

Definition of Generative AI

For this course, generative AI refers to systems capable of producing human-like text, images, data analysis, or other content. Examples include:

- Large Language Models (e.g., GPT-4, GPT-5, Claude, Gemini, TitanGPT)
- Text-to-image or multimodal generators (e.g., DALL-E, Midjourney)
- AI writing assistants and summarizers
- Automated coding, data, or content generators

AI Use Policy

AI is permitted and encouraged as a learning tool, under the following guidelines:

- **Allowed:** Using AI for feedback on annotated bibliographies, synthesis drafts, and reflections (see assignments for sample prompts).
- **Allowed:** Using AI to brainstorm questions, highlight gaps, or check clarity and organization.
- **Not Allowed:** Submitting AI-generated text as your own work or asking AI to rewrite your assignments.
- **Optional:** Students may choose whether or not to use AI tools for any assignment in this course. All work can be completed successfully without AI assistance. This optional approach applies to all course requirements, regardless of specific AI-related instructions in individual assignments.

Rationale for AI Policy

This policy is designed to ensure AI use strengthens—not substitutes—your academic work:

1. Promotes critical engagement with public administration theory by using AI as a feedback partner.
2. Enhances literature review and writing by highlighting missing connections or blind spots.
3. Builds professional literacy with tools already common in public service organizations.
4. Develops ethical judgment by practicing responsible use of emerging technologies.
5. Encourages sustainability awareness in balancing AI's benefits with its environmental costs.

Ethics and Responsible Use

Students are expected to engage with AI responsibly:

- **Authorship:** All substantive writing must be your own. AI may provide critique, but not draft or rewrite.
- **Citation:** When AI meaningfully informs your work, cite it (e.g., "ChatGPT (GPT-5) [AI model], feedback received [date]").
- **Bias Awareness:** AI outputs reflect biases. Evaluate them critically for fairness and accuracy.
- **Sustainability:** Be mindful of AI's environmental footprint and use tools thoughtfully.

Repercussions for Misuse

- Misuse includes submitting AI-generated work as your own, failing to cite AI contributions, or relying on AI instead of demonstrating your own analysis.
- Consequences may include revision requirements, grade penalties, or formal academic integrity proceedings.

Assessment of AI Use

AI use will be assessed not by how often you use it, but by how thoughtfully you integrate it into your learning:

- Evidence of revision and improvement based on AI or peer feedback.
- Student reflections on the usefulness and limitations of AI.
- Quality of class participation, showing independent engagement with readings and theory.
- Final projects that demonstrate original critical thinking, even if AI supported the drafting process.

The goal is to treat AI as a *feedback partner*—a tool to sharpen your analysis, deepen your questions, and strengthen your voice in public administration.

Technical Competencies

Pollak Library Resources

The Pollak Library provides a wide range of resources and services to support your research and learning. These resources include books, journals, databases, and research guides. You can access the library's resources online through the [Pollak Library website](#). The library also offers research assistance through the [Research Assistance Program](#). You can also access the [library's online instruction guidelines](#) for help with online learning.

Canvas

This course will use [Canvas](#) as a learning management system. You will use *Canvas* to access course materials, submit assignments, participate in discussions, and communicate with the professor and your classmate. You are responsible for checking *Canvas* regularly for announcements, assignments, and other course materials. You are also responsible for ensuring that your *Canvas* notifications are set to receive messages from the course.

Zoom

This course may include synchronous online sessions using [Zoom](#). You are responsible for ensuring that you have the necessary equipment and internet connection to participate in these sessions.

Minimum Technical Requirements

To participate in this course, you will need the following minimum technical requirements:

- A computer or tablet with a reliable internet connection
- A webcam and microphone
- A modern web browser (Chrome, Firefox, Safari, or Edge)
- Microsoft Word or a compatible word processing program
- Adobe Acrobat Reader or a compatible PDF reader

Long- and short-term computer and internet access loans are available through the [Student Genius Center](#).

Student Resources Website

It is the student's responsibility to read and understand the required and important [student information for course syllabi](#). Included is information about:

- University learning goals
- General Education learning objectives
- Netiquette/appropriate online behavior
- Students' rights to accommodations
- Campus student support resources
- Academic integrity
- Emergency preparedness/what to do
- Library services
- Student IT services and competencies
- Software privacy and accessibility
- Accessibility statement
- Diversity statement
- Land acknowledgment
- Final exam schedule
- Semester calendar

Classroom Management

Classroom Policies

- **Attendance:** Regular attendance is crucial for success in this course. If you must miss a class, please notify me in advance and make arrangements to catch up on missed material.
- **Participation:** Active participation in class discussions is expected. Please come prepared to engage with the readings and contribute to group activities.
- **Technology Use:** Laptops and tablets are allowed for note-taking and accessing course materials. However, please refrain from using your devices for non-class-related activities during class.
- **Respectful Communication:** Treat your classmates and instructor with respect. Disagreements are natural, but please express them constructively and courteously.

Course Schedule

Week 1, Starting 1/19: Public Administration Theory I (MLK Week)

- **No class meeting:** MLK holiday
- Readings:
 - [Denhardt and Denhardt \(2015\)](#), *The New Public Service*, Chapters 1–6
- **Due Friday (1/23):** Week 1 Alternative Assignment

Week 2, Starting 1/26: Public Administration Theory II

- **In-person Session:** Introduction to the Course and Classical Foundations
- Readings:
 - [Wilson \(1887\)](#), “The Study of Administration”
 - [Weber \(1946\)](#), “Bureaucracy”
 - [Gulick \(1937\)](#), “Notes on the Theory of Organization”
 - [Follett \(1926\)](#), “The Giving of Orders”
 - [Simon \(1946\)](#), “Proverbs of Administration”
- **Due Monday (1/26):** Annotated Bibliography and Rough Draft Synthesis Paper
- **Monday (1/26):** Class Discussion + Peer Review Studio

- **Due Wednesday (1/28):** Final Synthesis Paper
- **Due Friday (1/30):** Reflection

Week 3, Starting 2/2: Ethics and Values in Public Administration

- **In-person Session:** Public Service Values and Ethics
- Readings:
 - [Friedrich \(1935\)](#), “Responsible Government Service Under the American Constitution”
 - [Finer \(1941\)](#), “Administrative Responsibility in Democratic Government”
 - [Goss \(1996\)](#), “A Distinct Public Administration Ethics?”
 - [Adams and Balfour \(2009\)](#), “Unmasking Administrative Evil”
 - [Denhardt and Denhardt \(2015\)](#), *The New Public Service*, Chapter 7
- **Due Monday (2/2):** Annotated Bibliography and Rough Draft Synthesis Paper
- **Monday (2/2):** Class Discussion + Peer Review Studio
- **Due Wednesday (2/4):** Final Synthesis Paper
- **Due Friday (2/6):** Reflection

Week 4, Starting 2/9: Leadership and Motivation

- **In-person Session:** Leadership and Motivation
- Readings:
 - [Christensen, Paarlberg and Perry \(2017\)](#), “Public Service Motivation Research”
 - [Denhardt and Denhardt \(2015\)](#), *The New Public Service*, Chapter 8
 - [Lachance \(2017\)](#), “Public Service Motivation”
 - [Perry and Wise \(1990\)](#), “The Motivational Bases of Public Service”
 - [Fairholm \(2004\)](#), “Different Perspectives on the Practice of Leadership”
- **Due Monday (2/9):** Annotated Bibliography and Rough Draft Synthesis Paper
- **Monday (2/9):** Class Discussion + Peer Review Studio
- **Due Wednesday (2/11):** Final Synthesis Paper
- **Due Friday (2/13):** Reflection

Week 5, Starting 2/16: Performance Management

- **In-person Session:** Performance Management

- Readings:
 - Behn (2003), “Why Measure Performance?”
 - Denhardt and Denhardt (2015), *The New Public Service*, Chapter 9
 - Douglas and Ansell (2021), “Getting a Grip on Performance of Collaborations”
 - Marvel (2015), “Unconscious Bias in Citizens’ Evaluations...”
 - Nicholson-Crotty (2004), “Public Management and Organizational Performance”
- **Due Monday (2/16):** Annotated Bibliography and Rough Draft Synthesis Paper
- **Monday (2/16):** Class Discussion + Peer Review Studio
- **Due Wednesday (2/18):** Final Synthesis Paper
- **Due Friday (2/20):** Reflection

Week 6, Starting 2/23: Street-Level Bureaucrats

- **In-person Session:** Street-Level Bureaucrats
- Readings:
 - Lipsky (2010), *Street-Level Bureaucracy*
- **Due Monday (2/23):** Annotated Bibliography and Concept Application Memo (Part A)
- **Monday (2/23):** Class Discussion + Peer Review Studio
- **Due Wednesday (2/25):** Decision and Practice Memo (Part B)
- **Due Friday (2/27):** Reflection

Week 7, Starting 3/2: Privatization and Contracting

- **In-person Session:** Privatization and Contracting
- Readings:
 - Milward and Provan (2000), “Governing the Hollow State”
 - Hood (1991), “A Public Management for All Seasons?”
 - Brown, Potoski and Van Slyke (2006), “Managing Public Service Contracts”
 - Jos and Tompkins (2009), “Keeping it Public”
 - Rainey and Bozeman (2000), “Comparing Public and Private Organizations”
- **Due Monday (3/2):** Annotated Bibliography and Rough Draft Synthesis Paper
- **Monday (3/2):** Class Discussion + Peer Review Studio
- **Due Wednesday (3/4):** Final Synthesis Paper
- **Due Friday (3/6):** Reflection

Week 8, Starting 3/9: 21st Century Challenges

- **In-person Session:** 21st Century Challenges
- Readings:
 - [Maynard-Moody and Musheno \(2012\)](#), “Social Equities and Inequities in Practice”
 - [Gooden \(2017\)](#), “Social Equity and Evidence”
 - [McCandless, Bishu, Gómez Hernández, Paredes Eraso, Sabharwal, Santis and Yates \(2022\)](#), “A Long Road”
 - [Denhardt and Denhardt \(2015\)](#), *The New Public Service*, Chapters 10–12
- **Due Monday (3/9):** Annotated Bibliography and Rough Draft Synthesis Paper
- **Monday (3/9):** Class Discussion + Peer Review Studio
- **Due Wednesday (3/11):** Final Synthesis Paper
- **Due Friday (3/13):** Reflection

Week 9, Starting 3/16: Emotional Labor in Public Service

- **In-person Session:** Emotional Labor
- Readings:
 - [Guy, Newman and Mastracci \(2008\)](#), *Emotional Labor: Putting the Service in Public Service*
- **Due Monday (3/16):** Annotated Bibliography and Concept Application Memo (Part A)
- **Monday (3/16):** Class Discussion + Peer Review Studio
- **Due Wednesday (3/18):** Decision and Practice Memo (Part B)
- **Due Friday (3/20):** Reflection

Week 10, Starting 3/23: Practice Comprehensive Exam Response

- **In-person Session:** Distribution and discussion of practice comprehensive exam
 - Review key theoretical frameworks in public administration
 - Discuss strategies for integrating course materials into a comprehensive argument
 - Outline approaches to time management and exam writing
- **Readings:** Revisit core course texts; review prior synthesis papers

- **Monday (3/23):** Class Discussion on practice exam prompt
- **Due Saturday (3/28):** Practice Comprehensive Exam Essay

Week 11, Starting 3/30: Spring Break

- **No Class:** Spring Break

Week 12, Starting 4/6: Comprehensive General Area Essay Exam

- **In-person Session:** Comprehensive exam launch and Q&A
- **Comprehensive General Area Exam distributed Friday (4/10) at 8:00 a.m.**

Week 13, Starting 4/13: Comprehensive General Area Essay Exam

- **Asynchronous Session:** No class meeting
- **Comprehensive General Area Exam due Thursday (4/16) by 4:59 p.m.**

Week 14, Starting 4/20: Concentration Area Paper

- **Asynchronous Session:** Concentration Area Paper
- Paper expectations and guidelines
- Due: Topic Selection

Week 15, Starting 4/27: Concentration Area Paper

- **In-Person Session:** Concentration Area Paper Workshop
- **Due Sunday (5/3):** Literature Review Draft

Week 16, Starting 5/4: Concentration Area Paper

- **Asynchronous Session:** Concentration Area Paper
- **Due: Final Draft on Tuesday (5/5) by 9:00 p.m.**

References

- Adams, Guy B and Danny L Balfour. 2009. *Unmasking Administrative Evil*. M.E. Sharpe.
- Behn, Robert D. 2003. "Why Measure Performance? Different Purposes Require Different Measures." *Public Administration Review* 63(5):586–606.
- Brown, Trevor L, Matthew Potoski and David M Van Slyke. 2006. "Managing Public Service Contracts: Aligning Values, Institutions, and Markets." *Public Administration Review* 66(3):323–331. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2006.00590.x>.
- Christensen, Robert K, Laurie E Paarlberg and James L Perry. 2017. "Public Service Motivation Research: Lessons for Practice." *Public Administration Review* 77(4):529–542.
- Denhardt, Janet Vinzant and Robert B. Denhardt. 2015. *The New Public Service: Serving, Not Steering*. Fourth edition ed. New York: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.
- Douglas, Scott and Chris Ansell. 2021. "Getting a Grip on the Performance of Collaborations: Examining Collaborative Performance Regimes and Collaborative Performance Summits." *Public Administration Review* 81(5):951–961. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/puar.13341>.
- Fairholm, Gilbert W. 2004. "Different Perspectives on the Practice of Leadership." *Public Administration Review* 64(5):577–590.
- Finer, Herman. 1941. "Administrative Responsibility in Democratic Government." *Public Administration Review* 1(4):335–350. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/972907>.
- Follett, Mary Parker. 1926. The Giving of Orders. In *Dynamic Administration: The Collected Papers of Mary Parker Follett*, ed. Henry C. Metcalf and L. Urwick. New York: Harper & Brothers pp. 50–70.
- Friedrich, Carl Joachim. 1935. *Responsible Government Service under the American Constitution*.
- Gooden, Susan T. 2017. "Social Equity and Evidence: Insights from Local Government." *Public Administration Review* 77(6):822–828. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/puar.12851>.
- Goss, Robert P. 1996. "A Distinct Public Administration Ethics?" *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 6(4):573–597. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordjournals.jpart.a024328>.
- Gulick, Luther. 1937. Notes on the Thoery of Organization. In *Papers on the Science of Administration*. New York: Institute of Public Aministration, Columbia University pp. 1–45.
- Guy, Mary E., Meredith A. Newman and Sharon Mastracci. 2008. *Emotional Labor: Putting the Service in Public Service*. Hoboken: Taylor and Francis.

- Hood, Christopher. 1991. "A Public Management for All Seasons?" *Public Administration* 69(1):3–19. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1467-9299.1991.tb00779.x>.
- Jos, Philip H. and Mark E. Tompkins. 2009. "Keeping It Public: Defending Public Service Values in a Customer Service Age." *Public Administration Review* 69(6):1077–1086. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2009.02065.x>.
- Lachance, Matthew J. 2017. "Public Service Motivation: Lessons from NASA's Janitor." *Public Administration Review* 77(4):542–543.
- Lipsky, Michael. 2010. *Street-Level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services*. 30th anniversary expanded ed ed. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Marvel, John D. 2015. "Unconscious Bias in Citizens' Evaluations of Public Sector Performance." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 26(1):muu053. <https://academic.oup.com/jpart/article-lookup/doi/10.1093/jpart/muu053>.
- Maynard-Moody, Steven and Michael Musheno. 2012. "Social Equities and Inequities in Practice: Street-Level Workers as Agents and Pragmatists." *Public Administration Review* 72:S16–S23. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41688034>.
- McCandless, Sean, Sebawit G. Bishu, Melissa Gómez Hernández, Érika Paredes Eraso, Meghna Sabharwal, Esteban Leonardo Santis and Sophie Yates. 2022. "A Long Road: Patterns and Prospects for Social Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Public Administration." *Public Administration* 100(1):129–148. <https://login.lib-proxy.fullerton.edu/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=buh&AN=155866504&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.
- McGhee, Heather C. 2021. *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together*. New York: One World.
- Milward, H. B. and K. G. Provan. 2000. "Governing the Hollow State." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 10(2):359–380. <https://academic.oup.com/jpart/article-lookup/doi/10.1093/oxfordjournals/jpart.a024273>.
- Nicholson-Crotty, S. 2004. "Public Management and Organizational Performance: The Case of Law Enforcement Agencies." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 14(1):1–18. <https://academic.oup.com/jpart/article-lookup/doi/10.1093/jpart/muh001>.
- Perry, James L. and Lois Recascino Wise. 1990. "The Motivational Bases of Public Service." *Public Administration Review* 50(3):367–373.
- Rainey, Hal G. and Barry Bozeman. 2000. "Comparing Public and Private Organizations: Empirical Research and the Power of the A Priori." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory: J-PART* 10(2):447–469. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3525651>.
- Simon, Herbert A. 1946. "The Proverbs of Administration." *Public Administration Review* 6(1):53–67. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/973030>.

Weber, Max. 1946. Bureaucracy. In *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills. New York: Oxford University Press pp. 196–244.

Wilson, Woodrow. 1887. “The Study of Administration.” *Political Science Quarterly* 2(2):197–222. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2139277>.

Updated: January 15, 2026