Doing Democratic Public Administration
Winter 2020

Wednesdays, 5p-9p, Saturday March 14, 2020 9am-end
Lecture meets in 105
Seminar rooms: 105 (Doreen); 207 (Lianna)
See Canvas site for up-to-date topics, schedule and assignment information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Office Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lianna Shepherd</td>
<td>Email through Canvas only</td>
<td>By appointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doreen Swetkis</td>
<td><a href="mailto:swetkisd@evergreen.edu">swetkisd@evergreen.edu</a></td>
<td>By appointment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TESC MPA MISSION STATEMENT

“Be the Change”

Our students, faculty and staff create learning communities to explore and implement socially just, democratic public service. We think critically and creatively; communicate effectively; work collaboratively; embrace diversity; we value fairness and equity; advocate powerfully on behalf of the public; and imagine new possibilities to accomplish positive change in our workplaces and in our communities.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This quarter we explore what it takes to administer for the public good in a democracy. This quarter is in part a “Public Administration-Management 101” survey of the challenges faced by administrators in the public, nonprofit or private sectors, and the knowledge and skills needed to administer/manage in diverse organizations that work toward the public good.

Our focus is on governing in a democracy. Aspects to governance such as leadership, management, theories of organization, and ethical considerations when governing will be some of the topics emphasized this quarter.

Key questions:
- What are the different ways in which we effectively organize ourselves?
- How do we understand and operate within an organization’s culture, biases, and resistance to change?
Learning objectives:

- Examine, place in context, and evaluate contemporary ideas about, and practices in, democratically administering for the public good in a world facing fundamental paradigm shifts.
- Understand the special role of public administrators within the complex environment of politics and civic engagement.
- Develop and improve organizational analysis skills and capacities, including developing leadership skills in ourselves and others.
- Gain an understanding of a variety of frameworks and models for sense-making of and in organizations, and the ability to use them as analytical tools.
- Develop capacities to work effectively in diverse environments and with diverse populations.
- Improve skills in critical thinking, writing, speaking, presenting and working effectively in teams.

Course Equivalencies for Evaluation:
3 credits Organizational Theory
3 credits Management & Leadership

EXPECTATIONS

Format of Assignment Submissions: Unless otherwise stated, all papers should be typed, double spaced, 12 point font, and follow APA format and citation style. All written work will be of high quality, grammatically correct, clear and without spelling errors. Follow the Federal Plain Language Guidelines for writing that is clear, concise, and accessible. If you require it, please contact the Graduate Writing Assistant. Sometimes your faculty will ask you to work with the Graduate Writing Assistant; if so, you are required to do so to the satisfaction of your faculty member.

Review Assignment Requirements Thoroughly Before Drafting Submissions: It is vitally important that you read and understand assignments before you begin to write. Some assignments have very specific requirements. Some are intentionally a bit more open to interpretation and to creative responses. Clear understanding of your goals when writing is important to avoiding frustration.

Late assignments: Are not accepted without prior (to deadline) approval by your seminar faculty member. Multiple late assignments put you at risk for no credit.

Participation & Attendance: Students are required to attend each class meeting in its entirety. Participation includes focusing on class content, being engaged in class and seminar, listening to others, taking notes, completing class interactive exercises, avoiding distractions, and listening to and interacting with guest speakers. If an absence is unavoidable, faculty must be notified prior to a class and/or seminar absence. After one absence per quarter, make-up work may be assigned at faculty discretion, on a case-by-case. Make-up work must be completed by the end of the quarter for course credit. Multiple absences put you at risk for no credit.

Holidays for Reasons of Faith or Conscience: Please inform us in writing within the first two weeks of class if you will miss specific class sessions because of holidays of faith or conscience, or for an organized activity conducted as part of a religious denomination, church, or organization. If you let us know within that time frame, we will offer you reasonable
Accommodations: are provided for any student who desires them through Access Services, the Graduate Writing Assistant, and the Quantitative and Symbolic Reasoning Center. To request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact the office of Access Services for Students with Disabilities (867-6348 or 6364). Information about a disability or health condition is regarded as confidential. Please refer to TESC’s Students With Disabilities Policy here.

Use of Electronic Devices: The class is participatory and the learning community is dependent upon people being present to what is happening in class. Research shows that using electronic devices can be distracting and deleterious to the learning experience and to the learning community. Further, research suggests that typing notes on a keyboard rather than writing out longhand results in shallower processing of the concepts. Yet we acknowledge the limited, key situations where these devices are necessary. These situations include: accessing the Canvas site when course materials are being explained; workshops where laptops help teams track requirements and output; practical exercises in class where spreadsheets or other templates are needed; and individual situations where accommodation must be made through technology. In short, put away your devices (laptops, phones, tablets) except when otherwise instructed (we recognize that some may be accessing readings electronically and will use a device in seminar). If an emergency requires you to track activity on your phone, please inform a faculty member.

Teamwork: The expectations of students as individuals applies to expectations of individuals in project teams as well. Each team member is expected to behave as part of a learning community. The division of labor in teams should respect differences among members while ensuring maximum participation of all team members. Conflicts with the team should be resolved by team members to the greatest extent possible. It is not the role of faculty to adjudicate conflicts within teams unless they involve violations of college policies.

Credit: Students will receive 6 graduate credits at the end of the course if all requirements have been satisfactorily completed. Students will be evaluated based upon their progress towards the learning objectives, assessed from classroom, seminar, and assignment performance. No partial credit or incompletes will be awarded. Full loss of credit decisions will be made by the faculty team. Full loss of credit for two terms of core may result in dismissal from the MPA program. Academic dishonesty and plagiarism (i.e., using another’s work as your own, see MPA Student Handbook for more), failing to complete one or more assignments, completing more than one assignment late, or multiple absences may constitute denial of credit and/or dismissal from the MPA program. Failing to meet course requirements (ex. not completing one or more assignments, completing one or more assignments late, or multiple absences) may constitute denial of total credit at the discretion of the faculty team. Students at risk of losing credit will receive written notification prior to the end of the quarter.

Evaluation: A written self-evaluation and seminar faculty evaluation are required for credit. All final evaluations are to be submitted via our online evaluation system no later than one week after the last class. Evaluation conferences may occur in person or over the phone and should be scheduled with your seminar faculty. Evaluations are considered “submitted” only when posted through the College portal.
**Other Expectations of Students and Faculty:** We commit to promoting a cooperative, supportive atmosphere within the community; giving everyone opportunity for self-reflection and expression; using high standards in reading the text and in preparing our papers, lectures, and comments in seminar; handling all disputes in a spirit of goodwill; respecting our differences; discussing any problems involving others in the learning community directly with the individuals involved.

We abide by the [social contract](#), the [student rights & responsibilities](#) and the [non-discrimination policies and procedures at TESC](#).

All students are expected to support and contribute to a well-functioning MPA classroom learning community. Behavior that disrupts the learning community may be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the MPA program.

**Guest Policy:** Guests are welcome to visit our learning community during class time and seminar meetings with approval from course faculty in advance of each requested visit. It is the host student’s responsibility to contact the faculty with details about the requested guest visit and await approval. All guests must abide by all social contract, conduct code, and nondiscrimination policy guidelines as aforementioned in this syllabus. Per faculty discretion, guests may be asked to leave and not permitted to return to class if these guidelines are violated in any way including behavior that disrupts the learning community. All guests are expected to minimize their participation in class and seminar discussions.

**Permission to Record Lecture, Workshop and Other Similar Discussion:** If a student in class would like to obtain an audio or video recording of another participant in class speaking, discussion, lecture or other related communications in class, and this falls beyond the scope of *reasonable accommodations*, then this student would need written permission via email or other acceptable forms of documentation, from all participants in the activity (i.e., guest speakers, faculty, students registered in the class) and would need to give a reasonable time period in advance of the recording (usually 5 business days). Written consent would need to be obtained before the recording begins. Any of the participants have the right to deny this request.

**Inclement Weather:** In the event of bad weather or emergencies students should check with television, web pages, and radio stations for announcements of campus closures. Students can also call the main campus line 867-6000 to get the latest news regarding a campus closure or delay. Since many students in the program travel from relatively distant locations, faculty may decide to cancel class even if campus is open. If we do this we will send an all-class email by 3:00 pm. If you've not already done so, sign up to receive alerts about campus closing or other emergencies [here](#).

**Communicating with Each Other:** Email and [Canvas](#) are our primary means of communication. You are responsible for checking Evergreen email and [Canvas](#) regularly.

**REQUIRED TEXTS FOR THE QUARTER**


Additional Readings posted to Canvas.

ASSIGNMENTS

ITP Metrics Assessments and Reflective Questions

- Team Dynamics (Week 7)
- Leadership (Week 9)
- Team Peer Feedback (Week 10)

**Purpose:** For several weeks this quarter, you will complete regular evaluations via ITP Metrics (The Individual and Team Performance (ITP) Lab at University of Calgary). These are research-backed evaluations designed to help you understand your personal strengths and challenges and assess team health to help manage conflicts in your assigned team work.

**Instructions:** You are expected to complete all ITP Metrics evaluations that are sent via email. After each evaluation, carefully read your own customized report, and then answer the reflective questions provided on Canvas. This is for your own self-assessment only. While you must complete these questions, they will not be graded.

**Key Skills:** professional self-awareness, emotional intelligence, team building and management

**Week 2 Assignment: Organization Theory & Public Administration Paper**

**Purpose:** Organizational theory, particularly as it applies to public and nonprofit organizations, studies organizations to identify the patterns and structures used to fulfill the mission and goals of the organization.

**Instructions:** Write a 3-5 page, double-spaced paper answering the following:

- What is a central theme or purpose of organization theory?
- How can the various theories of organization be applied within the context of public administration to better achieve the goals of public agencies?

Explicitly incorporate readings from both weeks into the paper. Refrain from using additional resources beyond the Weeks 1 & 2 assigned readings and lecture materials.

**Key Skills:** critical analysis and writing, synthesis of seemingly disparate ideas

**Week 3 Assignment: Policy Memo (Applied Ethics)**

**Purpose:** The ability to write a strong and concise policy memo is one of the most important skills for policy practitioners in all fields. For professional policy analysts in local and regional public administration, think tanks, political consultation firms, lobby groups, and more, policy memos are written repeatedly on a variety of topics, and this assignment is intended to both increase facility with this critical writing skill and connect theory to applied practice.

**Instructions:** 1 page, single spaced, including an executive summary

Instead of describing and analyzing the readings, you are using the readings to make a recommendation to a decision maker. Your assignment is to write a policy memo on the topic of
Applied Ethics in Public Management, connecting the readings to a real-world organizational ethical dilemma. You may select the ethical issue, but you must incorporate more than one of this week’s readings into your analysis.

Select one issue and write a targeted policy memo to a specific policymaker identifying the problem and providing a recommendation. Use a memo style heading and include an executive summary of 3 sentences maximum. For guidance on policy memo writing, review the posted reading from Behn (2012) and the USC Libraries Research Guides.

Key Skills: Distill complex concepts into concise logical and persuasive statements; practice concise and targeted writing; demonstrate ability to problem-solve and think critically

Week 4 Assignment: Field Journal

Purpose: The primary goals of a field journal is for you to document your observations of how citizen engagement is organized in the real world and human behavior in a “democracy”. The secondary goal of a field journal is to physically put you in public service experiences you have yet to explore.

Instructions: 5 pages. Does not include cover page or works cited page. Attend a public meeting in person (ex. Legislative floor debate, Legislative committee hearing and testimony, City Council meeting, County Committee hearings, Planning Commission, Port Commission, non-profit Board meeting, Tribal Government public meeting, School Board meeting, etc.). Do not pick a meeting that is linked directly to your employer or one you attend regularly. Observe the actions or inactions of leadership and the democratic situation.

Write a narrative description of your experience that explains where you went, background about the organization, and what you learned from the meeting. This should be more than what is said, what was your experience. Additionally, respond to the following questions:

- Problem identification: What problems were identified? Were they addressed? What are some of the facts surrounding the problems? What critical issues contributed to the problems?
- Recommendations: Were recommendations made and, if so, by whom? What were the recommendations to address the problems? How effective do you think these recommended actions will be in alleviating the problems?
- Funding: Who funded the meeting?
- Leadership observations: Who did you identify as leaders and why? What leadership qualities did you observe?
- Observing the room: What was the physical space like and how did it impact the meeting? Who was in attendance? What did you notice about the audience members and their body language/reactions?
- Audience participation: Did the audience participate, and if so, how?
- Democracy observations: What democratic actions or comments were made?
- Making connections: How do your observations connect to any of the readings this quarter? As a public administrator, did this experience cause you to think differently about your work, how you present to elected officials or decision-makers, and/or how to include the public in your work?
Key Skills: Real time note-taking, observation skills, connecting theoretical ideas to practice

Week 5 Assignment: Team Work Plan

Purpose: The purpose of this assignment is to facilitate group planning and increase the likelihood of a successful group assignment.

Instructions: This is a group assignment that must be completed outside of class with your Outsider Organizational Analysis team. The Team Work Plan is posted on Canvas.

1. The group will perform a S.W.O.T analysis. Identification of SWOTs are essential because success may be achieved from your team members’ Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.
2. Next, the group will create a work plan, agreeing on:
   - The topic of the Organizational Analysis
   - A communication plan including meeting dates/times/location/mode (in person, over the phone, Skype, etc.)
   - The group’s definition of graduate level work
   - A conflict resolution plan, referring to your ITP metrics from last quarter
   - A definition of a successful team assignment
3. Lastly, the group will create an aerial timeline of the Organizational Analysis with deliverables (what you will do & when) and each team member’s responsibilities.

Key Skills: Strategic planning, decision-making, group facilitation

Week 6 Assignment: Design Thinking Critical Thinking Paper

Purpose: This is not just a summary of the readings. According to Paul & Elder’s, Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking (from Fall Quarter), critical thought means that you assess the assumptions and positions of yourself and between people in groups and organizations. This practice is important to managers and leaders because it helps us understand how we co-create and socially construct our perspectives in relation to each other.

Instructions: Length: 2-3 pages double spaced, plus references. Use APA format for references and cite all of your sources. Using the tools and approach described in Paul & Elder’s, Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking, critically assess and synthesize all of the readings for this week. If possible link the readings to something that occurred/is occurring in your professional experience.

Key Skills: Demonstrate knowledge of the assigned readings; illustrate ability to synthesize information from diverse sources into a holistic product; make connections between assigned readings to reveal new insights on the topic; explain the various strengths and weaknesses of the authors’ arguments.

Week 7 Assignment: ITP Metrics—Team Dynamics Assessment
Week 8 Assignment: Policy Memo (Public Management and Human Resources)

**Purpose:** In carrying out the managerial operations of public organizations, public managers are tasked with improving the quality and efficiency of services delivered by public organizations. Managers interpret public policy to implement public services in ways that are expected to achieve the most desirable outcomes for the interests they serve.

As with other actors in the realm of public administration, public managers must repeatedly write effective policy memos, and this assignment is again intended to both increase facility with this critical writing skill and connect theory to applied management practice.

**Instructions:** 1 page, single spaced, including an executive summary. Your assignment is to write a policy memo on the topic of Public Management and Human Resources, connecting the readings to a real-world organizational management issue. You may select the public management topic, but you must incorporate one or more of the readings into your analysis.

Select one issue and write a targeted policy memo to an organizational manager identifying the problem and providing a recommendation. Use a memo style heading and include an executive summary of 3 sentences maximum. For guidance on policy memo writing, review the posted reading from Behn (2012) and the USC Libraries Research Guides. (Links to an external site.)

**Key Skills:** Distill complex concepts into concise logical and persuasive statements; practice concise and targeted writing; demonstrate ability to problem-solve and think critically

Week 9 Assignment: Decision Memo & ITP Metric—Leadership Assessment

**Purpose:** We use “cases” or real-world examples of public administration to practice assessing the dilemma or question on the table and then practice making recommendations. This can also help us to build on decisions that worked before or avoid repeating decisions that did not work in the past.

**Instructions:** 1 page, double-sided, single-spaced, use footnotes. For this assignment, you will NOT use APA format.

- Read the article posted to Canvas and take the position of a Community Engagement Specialist with the Port of Tacoma. The question you will be answering is posted on Canvas.
- Pick your audience. Who should you gear your analysis and recommendation towards?
- Select a few current sources that provide background and facts about the issue (Ex. government documents, newspaper, academic journal, website, legal brief, research report, etc.). Pay attention to what decisions already occurred and the results of those actions. Note what crucial pieces of data or information are missing that leaders may need to make a decision.
- With your audience in mind, analyze the existing information and present three (3) options that are available for resolution of the issue. These options maybe have been presented by others, or they may be your own ideas. Weigh out the pros and cons of each option. Remember that one option is always maintain the status quo (i.e., “If we do nothing, then…”).
- Make a recommendation to your audience. Persuasively inform their decision.

**Key skills:** concise writing, creative problem solving, persuasive writing, critical analysis
Week 10 (Wednesday) Group Project: Organizational Analysis

Purpose: This assignment is designed to expand your skills at organizational assessment and provide insights into the realities of life in organizations.

Instructions: Each group will complete an organizational analysis of a tribal or public agency, or nonprofit organization. This may be an agency/organization for which you are an intern or volunteer, but please choose a different organization than one for which you work or sit on the board. **Interview the director or someone else with significant decision making authority.** You will not need to complete a Human Subject Review application if you follow the parameters outlined in class.

The paper (10 pages, double-spaced) will need to include a description and analysis of the agency/organization’s

- Size (personnel and budget), structure, revenue sources & overall finances, board;
- History, mission, vision, strategy;
- Population served and public need(s) addressed;
- Services or goods provided, statistics describing those services/goods, and any data on effectiveness/efficiency and overall reputation;
- Challenges and/or lessons learned; innovations implemented; future pursuits;
- Relationship to other sectors and/or non-profit organizations;
- Relationship to issues and topics discussed in the course;
- Provide citations and references;
- Your paper should conclude with recommendations on how the agency/organization could improve its performance.

Week 10 (Saturday 03/14/20) Assignment: Org Analysis Presentation and ITP Metric – Team Peer Feedback Assessment

Each group will deliver a 10-minute presentation of the analysis on Saturday, March 14, 2020. Q&A session of a few minutes will follow each presentation. All group members must present, and every group should have a visual component to the presentation (e.g., slide show, webpage, hand-out, video, infographic, etc.). If using a video, it may take up no more than 3 minutes of the presentation time.

Key skills: interview question development, professional interviewing, investigative analysis, group development and collaboration, critical writing and editing, develop presentation skills