

Public Administration: Personnel, Budgeting, and Communication

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PS 473/573; 4 credits
Oregon State University
Winter Quarter 2003
Wednesday 6-9:50 p.m.
Gilkey Hall 113

Many students will be employed in such public-sector organizations as City of Corvallis Community Development, the Benton County Human Resources Department, such state-level agencies as the Department of Environmental Quality or the Insurance Division, or the US Forest Service. This applied course is intended to help students develop information and skills that will begin the process of enabling them to operate in such organizations. The course is the second in a two-course sequence, with PS 472/572, but either course may be taken independently of the other and they need not be taken in order.

The course will use **no exams**. Instead, each student will select a government agency—probably at the state or local level—for detailed examination, which will lead to a series of papers and class discussions.

The course will begin with a brief book about the problems facing a newly-selected secretary of a cabinet department, followed by examination of particular elements of public administration. Each student will apply course reading to an agency, for example, concerning the budget context and personnel practices of that agency. In addition, each student will analyze communication by that organization, both internally and with those outside. Lectures will be only a small part of the course. Some guest speakers are planned in addition to regular class discussion of what students have found in their application of course materials to their agencies. (Students in PS 573 read additional material.) All course texts have been ordered for Library reserve and are in the Book Store.

Course Goals: The course is intended both to add to content of information about bureaucratic agencies and to help develop skills in analyzing agencies.

Content

- To develop an approach to bureaucratic agencies in terms of individual participants, institutional arrangements, and sets of relationships
- To develop general knowledge of various public agencies and detailed knowledge of one agency, individually chosen
- To develop a sense of main issues and approaches toward personnel, budgeting, and communication in public organizations

Skills

- To develop more highly nuanced ways of evaluating public agencies and their actions by avoiding either/or judgments and so moving beyond image-based evaluations based on media and other presentations
- To develop abilities to gather a variety of information for studying and evaluating public organizations
- To begin to develop skills regarding personnel, budgeting, and communication in public administration

Requirements and Grading: Two sets of papers will be used in the course. The first, called “Reaction Notes,” provide students an opportunity to show that they have read and understood course materials and to give feedback on their reactions to the materials. Six reaction notes, each worth 50 points, are given; the best four will count (total of 200 points). The second, called “Agency Papers,” apply course concepts to a particular agency, probably at the state or local level. Four agency papers are required, each worth 100 points (400 points total). An A requires 90% (540 of 600 points), a B 80% (480), a C 70% (420), and a D 60% (360). **Within each grade range**, the bottom three percentages are - and the top three are +. (Low scores may be improved by analyzing an extra book.) Improvement, attendance, and participation will be used to help decide borderline grades. Graduate students (enrolled for PS 573) have additional requirements, as indicated below, totaling 200 points.

Questions and Difficulties: Plan ahead, read course materials and media regularly, attend each class (attendance will help decide borderline grades), and participate in discussion. **Feel free to contact me about questions or problems.** I suggest an appointment to avoid waiting. Or contact by e-mail (above). Indicate PS 473 as subject.

Course Reading: Although **most** course books have been **ordered for reserve** in Valley Library, purchase of core texts and possibly other books (see below) is recommended. All books are available at the OSU Book Store.

Core Textbooks: All of each of these books are required (**all** have been ordered for **2-hour reserve**):

Radin, *The Accountable Juggler: The Art of Leadership in a Federal Agency* (CQ Press, 2002)

Hickman and Lee, *Managing Human Resources in the Public Sector* (Harcourt/Wadsworth, 2001)

Graber, *The Power of Communication: Managing Information in Public Organizations* (CQ Press, 2003)

Gosling, *Budgetary Politics in American Governments*, 3rd edition (Routledge, 2002)

PS 573 reading: PS 573 students do **one** of the following (some have been ordered for reserve but purchase is recommended, for convenience):

Read and write reactions to chapters in the following book (include these as separate reaction papers, turned in with regular reaction papers: Stillman, *Public Administration: Concepts and Cases* (Houghton Mifflin, 2000); chapters listed for various classes in the Topic and Reading Schedule, below

Apply the following book, an applied orientation to public personnel administration, to a topic of your choosing, in consultation with me (plan ahead and start early): Patton, Witt, Lovrich, and Fredericksen, *Human Resource Management* (Houghton Mifflin, 2002)

Apply the following book to current issues of Oregon state budgeting, drawing on various official materials to apply the core points of the author to current issues: Thurmaier and Willoughby, *Policy and Politics in State Budgeting* (M.E. Sharpe, 2001; not available on reserve)

Extra Credit: The following brief reference book contains useful guides to many techniques relevant for public administration. Some sections are listed for extra credit on course papers. It is **not** available on reserve: Ammons, *Tools for Decision Making: A Practical Guide for Local Government* (CQ Press, 2002).

Optional for Reference (not required but excellent for this and other political science courses): Stanley and Niemi, *Vital Statistics on American Politics 1999-2000*, paperback (CQ Press, 2000)

Subscriptions: Subscription is required to the *Washington Post National Weekly Edition*. Order through class; you will be billed (\$7.50). The WPW will be sent directly to your local address (initially distributed through class).

Optional Subscriptions: Though not required for this course, some students may want one of the following, available at special student rates. Subscription forms and other information will be available in class for the following publications: *New York Times* (NYT), *Christian Science Monitor* (CSM), *Wall Street Journal* (WSJ), and *The Economist*.

♿ **Students with documented disabilities** who may need accommodations, who have any emergency medical information the instructor should know, or who need special arrangements in the event of evacuation, should make an appointment with the instructor as early as possible, no later than the first week of the term. In order to arrange alternative testing the student should make the request at least one week in advance of the test. Students seeking accommodations should be registered with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities.

NOTE: On **all graded written materials**, in the **upper right-hand corner of the first page indicate** Student ID number, PS 473, paper or project name (e.g., Reaction Note 1), and date submitted. Do **NOT** indicate your **NAME**.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

- As indicated above, on any graded assignments, do not indicate your name. Instead, in the upper right corner of the first page indicate your ID number, PS 473, the assignment name, and the date you are submitting it.
- I prefer that you type single-spaced, with a line between paragraphs, with 1-inch margins on all sides.
- Do not use a cover (plastic or similar) on any written assignment.
- Guidelines for paper length are indicated below for reaction notes and agency papers. These are approximate and are estimates of what might be required to respond adequately to the elements of the assignment. Concise responses are graded more highly than longer, less clearly written responses.
- Each paper should be carefully written and proofread. I suggest that you use a spell and a grammar checker.
- Citations to course reading should use simply the author and page number(s), in parentheses after using that material (quotation, paraphrase, or any other use). You need not list these in any citations listing at the end.
- Citations of non-course material should be complete: Author, *Title*, edition if 2nd or later (City: Publisher, year) or complete address from web sites used, either using footnotes or parenthetical references and citations at end.

- Interviews or other agency material used to develop course papers should be completed cited and fully identified; for interviews include the name and title of person interviewed, the date and place of interview, and the approximate length of the interview.
- Number the pages on all assignments, for ease in my commenting and to be sure pages are in correct order.

REACTION NOTES

Six reaction notes are scheduled. I will count the **best four**, each worth a maximum of 50 points, a total of 200 points. Reaction notes normally will be probably 3-5 pages long, typed, single-spaced, standard margins, and carefully written and proofread. Please number the pages.

Although you need not do all reaction notes, you need to complete **at least one reaction note** from course materials on **each topic**: introduction, budgeting, personnel, and organizational communication. One from each will count.

Reaction notes should first summarize core points of that week's reading (discuss most of the materials, not just a small part) and then state your reactions to that reading. For example, do recent media discussions reinforce or challenge that reading? Or do analyses of your particular agency suggest some limits or, for example, that reading about national agencies may not apply directly to this particular local agency but must be modified in X way.

Reaction notes will be judged on three criteria: reasonable summary of course reading, the quality of reaction (showing clear understanding of reading and ability to apply and evaluate the reading), and clarity of writing. I suggest using a spell checker and grammar checker.

GRADUATE STUDENT (PS 573) REQUIREMENTS

In addition to requirements for PS 473 students, graduate students (those enrolled for PS 573) also

- **either** read extra materials, as indicated for each week, from Stillman, *Public Administration: Concepts and Cases*, and write a brief reaction paper—separate from the regular reaction paper—about that reading; eight of these are required (@ 25 points, total of 200), normally 3-5 pages long; label "Graduate Student Paper 1," etc.
- **or** use *Human Resource Management* by Patton and others (see page 2 above) to develop a project about public personnel management, after discussing ideas with me.
- **or** use Thurmaier and Willoughby, *Policy and Politics in State Budgeting* to apply to current issues of state government budgeting in Oregon, drawing on current budget materials and core concepts of this book

AGENCY PAPERS

Four agency papers are required. Each applies part of the course material to the specific agency chosen for analysis. They are due as indicated in the Topic and Reading schedule. Each agency paper should summarize the most directly relevant part of course reading (some of this may be drawn from your reaction notes) and then apply it to your agency, as indicated below. Agency papers probably normally will be about 5-8 pages long, typed, single-spaced, standard margins, and carefully written and proofread. You can attach photocopied materials, graphs, or other appendix material at the end (they do not count in page estimates indicated). Please number the pages.

Locating materials about the agency will require creativity and effort. The agency web page and printed materials may have relevant materials. However, you probably will have to interview some agency personnel to gather information for your analysis. We will discuss this in class.

You should be prepared to assure confidentiality to anyone if they request it, because some people speak more freely "off the record" than "on the record." We will discuss how you can assure confidentiality and yet use materials to prepare papers. (You can assure those interviewed that your instructor also will preserve confidentiality.)

Agency papers will be judged on three criteria: clear use of appropriate course reading, the quality of materials about agency used to develop this paper (including the creativity by which you obtained information), and clarity of writing (as stated above, I recommend that you use a spell checker and grammar checker).

Agency Paper 1: Introduction to the Agency and its Inter-governmental Context: Carefully identify the agency and its location within the overall government structure (level—national, state, county, city; placement within a larger organization, etc.), its leadership (identify leaders, their backgrounds, how long they have served, previous experience, and so on), and the inter-governmental context (general, not specific, sources of funding, the levels and branches of government with which the agency must interact, and so on).

Agency Paper 2: Agency Budget Issues, Practices, and Trends: In some detail describe the current budget of the agency, including both sources of funding and how it is spent, and suggest reasons for the allocation.

Summarize in some detail trends in budgetary support (table or other appendix material may be helpful), including adjusting those budget figures over time for the effects of inflation (materials for doing this will be distributed in class), suggest reasons for those trends, and discuss current budget issues and concerns. Conclude by discussing any likely effects of the recent Oregon state tax ballot measure results for your agency, making very clear the logic of your argument and drawing on appropriate data as evidence for your conclusions.

Agency Paper 3: Personnel Issues, Practices, and Trends: In some detail describe agency recruitment (the agency web site may be useful here, about current jobs), types of personnel (training, expertise), current issues and problems, and your overall judgment of strengths and weaknesses of the agency's personnel practices and resources, with reasons carefully stated. Course reading suggests other topics to be examined for this paper.

Agency Paper 4: Organizational Communication Issues, Practices, and Trends: In some detail describe the main groups and individuals outside the agency with whom agency personnel interact, being careful to include both government and non-government groups and individuals. Summarize the kinds of relationship (clientele, as funding source, oversight organization, and so on) and then draw on Graber (text) to analyze those interactions. Then summarize what you see to be the main patterns of interaction inside the agency and any difficulties or problems you see. Conclude by summarizing your view of the morale among agency personnel (and possibly differences in morale among various kinds of agency people), with clear statement of the basis upon which you are stating your judgments.

RELEVANT WORLD WIDE WEB (WWW) SITES

Many sources of information are available on the World Wide Web about national, state, and other levels and non-US bureaucratic agencies. The following sites are only examples and starting points. All are preceded by <http://>.

OSU Political Science Department home page: www.orst.edu/Dept/pol_sci/

Probably the best starting point for general searches: www.yahoo.com/; an excellent web search engine (Google): www.google.com/

Excellent starting points about current political developments: www.washingtonpost.com and also www.nytimes.com (the NYT site has a "registration" requirement, but there is no charge for registration)

An excellent media starting point is: www.newslink.org, with links to newspapers, magazines, and radio-TV

An excellent starting point for a range of views on current news is: headlines.yahoo.com/Full_Coverage

Some specific media sites are: www.cnn.com; www.abcnews.com; www.cbs.com; www.msnbc.com/news, and foxnews.com

Oregon Blue Book (starting point for Oregon government): bluebook.state.or.us and Oregon government: www.oregon.gov, which contains links to state and local government sites in Oregon

The White House: www.whitehouse.gov/

US government official web site starting point: www.firstgov.gov/; see also www.fedstats.gov/

Thomas (US Congress) thomas.loc.gov/; US House www.house.gov/; US House Republican (majority) freedom.house.gov/; US House Democratic (minority) www.house.gov/democrats/; US Senate www.senate.gov/; US Senate Democratic (majority) www.senate.gov/~dpc/; Republican leader (Lott): lott.senate.gov/

Library of Congress research page: lcweb.loc.gov/rr/tools.html

US government documents: www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/aces/aaces002.html

Useful political science Web starting point: www.lib.umich.edu/libhome/Documents.center/polisci.html

Washington Post "federal page," with items about national government bureaucracy: www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/politics/fedpage/

Office of Management and Budget (OMB): www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/fy2003/index.html (FY03)

Tax information: <http://www.taxpolicycenter.org/taxfacts/>

National Association of State Budget Officers: www.nasbo.org/default.html

Federation of Tax Administrators: www.taxadmin.org/

National Tax Association: www.ntanet.org/

Multistate Tax Commission: www.mtc.gov/

National League of Cities: www.nlc.org/nlc_org/site/

National Association of Counties: www.naco.org/

Municipal Research and Services Center: www.mrsc.org/

Brookings research papers, including greatest government achievements and priorities: www.brook.edu/dybdocroot/comm/policybriefs/archive.htm

TOPIC AND READING SCHEDULE

Note: All **required** course materials have been ordered for **reserve** in Valley Library. Books are listed by name of author(s). **Read regularly** to be able to participate in class discussion. Know core points and supporting details of chapters, and think about how these apply not only generally but to your specific agency.

Look at discussion of government agencies, budget, and similar in the *Washington Post National Weekly Edition* each week (you can also use the daily at the *Washington Post*, through its web site). I also encourage you to look at news media about issues related to this course. The *New York Times* (NYT), and other national media are especially recommended. At least occasionally monitoring television news coverage also is recommended.

Part I: Introduction

1. Wednesday, January 8. Introduction to the Course and Public Administration

Begin reading Radin, *The Accountable Juggler*

Pay attention to media and public discussion and debate about Oregon state government budget and taxes in light of the state tax ballot measure in late January

Recommended (can be included for extra credit in Reaction Note 1): an item from **www.appointee.brookings.org/survivorsguide.htm** and/or Milakovich and Gordon, *Public Administration in America*, 7th edition, ch 3 (book on reserve)

2. Wednesday, January 15. Analyzing Agencies

Complete reading Radin, *The Accountable Juggler*

Extra credit: Ammons, *Tools for Decision Making*, Read Part I and suggest any points that appear to apply to an agency you might study; also or instead you can read and react to the following web material about bureaucratic reform: **www.brook.edu/dybdocroot/comm/reformwatch/rw04/rw4.pdf** and/or the following web article **www.brook.edu/dybdocroot/comm/reformwatch/rw02/rw2.pdf** (“pdf” require Adobe Acrobat, on computer or available free from: **www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep.html**)

PS 573 reading: Stillman, *Public Administration: Concepts and Cases*, ch 3 (ecology; for extra credit: ch 1)

Due: Reaction Note 1 (one reaction note is required from each section of the course, so this note is required)

Part II: Public Budgeting

3. Wednesday, January 22. Budget I

Milakovich and Gordon, *Public Administration in America*, 7th edition (**reserve**), ch 3 (sources of agency power) **and** ch 4 (intergovernmental relations); strongly **recommended**: “Appendix” (information sources) Gosling, *Budgetary Politics in American Governments*, Preface to ch 2

Web on national government budgeting: **look at** the following sites to learn the kinds of materials that are available: Office of Management and Budget (OMB) **www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/index.html**; Congressional Budget Office (CBO) **www.cbo.gov**; Tax Foundation (conservative) **www.taxfoundation.org**; Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP, more liberal) **www.cbpp.org**; the following is optional but highly recommended: **www.orst.edu/Dept/pol_sci/fac/sahr/ps473/budget.pdf**

Pay attention to media and public discussion and debate about Oregon state government budget and taxes in light of the state tax ballot measure

Extra credit: Ammons, *Tools for Decision Making*: apply one of the topics in Part II to your agency.

PS 573 reading: Stillman, *Public Administration: Concepts and Cases*, ch 5 (IGR)

Due: Agency Paper 1: Introduction and Inter-governmental Context

4. Wednesday, January 29. Budget II

Gosling, *Budgetary Politics in American Governments*, ch 3, 4, and 5

Examine some tax information at (**download** for Reaction Note 2): **www.taxpolicycenter.org/taxfacts/**

Look at selected recent materials on state government budgets at **www.cbpp.org/pubs/sfp.htm**

Web on state budgeting: **skim** the following web materials about current budget issues in states: **www.nasbo.org/Publications/PDFs/reboundlag.pdf**; read quickly pages 1-26 and skim other sections of the following about state fiscal conditions **www.nasbo.org/Publications/fiscsurv/fiscsurvdec2001.pdf**, and look at **www.nasbo.org/Publications/PDFs/budpro2002.pdf** as a possible source of information; examine also the Oregon state government budget page **www.governor.state.or.us/budget.htm** and the 2001-2003 budget for Oregon **www.governor.state.or.us/governor/budget01-03/budget01-03.pdf**; you could also look at Oregon legislative sites **www.leg.state.or.us/comm/lfo/home.htm** and/or the following site **www.leg.state.or.us/comm/lro/home.htm** or **www.leg.state.or.us/comm/lfo/0103_LAB_Intro.pdf**

Examine web materials on Oregon budgets (see the web materials above) in light of state tax ballot measure

Extra credit: Ammons, *Tools for Decision Making*: apply one of the topics in Part III to your agency; and/or from this web site www.tcf.org/Publications/Issue_Briefs/taxbrief.pdf; compare and contrast the 1993 and 2001 tax actions, this can be reflected in Reaction Note 2 for possible extra credit

PS 573 reading: Stillman, *Public Administration: Concepts and Cases*, ch 4 (administrative power)

Due: Reaction Note 2 (one reaction note is required from each section of the course, so this note is required)

5. Wednesday, February 5. Budget III, Conclusions

Gosling, *Budgetary Politics in American Governments*, ch 6, 7, and 8 and review earlier chapters

Extra credit: Ammons, *Tools for Decision Making*: apply one of the topics in Part IV to your agency

PS 573 reading: Stillman, *Public Administration: Concepts and Cases*, ch 12 (budgeting)

Due: Agency Paper 2: Budget

Part III: Public Personnel Administration

6. Wednesday, February 12. Personnel Management I

Hickman and Lee, *Managing Human Resources in the Public Sector*, Foreword to ch 4 and Appendices A-C

Web on public personnel: look at the following sites to learn the kinds of materials that are available: national government Office of Personnel Management (OPM) www.opm.gov; Oregon State Department of Administrative Services www.das.state.or.us, especially Human Resources www.dashr.state.or.us

Extra credit: Ammons, *Tools for Decision Making*: apply a topic in Part V to your agency; and/or this web article about personnel and reform www.brook.edu/dybdocroot/comm/reformwatch/rw05.pdf

PS 573 reading: Stillman, *Public Administration: Concepts and Cases*, ch 11 (motivation)

Due: Reaction Note 3 (reminder: at least one reaction note is required from each section of the course)

7. Wednesday, February 19. Personnel Management II

Hickman and Lee, *Managing Human Resources in the Public Sector*, ch 5-7

Extra credit: Ammons, *Tools for Decision Making*: apply a 2nd topic in Part V to your agency; and/or results of a survey of views of political appointees, www.appointee.brookings.org/events/sept6report.pdf (before September 11, 2001) and/or www.appointee.brookings.org/events/oct19report.pdf (after)

PS 573 reading: Stillman, *Public Administration: Concepts and Cases*, ch 6 (internal dynamics)

Due: Reaction Note 4 (reminder: at least one reaction note is required from each section of the course)

8. Wednesday, February 26. Concluding Personnel Management and Beginning Organizational Communication

Hickman and Lee, *Managing Human Resources in the Public Sector*, ch 8 and review earlier chapters

Graber, *The Power of Communication*, Preface and ch 1-2

Extra credit: Ammons, *Tools for Decision Making*: apply a topic in Part VI to your agency; and/or article about bureaucracy and reform www.brook.edu/dybdocroot/views/articles/light/PaulLightMagazine.pdf

PS 573 reading: Stillman, *Public Administration: Concepts and Cases*, ch 9 (communication)

Due: Agency Paper 3: Personnel Management

Part IV: Public Organizational Communication

9. Wednesday, March 5. Organizational Communication I

Graber, *The Power of Communication*, ch 3-6

Extra credit: Ammons, *Tools for Decision Making*: apply a 2nd topic in Part VI to your agency

PS 573 reading: Stillman, *Public Administration: Concepts and Cases*, ch 7 (subsystems)

Due: Reaction Note 5 (reminder: at least one reaction note is required from each section of the course)

10. Wednesday, March 12. Organizational Communication II and Course Conclusions

Graber, *Public Sector Communication*, ch 6-9

Extra credit: Ammons, *Tools for Decision Making*: apply a 3rd topic in Part V or Part VI to your agency and state how points in Part VII (very short) apply to your agency

PS 573 reading: Stillman, *Public Administration: Concepts and Cases*, ch 16 (ethics)

Due: Reaction Note 6 (reminder: only four reaction notes will count, but you need at least one from each section of the course)

Final Exam Week: Date to be decided

Due: Agency Paper 4: Organizational Communication