Contact Information
Dr. Julie Williams, jlw@uvic.ca
Office Hours: Wednesdays 4:30-6:30 pm in DTB A334 and by appointment

Course Meeting Times and Place
Wednesday 6:30–9:20 pm
COR B111

Course Description
Public administration encompasses a changing structural and value context within which public officials work. This course explores external and internal factors affecting contemporary public sector management in Canada. We will discuss the various legislative, executive and judicial processes in which public officials and citizens are engaged. The course sets the theoretical and institutional context and examines emerging trends in public administration. We then proceed with an analysis of how various layers of the public sector function. This includes federal, provincial, local and Indigenous forms and modes of governance.

Over the course of the semester, students will gain insights into the theory and practice of government as well as acquire skills in policy analysis. We will examine current and emerging debates about public institutions, laws, policies and diversity. Course material includes a range of text and visual materials that integrate diverse perspectives on how to advance public goods and interests. We will examine the functioning of various institutions and their responses to the contemporary challenges of our time.

This course is cross-listed as POLI 350, ADMN 311

Learning Objectives and Outcomes
This advanced political science course focusing on public administration has the following objectives:
1. Understanding various processes and approaches to public administration
2. Debating and evaluating techniques of public administration
3. Identifying various forms of engagement in the policy-making process
4. Enabling critical reflection and analysis through written and visual materials
5. Encouraging dialogue through exposure to participatory public administration processes
Students will leave the course with the following skills to meet identified learning outcomes:

- **Critical Thinking**
  - Problem identification and definition
  - Policy analysis and design
  - Problem-solving

- **Research and Writing**
  - Information gathering and synthesis
  - Independent research
  - Writing for a government audience

- **Communications**
  - Oral presentation of research
  - Group facilitation
  - Translation of knowledge for diverse audiences, inside and outside the academy

**Communication:**
CourseSpaces will be used in this course for most communication, including announcements, course materials, readings and details about assignments. Therefore, please monitor and check CourseSpaces frequently. I will attempt to respond to emails in a timely fashion, although depending on my schedule, delays may occur. Also, remember that course emails are a professional exchange (i.e. not texts or social media status updates). Please follow proper etiquette amongst the course instructors, fellow students and guest speakers.

**Readings:**
The course draws on diverse readings from academic and government sources, including the following required text:


The other readings for each week will be made available on CourseSpaces. As this course draws heavily upon current events, students are encouraged to keep up with the news, to discuss current policy issues during class, and to share links to appropriate news articles with each other via CourseSpaces.
Reading summary and presentation - 20% (10% written component; 10% for class presentation)

One learning objective for this class is to develop critical thinking skills. Almost everything analytical involves reading something, summarizing the key points, and thinking through the implications. This means honing your ability to (1) summarize the main arguments of the text, (2) ask relevant and insightful questions of the text, and (3) develop your own insights and analysis into the text at hand. Students will take on more responsibility for presenting the readings and initiating discussion. For the Reading Summary assignment you will select one reading from one week and:

(1) summarize the main arguments from the text and identify questions and insights in approximately 1,000 words, (approx. 2 single-spaced pages) (worth 10%); and
(2) present your summary to the class in the week the reading you have selected is due, and start the discussion with a few questions you have identified in the reading (worth the second 10% for the 20% Reading Summary mark). Your presentation should be approximately 10 minutes summary followed by questions to lead approximately 10 minutes discussion.

Students must identify which readings and which week you will submit and present your Reading Summary. You do not have to actually read all of the articles to make this decision at the beginning of the course—just skim the weekly topics, titles, and style of the article. If you have not selected a reading yourself by the end of the second class you will be assigned a reading and week to present.

Required weekly readings will be tested in the exams. Each week also has recommended readings that are available for reading summaries but will not be used for the exams and therefore only are only strictly required for those who sign up to present a reading summary for those readings, though it is recommended that you read all the articles assigned per week in order to more fully participate in class discussions. Some of the longer or more complex articles may be suitable for more than one student to use for a reading summary, dividing the content along arguments, topics, discussion
points, or other appropriate lines. **No more than two students may select any particular reading for the reading summary.** You may also choose a chapter from Dunn that is not required reading for your reading summary. If you want to use a chapter of Dunn that is not assigned as required reading, you will need to discuss with the instructor which week will be an appropriate one for your presentation. This decision will be based on topic and on balancing the number of reading presentations as much as possible between the classes.

Do not attempt to summarize the entire article or chapter if it is a long one, but to focus on key aspects or points, then to come prepared to post a couple of questions to the class for discussion. For articles based on primary research, you do not need to summarize or address the methodology used; rather, focus on the results, their implications for public administration and/or policy, and analyze and discuss the implications of the results. In preparing your reading summaries, it can help to ask yourself questions such as:

- What do you find exciting about the article, and why? How did it make you think differently about something, and why is that important? Identify that element of the reading and pose a question to the group about it.

- What would be the significance if some institution or entity (eg: a government) took the person’s argument seriously: what would that imply for the changes necessary, the transformations needed to deal with an issue? Or, put otherwise, what is the implication for public policy or social change?

- What kinds of institutions/people would benefit/lose if the insights of the reading were taken seriously? This also can lead you to think about what might be necessary to make the changes the author is asking for materialize, or what barriers exist.

You will likely not have room in the 1,000 words to address all of these suggested bullets, so ensure your summary concisely summarizes the key points of the article and addresses at least one of the bullets above. You do not have to give a formal presentation nor present a completed Reading Summary to the class. Select which elements you believe to be the most interesting or pertinent to raise with the class and initiate a discussion.

**Decision proposal and presentation** (10% proposal due February 27; 25% decision note due March 20)

There are numerous ways that civil servants communicate ideas. One of the most common instruments is a Decision Note. For this assignment Decision Note geared towards a high-level government official. Examples and a template for this assignment will be provided and discussed in class. **The Decision Note should be approximately 3 pages in length and not exceed 1,500 words (not including references).**

You must submit a one page proposal of your topic to the instructor in advance of preparing the decision note. The proposal does not have to follow any particular format but must address: the issue; the specific problem to be addressed; how you propose to research and analyze the issue (eg: where you will get your information). This proposal is worth 10% and is due **February 27.** The Decision Note is due on **March 20.**
A Decision Note is a document that addresses a specific policy problem that may affect citizens in some way. The assignment requires a synthesis of complex details in a straightforward and reader-friendly manner. The reader must be able to quickly understand the crux of the issue, background, identify stakeholders and assess implications. Select a policy issue appropriate for discussion in the Canadian context; discussion of international implications should be addressed, if appropriate, as context or implications within the Canadian context, rather than addressing the topic solely at the international level. Within the Canadian context, if your Decision Note is addressed to a public official, select either the municipal, provincial or federal level, not more than one, and be clear about in which level of government the official works. Depending on your topic, it may also be appropriate to address your Decision Note to the leaders of an Indigenous government or a government in another country.

For this assignment, the Decision Note must outline the background to a policy issue, a policy question for a government decision maker to decide, options, and a recommended option supported by research. The Decision Note is not meant to be overly theoretical but concise and persuasive, based on evidence. In other words, your policy brief should also be as much as possible be objective, rather than a persuasive opinion piece, with the data and implications of options leading to approximately three preferred options. The objective is to present a feasible recommendation that could lead to action or policy change. A template will be provided for your Decision Note assignment for this course.

**Midterm (30%) – February 13. Two hours.**

The midterm will cover material in all required readings & class lecture notes (PowerPoints and other materials provide during class) in classes 1-5. The midterm exam will be closed book, in class, and take up to two hours.

**Final exam (15%) – April 3. 1.5 hours.**

The final exam will cover material in all required readings & lectures from all classes after the midterm. The exam will be closed book, in class, and take up to 1.5 hours.

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This course aims to provide you with an understanding of the concepts and practices of public administration. To accomplish this goal, each of you will need to engage in exercises in class, collaborate with others to support their and your own learning, and contribute questions and ideas to our discussions.

It is important that you do the required reading before class. The lectures will build on the information contained in the readings. With an interactive format, the lectures are also your opportunity to ask questions about anything you find confusing, problematic, or difficult to understand in the readings for the week. You will understand the lectures better, and be able to ask better questions, if you’ve done the readings.

Students are expected to demonstrate a respectful and dialogical demeanor by routinely attending class and coming well-prepared. As you do the readings, ask yourself the following questions and be prepared to raise and discuss these during class-time:
Asking good questions prepares you to discuss the reading. It should distill your reading experience into discussion questions that solicit the responses of the group, drawing others into a collective dialogue on the readings. Taking questions seriously is important as it should lead you, and the others to whom you are asking it, and push you and your peers further in your thinking about what has been written.

**Good discussion questions are “open-ended”:** They have a complex answer and/or a range of possible answers. They are usually not “closed-ended,” meaning that there is a particular, discrete answer. More importantly, good discussion questions are genuine. That means you have not already made up your mind what the answer is. For example if you ask, “do changes to environmental impact assessment laws adversely affect citizen engagement?” and you really have not made up your mind if the government is right or not, your question is genuine. You are really asking. If, on the other hand, you ask, “the Premier can’t really believe it is right to change the act, right?” you have made up your mind that it is wrong. You are really telling, not asking. Ask, don’t tell.

**Good, genuine questions can be descriptive:** These ask about what actually is happening in the reading or in the world. Examples: “Does the author mean to say...?” or “What does the author’s use of the term objectivity mean in this text?”

**Good, genuine questions can also be normative:** Normative questions ask what should be going on in the readings or in the world. For example, a question about whether the federal government is right to streamline laws is normative. Normative questions open up the issue of values, of what people think the world should be like. You can ask either descriptive or normative questions in your questions.

As we move along in the class, you might find it helpful to think about the readings in conversation with each other. By this I mean that you might start thinking about the commonalities and differences between the arguments made by different authors. Some arguments will seem more compelling to you. Ask yourself why, and try to think the differences through.

**Policy on Late Assignments**

Late papers are strongly discouraged and are penalized at 5% per day. Nonetheless, at times situations do arise where they are unavoidable. If you anticipate you may have difficulty meeting a due date, let me know as far ahead of time as possible, preferably by e-mail, and indicate when you think you can have the assignment completed. Given that you know due dates well ahead of time, simply running out of time or having a lot of work due at the same time is not an adequate excuse. Unless you provide reasonable documentation of the reason for its lateness, the assignment will be penalized.
Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is intellectual honesty and responsibility for academic work that you submit individually or as a member of a group. It involves commitment to the values of honesty, trust and responsibility. It is expected that students will respect these ethical values in all activities related to learning, teaching, research and service. Therefore, plagiarism and other acts against academic integrity are serious academic offences.

The responsibility of the institution - Instructors and academic units have the responsibility to ensure that standards of academic honesty are met. By doing so, the institution recognizes students for their hard work and assures them that other students do not have an unfair advantage through cheating on essays, exams, and projects.

The responsibility of the student - Plagiarism sometimes occurs due to a misunderstanding regarding the rules of academic integrity, but it is the responsibility of the student to know them. If you are unsure about the standards for citations or for referencing your sources, ask your instructor. Depending on the severity of the case, penalties include a warning, a failing grade, a record on the student’s transcript, or a suspension. It is your responsibility to understand the University’s policy on academic integrity, which can be found on pages 32-34 of the undergraduate calendar.

Attendance, Assignments, and Grading

The UVic Academic Calendar states: “Students are expected to attend all classes in which they are enrolled.” Any student who attends fewer than 70 percent of scheduled class sessions may be assigned a grade of “N” for the course. Students must complete all assignments (see Course Requirements) in order to get credit for the course.

The Learning Environment

The UVic Academic Calendar notes: “The University of Victoria is committed to promoting critical academic discourse while providing a respectful and productive learning environment. All members of the university community have the right to experience and the responsibility to help create such an environment.” Students and community partners have diverse views on the issues discussed in this course, and the instructor seek to create an environment in which all perspectives – including those of the instructor – can be analyzed critically in a respectful fashion.

Recording

If you prefer to record lectures or class exercises, or use any sort of device for images in the classroom, please ensure you follow the principles of prior, informed consent with the instructor and fellow students.

Course Experience Survey

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term, as in all other courses at UVic, you will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous survey regarding your learning experience (CES).
survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future. The survey is accessed via MyPage and can be done on your laptop, tablet, or mobile device. I will remind you and provide you with more detailed information nearer the time but please be thinking about this important activity during the course.

**PERCENTAGE GRADING SCALE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passing Grades</th>
<th>Grade Point Value</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>90 – 100</td>
<td>Exceptional, outstanding and excellent performance. Normally achieved by a minority of students. These grades indicate a student who is self-initiating, exceeds expectation and has an insightful grasp of the subject matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>85 – 89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>80 – 84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>77 – 79</td>
<td>Very good, good and solid performance. Normally achieved by the largest number of students. These grades indicate a good grasp of the subject matter or excellent grasp in one area balanced with satisfactory grasp in the other area.</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>73 – 76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>70 – 72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>65 – 69</td>
<td>Satisfactory, or minimally satisfactory. These grades indicate a satisfactory performance and knowledge of the subject matter.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>60 – 64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50 – 59</td>
<td>Marginal Performance. A student receiving this grade demonstrated a superficial grasp of the subject matter.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Failing Grades</th>
<th>Grade Point Value</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 – 49</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory performance. Wrote final examination and completed course requirements; no supplemental.</td>
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<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 – 49</td>
<td>Did not write examination or complete course requirements by the end of term or session; no supplemental.</td>
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1. The percentage grading scale applies to all Faculties at the University of Victoria.
2. The percentage grades should be associated with a letter grading schema.
3. A percentage grade for an N grade should be assigned in the following manner:

**N GRADE:** If a student has not completed the exam, or has not completed the course requirements, but has submitted course requirements that total more than 49% of the total grade for a course, an instructor will assign a percentage grade of 49%.
**Course Schedule**

*IMPORTANT – This schedule is subject to change; be sure to pay attention to announcements during classes and check CourseSpaces regularly for announcements. Required readings are indicated below, with additional bibliographic information included on CourseSpaces. Be prepared to discuss these during class and in your assignments.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class &amp; date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Jan 9</td>
<td>Introduction to Public Administration</td>
<td><strong>Required:</strong> Dunn, Introduction, pp.1-14.</td>
<td>Sign up for Reading summary presentations</td>
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</tbody>
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| 2. Jan 16    | The Westminster model and the civil service | **Required:** Dunn chapters 1 & 5  
**Recommended (can be used for reading summaries):**  
| 3. Jan 23    | Bureaucracy:  
- Theories of bureaucracy  
- Role of the civil service  
- New Public Management | **Required:** Dunn chapter 7  
**Recommended (can be used for reading summaries):**  
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| 4. Jan 30    | Introduction to the policy process | **Required:** Dunn chapter 14  
**Recommended:** (can be used for reading summaries):  
| 5. Feb 6     | Local government  
Guest speaker: Jennifer Kroeker-Hall, Ph.D. (Candidate)  
Review for midterm | **Required:** Dunn chapter 9  
**Recommended:** (can be used for reading summaries):  
Optional *(not eligible for reading summaries):  
Federation of Canadian Municipalities website  
Your Guide to Municipal Institutions in Canada* | Reading summary presentation |
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<tr>
<td>6. Feb 13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Midterm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 20</td>
<td>Reading break</td>
<td>No class</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. March 6</td>
<td>Communication and consultation</td>
<td>Required: Dunn chapter 25</td>
<td>Reading summary presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class &amp; date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Readings</td>
<td>Assignment</td>
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| 9. March 13 | • Accountability  
• Administrative fairness | Required:  
Dunn chapter 4  
PowerPoint on administrative law to be presented in class (reading summary n/a)  
Recommended (can also be used for reading summaries):  
| 10. March 20 | Globalization, complexity and wicked policy problems | Required:  
Dunn chapters 15, 20 & 27  
Recommended (can also be used for reading summaries):  
Reading summary presentations |
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<tr>
<td>12. April 3</td>
<td>Final exam</td>
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