

University of Montana
Political Science 361: Public Administration
Monday/Wednesday/Friday: 12:10-1 p.m
Fall 2014

Instructor Information

Three (3) credit hours

Classroom: Liberal Arts 337

Instructor: Dr. Sara Rinfret

Professor's Office: Liberal Arts 352

Email: sara.rinfret@mso.umt.edu (email is the most reliable way to contact me)

Office Hours: Monday (10-11a.m.), Wednesday (10-11a.m.), Friday (10-11a.m.), or by appointment

Course Description

This course acquaints students with the structure, issues and "themes" of public service and stimulates our thinking about how leaders respond (or fail to respond) to public needs. Primarily through case studies and lecture, we'll examine the context of public administration: the political system, the role of federalism, bureaucratic politics and power, and the various theories of administration that guide public managers today. We'll study several components of public administration, including personnel, budgeting, decision-making, organizational behavior, leadership, and policy implementation. Finally, we'll conclude the course with observations about the future of public administration in America.

Expectations for Student Learning

The course's dual focus on content and process is accomplished by dividing class sessions roughly equally between the study of the "nuts and bolts" of public administration (which is primarily lecture-based) and the examination of the case studies and important research in the field of public administration (which is mostly discussion-based). The course will operate in the following way: one session will often be devoted to the material in the text; the other will usually be devoted to the case study material; and a final class session on lessons learned. On discussion and lessons learned days, you examine the case study and the articles in the Stillman book by actively participating as part of a small group. On other days, your participation is still very valuable, but takes place in the context of an entire class. Unless otherwise instructed, please plan your study according to this schedule.

Therefore, by the end of the semester, students in this course should be able to:

1. Use critical thinking skills by carefully considering the context in which public decisions are made
2. Explore and recognize how management occurs in real life situations, and express that thinking in writing and in discussion
3. Analysis of case studies that relate to public administration theory and practice
4. Develop qualitative (interviewing) research skills and improve writing, speaking, and analytical capabilities

Course Readings

One book is required for the course:

1. Richard J. Stillman, Public Administration: Concepts and Cases, Ninth Edition, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.), 2010. Earlier editions of the Stillman text may be available, but will not have all of the

case studies we discuss in class.

*You are also required to access on-line reading materials posted on the Moodle site – please see course schedule

Strongly Suggested Books:

For students thinking about a career or graduate work in public administration, I recommend that you purchase a leading text in the field for your library: Michael Milakovich and George Gordon, Public Administration in America, (New York: St. Martin's Press). Often, I will bring in current events, and you may be asked to read news articles about government policies and agencies.

Course Expectations

Lap Top Computers and Cell Phone Policy:

- *Cell Phones:* If students are caught texting during class, you will be asked to leave and will receive zero points for the day (participation). If cell phone use is a constant occurrence, this will significantly damage your overall grade (a 50 point deduction).
- *Laptops:* Students should be able to take notes without laptops, and studies have shown that taking your own notes, with a pen and paper increases your likelihood to do well in the classroom. Please note, however, that this course periodically has “laptop activity days.” During these class sessions ONLY, I ask students to bring their own laptops (not required to have one) to class for fun and exciting in-classroom assignments. These dates are TBD, if not specified on the course outline.

Using Moodle:

This semester each student is enrolled in Moodle. On Moodle students can find additional copies of the course syllabus, assignment instructions, grades, dropboxes for assignments, and class announcements. Students are required to check this site on a daily basis. Link for Moodle access: <http://umonline.umt.edu/>

Keep in mind that Moodle is organized through three tabs:

1. Course information – extra copy of the course syllabus
2. Readings – organized by week to coincide with the course schedule
3. Assignments – where you submit assignments, find samples, or additional instructions
4. Portfolio project – additional instructions

Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes:

Students are evaluated according to their performance in four areas: outlines of the case studies, work in discussion groups/course participation, a portfolio project, and performance on exams. Descriptions are listed below and to be transparent/fair, each assignment for this course provides “how will you be evaluated” so you can use this as a guide for how grades will be awarded for your efforts.

Case Study Outlines (4x15 points apiece = 60 points)

Nine case studies appear in the reading schedule. For **four** of the case studies, you should prepare a **3-5** (typed) page, double-spaced outline of the case study. If a student decides to outline all of the course case studies, the top 4 highest grades will be recorded. All students are required to complete at least one outline before Exam 1. Your outline should include the following:

- 1) Case details/overview (what is the case about)
- 2) Explanation of the actors (who are the actors)
- 3) Two important lessons for public administrators from the case (what can we learn)
- 4) The relationship of the case to other course discussions, readings or materials, or current events, with

particular focus on how this case illustrates a specific theory or concept (how did the case connect to the theory for the week).

How Will You Be Evaluated?

Each section counts equally, so in writing your outline, use bullet points and follow guidelines set forth in a writing handbook on how to properly craft an outline (Purdue Owl is another great source: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>). Also, in outlining the “lessons” section, thoughtfully consider what you have learned about management and administration from the case and why that is important.

The purpose of these outlines will help students to prepare for in-class group discussions, exams, and our portfolio project. *Please make sure to properly cite (in the text) and add a reference page at the end of each outline. Students must use a proper citation format (APA, MLA). An automatic 5 point deduction will result in students that fail to cite. Also, students that cite Wikipedia will receive a 0 for case study assignments.*

***Outlines should be turned in at the end of class on our case study days (hard copy). There is also a sample on Moodle for students wanting to view an example. Do not plagiarize this copy for your own use, otherwise zero points will result.**

A Range: Uses correct outline format, properly cites, well organized, grammatically correct, proper in-text citations and reference page, clearly addresses and understands items 1-4 in assignment instructions, provides own assessment in lessons learned

B Range: Attempts to be well organized, uses correct outline format, properly cites/reference page, but lack of understanding assignments items 1-4

C Range: unorganized, outline format used is unorganized, grammatical errors, does not understand the relationship between the theory of the week and how it links to the case study

D-Below: writes a paper instead of an outline, does not properly cite, lack of organization, does not follow assignment instructions

Participation (75 points possible)

Questioning, probing, making judgments, wondering about “what ifs” – these are all part of a healthy learning process. To participate effectively you should read the scheduled assignment BEFORE coming to class. The 75 points possible for participation include:

- ✓ Discussion Days and Additional Assignments: In addition to outlining the cases, you will participate in small and large group discussions. Small groups will discuss the case by addressing questions I pose to the class. Every group should come to class ready to answer these questions, and **every student is responsible for reading and being prepared to discuss every case**. Each group will have an assigned discussion leader for the case, who will report the conclusions and comments of the group, and a recorder, who is responsible for submitting a written response from the team each week, which are graded. Your colleagues in the group will evaluate your participation. You will also get a chance to evaluate your own contribution to the discussions and to the class. Moreover, additional assignments in or out of class will take place. Thus, approximately 20-30 points of your total participation grade is comprised of discussion and assignments.
- ✓ Lessons learned Fridays: To move from theory to practice, each case study group will lead 1 Friday “lessons learned” segment, which begins week 4 of the semester. Each group is to come prepared with questions for the class, leading the class discussion for the day. In the past, students have shared videos, created their own videos, or used current events to update us on the current topic for the week. Groups should use our discussions from Wednesdays to guide their group’s lessons learned segment for the week and meet with the professor to discuss any questions that the group might have. This is 20 points out of your total participation grade and

students will be individually graded. Underperforming students in the group will receive 0 points for lack of participation in helping with the overall group.

- ✓ **Firing Option:** Working in groups is not an easy endeavor; therefore, case study groups have the option to fire underperforming classmates. If a group wants to fire a group member, the group must first meet with the professor and provide the classmate(s) a second chance option. If this option is not met, the student will be fired and will receive a significant point deduction to the class participation grade.
- ✓ **Attendance:** Each class period, attendance will be taken. Students are allowed *one* excused or unexcused absences. Also, each student is required to attend all of the student portfolio presentations. In the event that you miss one of the viewing days, 20 point deduction to your participation grade. Lastly, students that miss more than 4 classes will receive an F for participation.
- ✓ **Professionalism:** I expect that each student comes to class prepared to be engaged in the course materials. *Texting, sleeping, disrespectful comments to the professor or classmates, coming to class late, leaving in the middle of class, having side conversations with classmates during class time, not staying on task during group work, packing up before the end of class, or leaving early are all unacceptable behaviors.* Each time you are caught engaging in one of these unprofessional activities a student will receive a 10 point deduction for their overall attendance grade. Multiple offenders will receive a 40 point deduction.
- ✓ **Please Note:** If student participation/attendance begins to drop, the instructor reserves the right to add additional points to the course and have in-class pop quizzes. These are unannounced and based on the reading for the day.

A Range: Prepared for class, clearly engaged in classroom discussions – contributes at least twice per week in larger group discussions and is truly invested in small group discussions (not a free-rider and does not dominate conversation), does not leave class (this includes group work!), does not engage in unprofessional behavior (see list above), perfect attendance

B Range: Occasionally engaged in larger and small group discussions, does not leave class, sometimes engages in unprofessional behavior, misses 1 class session

C Range: Rarely participates in larger and small group discussions, does not leave class, often engages in unprofessional behavior, misses 2 classes

D-Below: Does not participate in larger and small group discussions, leaves in the middle of classes, illustrates rude and unprofessional behavior, misses more than 3 classes

Examinations (2x100 points apiece = 200 points possible)

This course will have two take-home examinations. Each test will ask you to draw examples from the cases we have read. Exam 1 covers the first half of the course; Exam 2 covers the last part of the course. Additional details about the format will be addressed in class. Make-up exams are not an option so please plan accordingly.

Electronic Portfolio Project (240 points possible)

The centerpiece project of this course is a portfolio designed to develop and enhance a number of skills that are important in both the practice and study of public administration. The project encompasses a series of assignments outlined below that will be turned in at various points during the semester on **Moodle**. After completing all of these assignments, students will write a reflection and present their lessons learned to the class (5 minute presentation). A brief description of the portfolio project elements are listed below, but students are required to review detailed assignment instructions on Moodle. More details to follow in-class.

1. Public Administration in the News (80 points out of the 240 total) – Students should identify a

current topic in the news related to public administration. Each student should research the topic and prepare a four to five page analysis. The report should include: a description of the issue, the organizations, interests, and officials involved, the direct connection to public administration, and an analysis of the issue drawing upon one of the readings discussed in class. Appropriate citations and a reference page are expected. For example, the Federal Aviation Administration was in the news last year when many commercial airliners had to ground planes for wiring inspections. Although the news reports presented a picture that accused both the airline industry and the FAA of fault, there was much more to the issue. For instance, why does the FAA mandate such inspections anyway? How does the FAA function and how does its management and structure impact requirements for the airline industry? What internal and external controls affect the FAA's operations? Was someone to blame for the delayed and cancelled flights or was it the fault of "the system?" What competing interests underlie these debates?

Due Date: October 10 (attach a word doc or docx to the designated Moodle dropbox)

2. Interview with a Public Administrator (80 points out of the 240 total): One of the best ways to get a sense of what being a public administrator is like is to talk with one. Average public administrators range from post office employees, to law enforcement officials, to public school teachers, and city government officials. This part of the portfolio project requires you to interview a public administrator of your choosing (local, state, or federal). The only stipulation is that the public administrator cannot be in your family. You are encouraged to interview someone who is in a position that is of interest to you or relates to your professional interests (after all, these interviews may be a great way to begin networking for professional opportunities). Finally, this will be a good opportunity for students to engage in qualitative interviewing. Since the types of public administrators that are interviewed will vary widely, students have a good deal of latitude in what they ask their interviewee. Interviews should last about 20-30 minutes. To prepare for your interview, draft interview questions must be turned in for instructor review. After the interview is conducted, a write-up should be prepared. In four-five pages, discuss the person you interviewed, why you selected the individual, what you talked about, and some of the most surprising findings from your interview. The idea is that you will be able to link this interview to course readings (3-4 scholarly sources required, double-spaced, 12 point font).

Due Dates: Interview Selection (10 points): September 15 (turn in on a piece of paper to Prof. Rinfret by the beginning of class)

Draft Interview Questions (25 points): September 22 (due on Moodle by 11:30a.m.)

*Keep in mind you might be asked to re-write questions if the draft is not appropriate before interview takes place

Interview Write-Up (45 points): October 27 (due on Moodle by 11:30a.m.)

3. Portfolio Reflection "Connecting the Pieces of the Puzzle" (80 points out of the 240 total): This portfolio is a whirlwind tour of public administration. The goal of this reflection paper is select two major theorists we have examined this semester to present the theme that brings together the three elements of your portfolio project. The suggested length of this assignment is four-five pages, double spaced, with 4-5 scholarly sources, reference page, 12 point font, and in-text citations. Additionally, this assignment should include:

a. Introduction and Body of Your Paper: This is your chance to revisit your initial knowledge, impressions, and perceptions about the field of public administration and place yourself, your views in the body of knowledge you acquired in this class. More specifically, lay out your argument in the introduction (first paragraph) that identifies the scholars/theories that has helped

you to connect the elements of your portfolio project.

c. *Concluding Thoughts*: A way to conclude this assignment is to ask: how do I see myself contributing to the field of public administration? Where do I stand on contentious issues? Where do I see myself in the future? How has the elements of your portfolio assignment aided you to address these questions?

d. *Brief Presentation*: Students present their lessons learned from their portfolio project during the final weeks of class.

Due Date: Reflection Paper: Due on Moodle, December 8, 10:00a.m.

Presentation Dates: See course calendar, dates TBD during class for each student

Totals Points for the Course

Exam #1	100 points
Exam #2	100 points
Case Outlines (complete 4)	60 points
Portfolio Project (several elements)	240 points
Participation	75 points
Total	575 points possible (If no alterations to the syllabus)

Grading Policy: The **University of Montana** uses the **Plus/minus** grading system and a **Credit/No Credit** system (the CR/NCR replaces the Pass/Fail system used in the past). *General education courses must be taken using the traditional letter grade to count toward one's general education requirements.* To accommodate the Plus/Minus system the grading scale shown below will be used.

Grade	Point Scale	Point Range	GPA
A	93-100	8 points	4.00
A-	90-92	3 points	3.67
B+	87-89	3 points	3.33
B	83-86	4 points	3.00
B-	80-82	3 points	2.67
C+	77-79	3 points	2.33
C	73-76	4 points	2.00
C-	70-72	3 points	1.67
D+	67-69	3 points	1.33
D	63-66	4 points	1.00
D-	60-62	3 points	.067
F	59 or lower	N/A	0.00

***Please Note: If a student is .5 from a letter grade, the total will be rounded up**

Course Schedule

I encourage you to stay up with the readings in order to maximize your classroom experience and minimize personal discomfort for the exams and discussion sessions. Although this is the general outline of readings, the schedule may change as the semester proceeds. Therefore, please check reading assignments with me or a classmate if you miss a class (“CS” stands for case study; “R” stands for reading in Stillman).

Date	Topic	Reading/Assignments
Week 1: Monday, August 25	Course Overview and Introductions	<i>Discussion about drawing groups and consideration of issues/concerns</i>
Wednesday, August 27 Friday, August 29	Concepts of Public Administration “Sipping Lattes” NO CLASS – Dr. Rinfret at a conference	Read: Stillman, R1.1 and Moodle Reading (Cox, Buck, and Morgan) <i>Groups for Case Study Days and the Role/Importance of Groups for PA</i> <i>Receive questions for Wednesday</i> Read: Stillman, R1.1 and Moodle Reading (Cox, Buck, and Morgan)
Week 2: Monday, September 1	NO CLASS, LABOR DAY	
Wednesday, September 3 Friday, September 5	The Blast in Centralia Lessons from Mining and Founders of PA	Read: Stillman, CS1 Due: Case Study Outline Option <i>Discussion about interviews with a public administrator and interview questions, review about case study and lessons learned class sessions</i> Read: Review Stillman, R1.1 and CS1 Instructor led lessons learned section
Week 3: Monday, September 8	The Bureaucracy and Power (Qualitative Research)	Read: Stillman, R2 *Discussion of extra credit opportunity
Wednesday, September 10	How Kristen Died	Read: Stillman, CS2 Due: Case Study Outline Option <i>Receive out of class assignment for Friday</i>

Friday, September 12	No class, out of class assignment, and can attend Wilderness Celebration Event	Read: Review readings for the week
Week 4: Monday, September 15	Concept of Ecology	Read: Stillman, R3 Due: Who will you interview (piece of paper, no overlap) Note that the case study for this week does not follow after R3
Wednesday, September 17	Columbia Accident	Read: Stillman, CS4 Due: Case Study Outline Option
Friday, September 19	Lessons from Gaus and Columbia	Read: Review readings for the week Due: Group 1 leads lessons discussion
Week 5: Monday, September 22	Federalism and IGR	Read: Stillman, R5 <i>Discussion about Public Administration in the News</i> Due: Draft Interview Questions (Moodle, 11:30a.m.)
Wednesday, September 24	Wichita Confronts Contamination	Read: Stillman, CS5 Due: Case Study Outline Option
Friday, September 26	Lessons in Federalism	Read: Review readings for the week Due: Group 2 leads lessons discussion <i>Receive Exam 1 Questions</i>
Week 6: Monday, September 29	Organizational Theory	Read: Stillman, R6, Receive mid-semester group review
Wednesday, October 1	American Ground	Read: Stillman, C6 Due: Case Study Outline Option (remember you must turn in 1 prior to Exam 1), mid semester group review
Friday, October 3	Exam 1 (work to finish exam, no lessons learned discussion)	Exam Due: Moodle, 1:00p.m.
Week 7: Monday, October 6	Decision-Making	Read: Stillman, R8

Wednesday, October 8	The Storm	Read: CS8, in class assignment
Friday, October 10	Lessons about disasters	Read: review readings for the week, lessons learned lead by instructor Due: Public Administration in the News, (turn in on Moodle by 11:30a.m.)
Week 8: Monday, October 13	Administrative Communication	Read: Stillman,R9, discussion about PA interviews
Wednesday, October 15	Columbine High School	Read: CS9 Due: Case Study Outline Option
Friday, October 17	Lessons from Columbine	Read: Review readings for the week Due: Group 3 leads lessons discussion
Week 9: Monday, October 20	Public Personnel Management	Read: Stillman, R11 <i>Students can turn in a draft of interview with PA, optional</i>
Wednesday, October 22	Who Brought Healy Down?	Read: Stillman, CS11 Due: Case Study Outline Option
Friday, October 24	Lessons – Women in PA	Read: Review readings for the week Due: Group 4 leads lessons discussion
Week 10: Monday, October 27	Issue Networks	Read: Stillman, R14 Due: Interview with PA Due, Moodle, 1p.m.
Wednesday, October 29	What’s for lunch?	Read: Stillman, CS14 Due: Case Study Outline Option
Friday, October 31	Lessons about lunch	Read: Review readings for the week Due: Group 5 leads lessons discussion
Week 11: Monday, November 3	PA and Public Interest	Read: Stillman, R15 <i>Discussion about final elements of portfolio project, select presentation order</i>
Wednesday, November 5	Torture	Read: CS 15

Friday, November 7	Lessons about Torture	Due: You be the critic, Moodle, 11:30a.m. Group 6 leads lessons discussion
Week 12: Monday, November 10	Ethics and Public Service	Read: Stillman, R16
Wednesday, November 12	The Last Great Days	Read: CS 16 Due: Case Study Outline Option
Friday, November 14	Lessons about Ethics	Due: Group 7 leads lessons discussion or instructor will lead, TBD
Week 13: Monday, November 17	The Future of Public Administration – Rowing or Steering?	Readings to be provided to the class, receive end of semester group review
Wednesday, November 19	Portfolio Presentations	<i>Turn in final group review, receive Exam 2 questions</i>
Friday, November 21	Work on Exam – possible meetings with Professor Rinfret	
Week 14: Monday, November 24	Exam 2	Due: 1:00p.m., Moodle
Wednesday, November 26 Friday, November 28	Thanksgiving Break!	Read: None
Week 15: Monday, December 1 Wednesday, December 3 Friday, December 5 Final Exam – Monday, December 8	Portfolio Presentations	Must be present for all presentations Due: Portfolio Reflection (Moodle, 10a.m – submit online please)

Classroom Policies

- **Extra Credit:** For an upper level class, this is highly unlikely
- **Make-up Exams:** See course schedule
- **Classroom Etiquette:** Students are expected to observe proper etiquette in class. Disruptions, such as talking to a classmate and leaving in the middle of class must be avoided. I expect all students to maintain a high level of professionalism in their classroom conduct with me, and with their fellow students. This means **coming to class on time**, being respectful during class discussions, and in all communications with the professor and others.
 - Rude behavior will not be tolerated. Any student who acts in an inappropriate manner will be asked to leave the class. Second offenders will have a meeting with the department chair and a complaint filed with the Office of Student Affairs.
- **E-mail Etiquette:** E-mail is a wonderful tool for you to contact me with questions, but it does not replace office hours. If you have involved questions about course material, you should come see me during office hours or during an alternate appointment. Office hours are the best opportunity to get your questions answered. Plus, you can get to know your professors.
 - **DO NOT email Dr. Rinfret asking did I “missed anything” due to student failure to attend class** (ask a classmate).
 - **Before emailing Dr. Rinfret you must ask yourself the following:**
 1. **Can I find the answer to my question in the syllabus?**
 2. **Can I find the answer to my question on Moodle?**
- **Incompletes or Withdrawals “W” for the Course:** If for some reason the course is not working out for you please adhere to the University’s policies for the last day to drop a class. If you need an incomplete for the course, you **MUST** come to my office hours or set up a meeting with me four weeks from the end of class in order to make this request. A written medical excuse or documentation will be needed for the professor to grant such a request.
- **Late Assignments:** Students are expected to submit all work on the date specified in the course calendar and be present for examinations. Any exceptions to this must be approved by the instructor 72 hours before the date in question. Students must complete all assignments to receive a grade for the course.
- **Miss a Lecture:** Lectures will not be repeated, nor will the instructor provide them. Ask a friend for their notes.
- **400 level writing requirements:** Students that are taking this course to fulfill the 400 level writing requirement must first meet with the professor. Upon approval students will be required to lengthen the writing for each portfolio project assignment (2-3 pages per assignment). Additional requirements will also be discussed in terms of writing style, grammar, etc.
- **University Attendance Policy:** (please make sure to follow the participation course policies listed above too) Students who are registered for a course but do not attend the first two class meetings may be required by the instructor to drop the course. This rule allows for early identification of class vacancies to permit other students to add classes. **Students not allowed to remain must complete a drop form or drop the course on the Internet (<http://cyberbear.umt.edu>) to avoid receiving a failing grade.** Students who know they will be absent should contact the instructor in advance.
- **Wikipedia:** This online source is not reliable and should not be cited in any course assignment. Students that cite Wikipedia in the text or list on a reference page will receive 0 points for the assignment. The goal is to become accustomed to using scholarly sources for all work in any of your courses at the University of Montana.
- **Academic Dishonesty (Plagiarism):** Students must follow the University’s policies for academic dishonesty. For detailed information, please view: <http://www.umt.edu/catalog/acad/acadpolicy>. As such, all work submitted must be your own; no duplicate work (work completed for another class) will

not be accepted. Acts of cheating or plagiarism will result in a grade of ZERO (0) for the assignment. Moreover, acts of plagiarism will also be reported to the Academic Court. To avoid acts of plagiarism, cite each reference or source you use and give proper credit for the ideas, opinions, and findings of others. When you are using the exact words of others, you must use quotation marks and include the page number where you found the quote in your citation.

- **Moodle:** This class is supported by Moodle. Please refer to this site regularly for additional readings, announcements, grades, submitting assignments, or updates to the schedule. When submitting assignments on Moodle, students should attach Microsoft Word doc or docx files. Students that turn in documents' that are unreadable will receive zero points.
- **Sensitive Course Materials:** College education aims to expand student understanding and awareness. Thus, it involves engagement with a wide range of information, ideas, and creative representations. In college courses, students can expect to encounter—and critically appraise—materials that may differ from and perhaps challenge familiar understandings, ideas, and beliefs. Students are encouraged to discuss these matters with the professor.
- **Disability Assistance:** The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and can find this information at this link: [Disability Services for Students](#). If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with Disability Services, please contact Disability Services in Lommasson Center 154 or call 406.243.2243. I will work with you and Disability Services to provide an appropriate modification.