

UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH
Department of Political Science

POLS 2250 PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (WINTER 2019)

Instructor – Dr. Tim A. Mau

Office Hours: TBD or by appointment (MACK 531)

Extension 52170 or email: tmau@uoguelph.ca

Course Objectives:

The purpose of this course is to build your foundational knowledge and understanding of the theory and practice of public administration in the Canadian context. While the course content will primarily focus on this country's administrative practices and reform initiatives, an effort will be made to situate our system and these initiatives in a more global context since the reality is that there has been a widespread adoption of New Public Management (NPM) and New Public Governance (NPG) in recent years.

In this course you will acquire a better appreciation of organisational theory and the theories of public administration as well as a heightened awareness of the enormous impact of NPM on the organisation of government and the delivery of public goods and services. In order to fully appreciate the impact of NPM, you will need to understand the various organisational forms (i.e., department, agency and Crown corporation) that were historically used to deliver a variety of programs and services to the public. These traditional organization forms stand in stark contrast to the various forms of alternative service delivery (ASD) mechanisms that have been adopted by government in recent years, such as Special Operating Agencies, contracting out, privatization and public sector-private sector partnerships (P3s).

Moreover, the course will explore a number of critical topics related to the study of public administration. First, you will be exposed to the values and ethics that underpin the public service and how NPM has engendered a new set of values, ones that often challenge and threaten the old ones that buttress our professional public service. Second, the course addresses some of the critical human resources challenges that the government faces as it tries to ensure that we have a world-class public service in Canada. Finally, you will be introduced to the budgetary process and the management of financial resources. The reality is that without the requisite financial resources, governments simply cannot provide their citizens with the full range of programs and services that they want and expect.

Students who have completed this course should have:

- (i) a sound understanding of the role that the bureaucracy plays in the Canadian system of government;
- (ii) a nuanced appreciation of how various organizational theories have impacted the development of public administration in Canada;

- (iii) a knowledge of the organisational forms through which the government delivers a variety of programs and services to the public;
- (iv) an awareness of the evolution of New Public Management in Canada and elsewhere;
- (v) an ability to critically examine our system of public administration, particularly with respect to the significant changes ushered in with the advent of the New Public Management paradigm;
- (vi) an ability to conduct research using government documents and other publications, including the numerous resources available electronically through the internet.

Required Texts:

Paul Barker and Tim A. Mau. *Public Administration in Canada: 2nd Edition*. Scarborough: Nelson, 2017.