PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION 5100:

ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGNS FOR GOVERNANCE AND PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

Dr. Kevin Quigley
Assistant Professor
School of Public Administration

Office: School of Public Administration, Room 3030
Telephone: 494-3782

Email: kevin.quigley@dal.ca
Office Hours: Tuesdays 1-2 and Thursdays 10-11

Teaching Assistant: Gillian Carter (gwcarter@dal.ca)

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INTRODUCTION

This course examines the organizational dimensions of governance and public management. Notwithstanding the quip of James Q. Wilson, a noted American scholar, that “only two groups of people deny that organization matters: economists and everyone else”, practical experience, as well as empirical studies, demonstrate that organizational designs have their consequences - they have effects, whether intended or not. A great deal of organizational change is thus undertaken precisely on the assumption that organization does matter. Much of this change does not produce the desired results in improved governance or improved public management. Yet, this seldom puts a brake on the phenomenon of organizational change. There are two principal reasons for the phenomenon.

First, since organizing is a function of managing, managers will use organizational change as one tool of management to deal with real or perceived problems, especially in the case of “wicked” problems where the use of other tools in the search for solutions are not self-evident or feasible. Second, organizational change invariably entails an attempt to change the structure or balance of real power in organizations. Since power is not only the means to effect desired outcomes, but also an end in itself, both formal and informal organizational change can be expected as a constant in organizational life. The fact that a good deal of such change appears little more than an exercise in “musical chairs” is thus beside the point.

The challenge in organizational design as a function of management is to understand when organizational change is actually required. While easier said than done, this implies at least two things. First, there needs to be an analysis of the presumed deficiencies of the existing organizational design in place as it relates to the effective pursuit of objectives and the performance of required tasks. Second, there must be the design of a new organizational structure that more effectively addresses the questions of objectives and tasks and is based on organizational learning, that is, knowledge from one’s own experiences or from the broader universe of governance and public management.

In considering the challenge of organizational design, we must be cognizant of the several different determinants of government structure and organizational designs, including:

- the constitutional principles and conventions that shape the basic architecture of the state;
- the ideas (that is, the political and/or management theories and convictions) that, explicitly or implicitly, underlie prevailing conceptions, or paradigms, of how best to organize public sector institutions;
- the political interests that demand or require organizational representation;
- the policy objectives of government that require an organizational response;
- the policy interdependencies that need to be coordinated;
- the public services that must be integrated to provide seamless service;
- the size of the public sector in any given jurisdiction;
- the nature of the various functions and tasks undertaken by government at any point in time.
In exploring these determinants, the course seeks to identify the various organizational design options that are available as found in the collective experiences of comparative jurisdictions. This exploration assumes that there is no one right way to organize to perform the functions of governance and public management: all design options have their advantages and disadvantages. Hence the notion of “contingency theory” - it all depends on how advantages and disadvantages are assessed in the context of the circumstances and, of course, who gets to make the final pronouncement on the assessment.

Because the science of organizational theory and design constitutes social science knowledge applied in real life, it is inherently a mix of empirical knowledge and belief. Hence political leaders and public administrators invariably will have their personal ideas or convictions about what constitutes the best designs in any given circumstance, and many of these will be grounded on less than solid evidence drawn from experience. These beliefs, nonetheless, have their effect on organizational designs.

Some of these preferences are grounded in theoretical accounts derived from the world of academic scholarship, most notably in recent years the prescriptions that flow from public choice, agency and transactions cost theories as they have been deployed explicitly in New Zealand, Britain and Australia. In addition, and especially in North America, these preferences flow from an acceptance of the managerial ideas, fads and fashions of the day as shaped by management consultants who promote their conceptions of “best practices” drawn primarily, even exclusively, from the private sector, yet presented as generic to all organizations. Good public management demands that managers be aware of the inherent limitations of applying ideas from different contexts, including from both the private sector and other jurisdictions, lest they not fit their circumstances and thus not have their intended effects (or worse, produce perverse effects). Equally important, good public management demands attention to the contradictions that all too often are embedded in simplistic ideas masquerading as straightforward solutions to complex organizational issues.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the course are that class members:

- develop an understanding of the determinants of government structure and organization;
- develop knowledge of the various design options that exist in the universe of public administration; and,
- develop the capability to undertake organizational analyses as a critical function of management.

FORMAT

Please be advised that the subject matter of this course necessarily entails a good deal of overlap between the several topics. We are dealing with a system of structures and organizational designs, and the several parts of the system cannot be discussed entirely in isolation from one another: in important respects, they are meant to constitute a whole. Inevitably, there must be a
good measure of repetition in our discussion. But this constitutes necessary repetition, as we
explore organizational and management issues from different, but related, perspectives. There is
no simple or straightforward way to cut into the subject with a series of topics in a sequential and
cumulative manner.

The course will be conducted using individual student presentations on assigned topics,
class discussion of the issues raised by these presentations, and overviews by the instructor. All
students will be expected to have read the assigned text and readings for each week’s topic and
to be prepared to discuss the major points raised therein.

For each class, 4 or 5 students will each make a presentation to class on one of the topics
listed below. Each presentation is to focus on the specific topic but to do so in a way that situates
its significance within the general topic under consideration. These individual presentations, and
the subsequent discussion on each presentation, will be done sequentially. Each presentation
should take 10 minutes (maximum 11) with about 15 minutes discussion. Students are expected
to consult with the instructor on their individual assignments in advance of their class
presentation. Students may consult with the teaching assistant in this way also. Students must
email their presentation to the instructor and class by 5 pm the day before their assigned
presentation to the class. Failure to do so will result in lost marks. The document – at a
minimum – should include a one-page (max two-page) summary of your key points and three
questions to prompt discussion in the class. The summary might include a thesis statement and
three or four key points (with supporting examples) that you would like to make to support your
thesis. It might also include appropriate background and contextual information. You might
choose to use powerpoint slides or audio or video files during your presentation – but remember
that you only have 10 minutes, and the time limit will be strictly observed.

Each student will prepare a 10-page paper [2500 words] on the subject of her or his in-
class presentation. Papers must be received, in hardcopy and electronically, no later than
December 7.

There will be a(n approximately) one-hour, in-class written test on October 15. It will
cover the first five classes. There will be a two-hour written examination at the conclusion of the
term in the University’s examination period (and scheduled by the Registrar). This examination
will cover the full term.

Grading Scheme: Participation: 10%; Presentation: 10%; Paper: 25%; In-class test: 15 %;
Examination: 40%

Important Notes on Participation, Assignments, Mid term and Exam

Participation

Attendance will be taken regularly and will play an important part in determining your
participation mark (10%). While ‘showing up’ is a necessary condition for securing a good
participation mark, it is not sufficient. You will also be expected to participate and share your
ideas in the classroom. You will be able to participate more effectively if you have read the
reading material in advance. It will also help if you keep abreast of current affairs in public
administration/government. The current affairs that are discussed in class are examinable material. Occasionally you may be called upon to work in groups and/or present ideas to the class. Quizzes may occur occasionally but these will not be marked: they will be used to facilitate discussion during the class.

Note: (1) Signing someone else’s name on the attendance sheet is considered a breech of academic integrity and will have nasty consequences; (2) You may only sign the attendance sheet if you attend the entire class.

Assignments
If you fail to hand in an assignment you will receive a zero for it.

Late Papers: Papers are due on December 7. If you fail to hand the assignment in on the due date, you can hand it in at the end of the week – December 11. In such a case, your paper will be reduced by ten per cent for being late. Beyond December 11, papers will not be accepted.

Note all assignments are individual assignments. Co-authoring and/or collaboration with colleagues is/are not permitted.

The instructor assumes that students can communicate clearly. Evaluations of written work will adhere to a very high standard. These standards will include penalizing those who submit work that is not appropriately formatted and/or referenced. Page references must always be cited when appropriate, which is almost always. Assignments that do not include page references will not be accepted. Hand-written assignments will also not be accepted. For each of the written assignments, a random sample of papers may be submitted to turnitin.com.

Please ensure your assignment is as close as possible to the prescribed word count. Any assignment that exceeds +/- 15% from the word count will be deemed too long/too short and may be penalized.

Mid Term
All material included in this course by October 8, including, readings, lectures, handouts and in-class discussions, is examinable material for the midterm.

If you miss the mid term you will receive a zero for it.

Everyone must write the midterm. The midterm is scheduled for October 15. The decision to grant a re-write rests with the professor. Here are the guidelines I will use. If there is a medical reason that justifies a student missing the mid term on October 15 then I may allow a student to sit a re-write. In this case, the student would have to provide documentation detailed and signed by a medical doctor that states explicitly that the student was unable to write the midterm. The documentation must be provided to me by October 16 at 4:00 pm. The student must also obtain my explicit permission to sit the rewrite before the day of the rewrite. There is one rewrite time: Wednesday October 21 at 7:15 am.

Final Exam
Everyone must write the final exam. All material included in this course, including, readings, lectures, handouts, presentations and in-class discussions, is examinable material for the final exam.

If you miss the final exam you will receive a zero for it.

In reference to assignments, tests and attendance in general: In the interests of fairness, there will be no exceptions made to the above rules unless there is an appropriate medical justification, which is documented by a medical doctor and presented to me in a timely fashion. Students – like the professor – have many commitments outside of this class (e.g., family, jobs, conferences, job interviews, etc.). In the interests of fairness, I try to treat everyone equally. Please do your best to ensure that these other commitments to do not conflict with our regular class meetings.

TOPICS AND SCHEDULE

September 10: Constitutional Governance and Public Management

September 17: Public Management and Professional Public Service

October 24: Management Theory in the Real World

October 1: Designing Organizations for Management

October 8: The Strategic Apex: Governing from the Centre

October 15: Portfolio Designs: Interests, Policy Priorities & Paradigms

*Note: Mid-Term Test*

October 22: The Corporate Management Framework

October 29: Devolving Authority For Performance Management

November 5: Integrating Service Delivery for Citizen-Centred Service

November 12: Delegating Authority for Indirect Public Administration

November 19: The Contract State: Partnerships and Private Delivery

November 26: The Accountability Conundrum

CLASS ASSIGNMENT-PAPER TOPICS:

*Topic 1: Constitutional Government*
1. GG & PM: power of dissolution
2. prorogation
3. minority governments
4. crossing the floor

**Topic 2: Professional Public Service**

1. staffing of the DM cadre
2. PSC’s independence
3. Minister’s staff / political staff
4. public service as a profession
5. anonymity of public servants

**Topic 3: Theory**

1. new public management
2. banishing bureaucracy
3. private-sector management as ideal
4. alternatives sources of information

**Topic 4: Designing Organizations**

1. horizontality
2. functional authority
3. coordination
4. standardization
5. motivation

**Topic 5: Strategic Apex**

1. PM and court government
2. PCO
3. PMO
4. Cabinet

**Topic 6: Portfolios**

1. form follows function?
2. politics trumps everything?
3. public safety
4. infrastructure renewal

**Topic 7: Corporate Management**
1. corporate management
2. issue: surreal vs. real
3. agencies
4. demographics
5. communications

**Topic 8: Devolving Authority**

1. devolution and decentralization
2. policy and operations
3. risk management
4. performance management

**Topic 9: Integrating Service Delivery**

1. citizen-centred service
2. organizational turf and missions
3. privacy
4. technologies
5. citizen’s charters

**Topic 10: Indirect Public Administration**

1. ministerial responsibility for arm’s length agencies
2. The corporate governance of Crown corporations
3. regulatory commissions and independent decision-making
4. responsible government and independent foundations

**Topic 11: Contract state**

1. private interests and public interests
2. managing public services by contracts
3. collaborating with the private sector
4. the state and the voluntary-service sector

**Topic 12: Accountability**

1. ministerial responsibility in question
2. deputy ministers as accounting officers
3. results-based reporting
4. freedom of information
5. Auditor General
COURSE MATERIALS

A. Text

The text for this course was written by Professor Peter Aucoin for the web-based version of this course. The version that is used for this course covers 12 lessons under 11 of the 12 topics listed above. This reading material is largely background material. It should be used in conjunction with the readings listed below. For assignments, you will have to conduct research beyond this reading list.

B. Readings

1. Constitutional Governance and Public Management


Videos:

Prorogation 2008: A Crisis in Responsible Government http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tMypCB6UgoE

2. Public Management and Professional Public Service


3. Management Theory in the Real World


Videos:
Robin Day Interviews Margaret Thatcher (Part 1): http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cpdbEK3E4U8
Tony Benn in Parliament: This Issue is Thatcher http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ETqOvBKKnKdk
Ronald Reagan: First Inaugural Address (Part 2 of 3) (The problem is government) http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R5cEhtge_BE

Argumentation

4. Designing Organizations for Management


5. The Strategic Apex: Governing from the Centre


6. Portfolio Designs: Interests, Policy Priorities and Paradigms


7. The Corporate Management Framework


8. Devolving Authority For Performance Management


Christopher Hood, The Uses of Measured Performance: Indicators in Governance and Public Services. (Parts 1 and 2). 2008. See youtube:
Part 1: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m4ukkBKGGN4
Part 2: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dHb9EkbGCyA&feature=related

9. Integrating Service Delivery for Citizen Centred Service


10. Delegating Authority for Indirect Public Administration


11. The Contract State: Partnerships and Private Delivery


12. The Accountability Conundrum


RESERVE READINGS


Sandford Borins, Kenneth Kernaghan, David Brown, Nick Bontis, Perri 6, Fred Thompson (eds.) *Digital State at the Leading Edge* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007).


Christopher Dunn (ed.), *The Handbook of Canadian Public Administration* (Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press, 2002)

JOURNALS AND WEBSITES

The most important journal for our purposes is *Canadian Public Administration*, the flagship publication of the Institute of Public Administration of Canada. The Institute also publishes a public-administration magazine entitled *Public Sector Management*. A second Canadian journal is *Optimum: The Journal of Public Sector Management*, published by Consulting and Audit Canada and the University of Ottawa.

The websites of the Government of Canada (www.canada.gc.ca) and the provincial governments provide access to an increasing number of reports, studies, papers and other publications that are relevant to this course. For our purposes, the most useful Government of Canada websites are those of the Canada School of Public Service, the Treasury Board Secretariat, Office of the Privy Council Office, the Public Service Commission, and the Auditor General.


Please note:

1. **Students with Disabilities:** Students with disabilities are encouraged to register as quickly as possible at the Student Accessibility Services if they want to receive academic accommodations. To do so please phone 494-2836, e-mail access@dal.ca, drop in at the Killam, G28 or visit our website at www.studentaccessibility.dal.ca.

2. **Academic Integrity:** At Dalhousie University, we respect the values of academic integrity: honesty, trust, fairness, responsibility and respect. As a Dalhousie student and a member of the
What is academic integrity?

Academic integrity is ensuring that any work you submit is your own and that you have given appropriate acknowledgement to any sources that you consulted. “Dalhousie University defines plagiarism as the submission or presentation of the work of another as if it were one's own. Plagiarism is considered a serious academic offence which may lead to the assignment of a failing grade, suspension or expulsion from the University.” (from Undergraduate Calendar section on Intellectual Honesty).

Some examples of plagiarism are:

- failure to attribute authorship when using a broad spectrum of sources such as written or oral work, computer codes/programs, artistic or architectural works, scientific projects, performances, web page designs, graphical representations, diagrams, videos, and images;
- downloading all or part of the work of another from the Internet and submitting as one's own
- the submission of a paper prepared by any person other than the individual claiming to be the author
- submitting work that has been completed through collaboration or previously submitted for another assignment without permission from your instructor

How is plagiarism detected?

Professors and TAs are highly skilled at recognizing discrepancies between writing styles, inappropriate citations, and obvious word-for-word copying. In addition, the Senate has affirmed the right of any instructor to require that student papers be submitted in both written and digital format, and to submit any paper to an originality check such as that performed by Turnitin.com. Copies of student papers checked by this process will be retained by Turnitin.com.

What happens if I am accused of plagiarism?

Instructors are required to forward any suspected cases of plagiarism to the Academic Integrity Officer (AIO) for the Faculty. You will be informed of the allegation by the AIO and a meeting will be convened. You may contact the Dalhousie Student Advocacy Service who will be able to assist you in preparing a defence. Until the case is resolved, your final grade will be an "INC". If you are judged to have committed an offence, penalties may include a loss of credit, F in a course, suspension or expulsion from the University, or even the revocation of a degree (for more information see Academic Integrity website listed below).

How can I avoid plagiarism?
• Give appropriate credit to the sources used in your assignment
  o Use RefWorks to keep track of your research and edit and format bibliographies in the citation style required by the instructor - http://www.library.dal.ca/How/RefWorks
• If you are ever unsure about ANYTHING, contact your instructor or TA
• Prepare your paper completely independently
• Make sure you understand Dalhousie’s policies on academic integrity

Where can I turn for help?

• Academic Integrity website - http://academicintegrity.dal.ca
  o Links to policies, definitions, online tutorials, tips on citing and paraphrasing
• Writing Center - http://writingcentre.dal.ca/
  o Proofreading, writing styles, citations
• Dalhousie Libraries - http://www.library.dal.ca/How/
  o Workshops, online tutorials, citation guides, Assignment Calculator, RefWorks

Final Notes:

All cell phones must be switched off during class time. Laptops may be used for taking notes only. If students are suspected of using laptops in class for reasons other than taking notes, they will be asked to stop. Repeated behaviour of this sort can result in the student being asked to leave the class; and/or the professor limiting or banning the use of laptops – by the student in question or the entire class.

Students are expected to attend and participate in class. Attendance will be taken regularly. Your participation mark (10% of your final mark) will be determined by your attendance and your participation. In short, if you miss classes, you will lose participation marks. Only a medical note explaining that you were unable to attend class—an explanation which is supported by the medical practitioner—will be accepted as a viable excuse.

Note also that it is always your responsibility to attend class. If you miss class it is always your responsibility to obtain the material from colleagues. Discussions in classes are examinable material.

My power point slides (when I have them) will be made available on-line but not before class. My notes will not be made available. I will place course material on the PUAD 5100 folder in the m-drive. Please be sure to check it regularly. I may also email you documents from time to time. (I will be using the course distribution list.) All students in this class have access to the m-drive. If you do not have access, please see the Dalhousie Helpdesk for assistance.
As often as possible the class will be audio-recorded; the audio recordings will be made available on-line. The audio recordings will allow you to review the class discussions. Audio recordings cannot be relied upon: the quality of the recording can sometimes be poor; the technology can fail (e.g., the recorder can run out of batteries; files can be accidentally deleted); sometimes we can forget to turn the audio recording device on. The professor cannot always take responsibility for the quality of student contributions (i.e. ad hoc comments and/or presentations). The recordings are therefore offered as an ‘extra.’ In addition to acting as a ‘reminder’ of the class, it can allow students to review their own presentations – for content and style. I can’t emphasize enough - it’s not a good idea to miss class thinking that you will review the audio file later.