



# GRADUATE SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

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## STRATEGIC ADMINISTRATION (GSOG6003)

Designed for advanced practitioners, this unit will explore six key strategic themes in public administration.

- The legislative and regulatory frameworks of NSW and other jurisdictions will be reviewed to provide a better understanding of how these affect macro-governance of the public sector. Case studies will be used to illustrate techniques and skills for managing and facilitating policy as well as delivering services within these frameworks. Explanations will be given of different models and techniques for negotiating agency, cross-agency and centre-of-government consultation and decision-making processes.
- Various theoretical and applied frameworks for ethics and policy will be examined as well as for personal and corporate responsibility, the political process and managing relationships with ministers.
- The notion of the 'contract state' will be reviewed, particularly in the context of designing and executing complex private-sector contracts.
- Consideration will be given to the nature and culture of organisations, particularly the ways they manage changes in their work force and workplace that have been introduced in response to external and internal stimuli.
- The impact of globalisation, and the response of various public sectors to terrorism will be reviewed as well as the influence these have had on international business dealings and trans-national contracting.
- Theories and practical examples will be presented of adjusting to, understanding and anticipating social, political and economic change and its impact.

## Learning Style

The administration of government at a senior level places significant and increasing demands on skills and knowledge. This unit, which is designed to be linked to participants' needs and interests, will build upon and enhance their knowledge, individually and as a group. Theory will be compared and contrasted with real-world examples, and ideas in the literature will be tested against experience. While some lectures will be given, most teaching will be through case-study analysis, independent research and problem-based learning in small groups and through active engagement with study materials. External experts from other sectors will complement academic input.

## Learning Outcomes

- Knowledge of and an enhanced ability to negotiate and achieve results within the legislative and regulatory frameworks of public sectors.
- Appreciation of and an enhanced ability to achieve high standards of probity and personal ethics whilst still delivering 'public value' and meeting appropriate political initiatives.
- Familiarity with the major theoretical frameworks and concepts underpinning contemporary public-sector governance, community and parliamentary responsibility and accountability.
- Skills in defining, developing and implementing policies and programs.
- Effective use of public-sector knowledge and experience to transfer existing practise-based information from current policies and programs to new policies and programs.
- Strengthened ability to identify and evaluate alternative interpretations of an issue and to place this analysis within a particular legislative and regulatory framework.
- Skills in the rapid identification, presentation and negotiation of issues with ministers and other political leaders.
- Skills in identifying and developing scenarios relevant to particular policies and programs based on analysis of current economic, social and political trends.
- Effective verbal and written communication, particularly in preparing, leading and facilitating discussion and decisions on strategic issues.

## Assessment

In keeping with the emphasis on blending theory and practice and drawing upon adult learning styles, assessment will involve a mix of tasks and assignments such as:

- case-study analysis
- individual or small-group research projects

- simulation exercises (possibly involving international collaboration), and
- critical commentaries on assigned readings.

A typical assessment schedule would be a 4000-word case study based on independent research (40 per cent), participation in simulation exercises (20 per cent), contributions to an online forum (20 per cent) and in-class oral presentation (20 per cent).

## Contact Hours and Private Study

The unit will be offered in 'intensive semester' mode. This will involve seven full days (42 hours) of class contact spread over 10 weeks (incorporating a three-week break for reading, reflection and writing). In keeping with the University of Sydney's expectations, face-to-face contact will be complemented by private study including the completion of assessment tasks.

## Indicative Topics

- Models of public sector legislative and regulatory frameworks (for example, NSW and UK).
- Managing continuous change within specific legislative and regulatory frameworks.
- Contemporary trends in public administration (for example, public/private coalitions).
- Ethics, probity and personal accountability: personal and institutional best-practice.
- Political and public service processes and relationships: 'can do' to 'the eye of doubt'.
- Strategic management: concepts, applications and relevance to public sectors.
- Contracting and outsourcing: theory and practice.
- Developing and managing complex contracts.
- Organisational cultures, workplace and work force trends.
- Globalisation impacts on national and regional public sectors.
- Social cohesion: community and government reactions and responses to terrorism.
- Understanding emerging economic, political and social trends.
- Diversity in public policy implementation: responding to emerging trends.

## Indicative Readings

- Aulich D, Halligan J and Nuttley S (2001) *Australian Handbook of Public Sector Management*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney
- Bryson J (1995) *Strategic Planning for Public and Non-profit Organizations*, revised edition, Jossey Bass, San Francisco
- Davis G and Keating M (2000) *The Future of Governance*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney
- Domberger S (1998) *The Contracting Organisation*, Oxford University Press, Oxford
- Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) (1994) *Pitfalls or Probity: Tendering and Purchasing Case Studies*, ICAC, Sydney
- Lane J-E (1997) *Public Sector Reform: Rationale, Trends and Problem*, London, Sage
- Nolan BC (2001) *Public Sector Reform: An International Perspective*, Palgrave, Basingstoke
- Rainey HG (1997) *Understanding and Managing Public Organizations*, 2nd edition, Jossey Bass, San Francisco
- Hill M and Hupe P (2002) *Implementing Public Policy*, Sage, London
- Rhodes R and Weller P eds (2001) *The Changing World of Top Officials: Mandarins or Valets?*, Open University Press, Buckingham
- Berg S, Pollitt M and Tsuji M (2002) *Private Initiatives in Infrastructure*, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham

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