INTRODUCTION TO PUBLIC SERVICE
SUMMER 2013

Contact Information

Professor: Dr. Meghna Sabharwal
E-mail: meghna.sabharwal@utdallas.edu
Office Location: 2.238 Green Hall
Office Hours: Available by appointment

CLASS TIME AND LOCATION:

This is an ONLINE class offered over the Internet. All course materials may be found on
UTD’s eLearning site at https://elearning.utdallas.edu

Please set up prior appointment with the instructor, if you wish to meet with her personally.

NOTE: I will respond to e-mails on Tuesday and Thursday. If you have something that needs
my immediate attention, please send me an e-mail with URGENT – PA 2325 in the subject line,
and I will try to respond right away.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to give students a broad introduction to public service. Students will
explore the meaning of public service in American life, examine the contemporary erosion of
interest in public service, explore different options for public service, and draw lessons from
their own experience about how to increase the likelihood that more Americans will engage in
public service during their lives. The course will also explore the range of alternatives for public
impact, whether through traditional personal volunteering and advocacy, service on nonprofit
boards, socially-responsible engagement in corporate careers, social entrepreneurship, or careers
in government and nonprofits. In addition, a range of topics will be covered from actors and
institutions involved in public service, to the various sectors (public, private and non-profits),
public service motivation, careers in public service, leadership, dealing with difficult people, and
ethics – all of which will provide a deeper understanding of what it takes to be a good public
servant.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

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1 Parts of the syllabus are adapted from Professor Carol c. Lanham’s class on Deviance
• Seek an understanding of the interdisciplinary nature of public service created by civic engagement between public policy, public administration and community service

• Differentiate among the public, private and non-profit sectors

• Explore possible careers in the public service

• Analyze factors that contribute to public service motivation

• Appreciate the challenges and triumphs of working and collaborating with politicians, press, and governing boards

• Understand the challenges and devise ways of dealing with difficult people

• Identify tools for successful leadership

• Develop an appreciation of challenges and opportunities that currently face our diverse society -using the civic engagement and social entrepreneurship lens

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK AND MATERIALS

1. Caught Between the Dog and the Fireplug, or How to Survive Public Service by Kenneth Ashworth

2. Driving Social Change: How to Solve the World's Toughest Problems by Paul C. Light

Other readings as assigned will be posted on eLearning

CLASS FORMAT AND INSTRUCTOR’S EXPECTATIONS

This course is entirely web-based and all work will be completed online through UTD’s eLearning site, therefore we will not be meeting in person for classes. The class format will consist of power point presentations (main points for each week), discussion boards, career development exercise, book review, quizzes, and a final exam. Even though we will not be meeting face to face, you are responsible for reading the assigned course material each week so that you can participate in online discussions and successfully. LATE SUBMISSIONS ARE NOT ACCEPTED (unless there are extenuating circumstances, and only with proper written documentation).
GRADING POLICY

Your final grade will be awarded based on the following scale. Grades for all assignments and tests will be available in the grade book in eLearning.

Weekly participation and discussions (10 discussion posts) – 25 points
Career Development Assignment– 10 points
Book Review – 20 points
Quiz (4) – 25 points
Final exam – 20 points

**Letter Grade Percentage Points**

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INTERACTION EXPECTATIONS

Traditional classes, unlike online classes, meet at a specific time and place on a regular schedule. The online course offers the participants the opportunity to interact asynchronously; this means that the participants most likely will **not be** "in" the online classroom at the same time. Our interactions will take place on the discussion board forum. Communication online is through words - we do not hear inflections, sarcasm, or humor, and we do not have physical cues and gestures to clarify meaning. Therefore, we must make every effort to phrase our responses and posts so they will not offend nor alienate our classmates. I expect each of you to completely think out all your posts, read and reread them thoroughly prior to posting, and to carefully consider what you are saying and how you are saying it. At all times show respect and courtesy for your fellow classmates.

ONLINE LECTURES/DISCUSSION BOARD

Although we will not be holding discussions in a traditional classroom setting, we will have virtual conversations on the online discussion board. There will be 10 discussion topics posted throughout the course of this semester; the professor will post one discussion question each week related to the readings. In order to receive full credit for this component of the course (25%), **you will be required to write 10 original posts over the course of the semester (minimum of 150 meaningful words each week for the first post)**. Direct quotes from the material do not count towards the 150 words.
Your work on the Discussion Board includes regular threaded discussions and activities. Interaction on the discussion board will be monitored throughout the week. An initial posting is due by 7pm on Thursday of each week.

**At least two responses to postings of colleagues are due by midnight on Sunday.** You are expected to read the postings throughout the module. Some weeks you may post more than this. On a rare occasion, you may find yourself posting less. The responses should not be all made at once, but spread out, to allow discussions to develop.

**SEE REBRIC on eLearning for grading**

**Posts will be judged by the following criteria:**
1. Did the student read and understand the original posting?
2. Did the student attempt to contribute a new thought to the thread?
3. Does the student demonstrate a critical understanding of the topic based on the readings?
4. Does the student make reference to the readings in the discussions?
5. Is the writing grammatically correct? (Spelling, punctuation, and grammar count! Quoted material does not count towards the word count).

**EXAMS**

An open book final examination will be distributed on August 5th and will be due August 11th at 11:59pm. The format is short-essay style questions. In addition, 4 quizzes (week 3, 5, 8, and 10) will be posted on eLearning, which will be due on June 16, June 30, July 21, and August 4. Quizzes will be a combination of multiple choice questions and short essays.

**COMPUTER LITERACY**

In order to succeed in this class, you must be computer literate and have a basic understanding of the Internet. If you do not consider yourself to be computer literate, please consider taking a traditional class instead.

**INTERNET ACCESS**

All coursework, reading assignments will be provided electronically on the Internet. Activities will include streaming and watching videos as well as completing exams and assignments online. These activities are not possible on anything other than a high-speed Internet connection. **Remember computer technology can be unreliable, so plan ahead.** Quizzes and exams will be timed, and once you start your quiz or exam, you cannot reset the clock – the exam must be completed within the allotted time period. If you are booted off or experience a slow connection, you will not be able to start over. If you run into trouble, send me an email IMMEDIATELY to document the problem. Or you may send an email to the UTD Computing Help Desk (assist@utdallas.edu) and copy me on the email. If your problem is related specifically to eLearning, call the help desk anytime at 1-866-588-3192 and ask for an email copy of your ticket, which you can then forward to me for verification.
eLEARNING SYSTEM

This class uses UTD’s eLearning System to manage the online content. You should log in to your eLearning account before the first day of class to ensure that you have no problems accessing the site. Once you are logged in, you will find links to eLearning student tutorials. You can get more help by calling 1-866-588-3192 or visiting eLearning - The University of Texas at Dallas.

EMAIL ACCOUNT

Please be sure that you know how to access your UTD email account and can check it regularly.

REQUIRED SOFTWARE

You must have access to Microsoft Office software (Word, PowerPoint and Excel) version 2007 or higher. Teachers and UTD students are eligible for significant discounts on software at the UTD Tech Store. You also must have Adobe’s Acrobat Reader and Apple’s Quick Time Player, which are both available through free downloads.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

MAKE-UP EXAMS AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS

The dates of exams and other assignments are indicated on the class schedule. Because you will have a full week to complete the exams, you most likely will not need a make-up. However, in case of extenuating circumstances, make-up exams will only be given for legitimate reasons and with proper written documentation. If you fail to take an exam or turn in an assignment without a reasonable excuse, you will receive a “0” for that portion of the course. THERE WILL BE NO MAKE-UPS FOR QUIZZES.

INCOMPLETE GRADE POLICY

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester’s end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of F.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The faculty expects a high level of responsibility and academic honesty from students. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual
honor in his or her scholastic work. **For online classes, letting another person complete your work for you or representing them as you is considered cheating.** Only students registered for the class may participate in class work or assignments.

**SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY**

Policy on Cheating: Students are expected to be above reproach in all scholastic activities. Students who engage in scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and dismissal from the university. "Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts." Regents' Rules and Regulations, Part One, Chapter VI, Section 3, Subsection 3.2, Subdivision 3.22.

A very useful statement on plagiarism (with good definitions, etc.) is available at [http://www.rbs2.com/plag.htm](http://www.rbs2.com/plag.htm)

To ensure academic integrity, all sections of the group project will be checked through Turnitin.com

**GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The University of Texas at Dallas has developed a number of policies and procedures designed to provide students with a safe and supportive learning environment. For UT Dallas policy related to the following go to: [http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies](http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies)

Field Trip Policies
Student Conduct & Discipline
Email Use
Withdrawal from Class
Student Grievance Procedures
Disability Services

**Topics**

**Week 1: 5/30 to 6/2 - Introductions**

ALL STUDENTS SHOULD GO TO THE DISCUSSION BOARD UNDER INTRODUCTIONS and post a brief introduction of themselves. Please do not post any personal addresses or contact information. Just tell us a little bit about yourself such as what year you are in, your major, your interests, brief working history, and future career plans (if you have formulated any at this time), and your interest in taking this class – apart from the fact that it is online.

**Week 2: 6/3 to 6/9 - What is public service?**
Read chapter - Bonafide bureaucratic Behavior – Ken Book Pages 121-133

Public service: an opportunity, not a burden
http://apps.federaltimes.com/mobile/article/305050004

Video: Who should take responsibility?
http://www.ted.com/talks/jennifer_pahlka_coding_a_better_government.html

Discussion board: What is your definition of public service? Does public service matter?

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Week 3: 6/10 to 6/16 – Public, private, and non-profit partnerships

Hal G. Rainey. Chapter 3- What makes public organizations distinctive

The emerging fourth sector: http://www.fourthsector.net/learn/fourth-sector

Civil Lessons: Society of Human Resources Management (SHRM)

Discussion Board: Can and should private sector corporations perform public service?

Quiz 1: Due June 16 at 11:59pm (covers all materials from weeks 2 and 3)

Week 4: 6/17 to 6/23 - Public service motivation


In Service to Public Servants:

Video: Why public service?
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2xVBEOhR3rM&feature=youtu.be

Discussion board: How did September 11 or Katrina or any other major national catastrophe affect your desire to engage in public service?

Week 5: 6/24 to 6/30 - Actors and Institutions

Kenneth Ashworth Pages 1-33 and 89-120
- Working with politicians
- Working with the press
- Relations with the governing boards
- More on governing boards
Discussion board: Why should administrators/bureaucrats be concerned about their relationships with politicians, media and the governing boards?

Quiz 2: Due June 30 at 11:59pm (covers all materials from weeks 4 and 5)

Week 6: 7/1 to 7/7 – People Skills

Kenneth Ashworth Pages 45-62
  • Dealing with unpleasant and difficult people
  • More on unpleasant people


Discussion board: Difficult people are everywhere. How do you deal with unpleasant and difficult people? Reflect on the advice provided by Ashworth and Berman and Berman.

Week 7: 7/8 to 7/14 – Careers in Public Service

Light, To Restore and Renew: Now Is the Time to Rebuild the Public Service, available online http://www.brookings.edu/research/articles/2001/11/governance-light


Your defining decade (optional): http://www.ted.com/talks/meg_jay_why_30_is_not_the_new_20.html

Browse through the various career options available in public service: http://www.usa.gov/Citizen/Topics/PublicService.shtml

Discussion board: Would you recommend a job in government or non-profit to a friend? Why and/or why not?

This is a professional program and most students will be entering the job market while completing the class. Accordingly, a theme of this week’s discussions will be related to career development. Accordingly, students will be required to complete a resume and a cover letter for a job of their choice.

Assignment - Using the federal government website https://www.usajobs.gov/ choose one job for which you are currently qualified or would be interested in applying. Prepare a one page
resume and a one page cover letter for the job describing why you would be the best fit for the job.

**Assignment due by 11:59pm on July 14**

**Week 8: 7/15 to 7/21 – Tools for Successful Leadership**

Kenneth Ashworth Pages 34-44 and 63-81
- Learning from your boss
- Subordinate leadership, getting help from above
- Taking the initiative, or risk taking inside the government

Take the Online Quiz – Leadership Style:  
http://sites2.theginsystem.com/gkfiu/files/201302132304011272__e__emerging_leaders_roundtable__leadership_style_quiz.pdf

**Discussion board:** What is your leadership style? Which leadership style do you think is most effective and why?

**Quiz 3: Due July 21 at 11:59pm (covers all materials from weeks 6, 7 and 8)**

**Week 9: 7/22 to 7/28 – Leadership**

Kenneth Ashworth Pages 134-151 and 168-177
- Walking with kings
- Delegating, or working for your subordinates
- A few thoughts on leadership

*Your First 100 Days: Starting Strong as a New Leader in Government*  
http://ourpublicservice.org/OPS/publications/viewcontentdetails.php?id=214

A four-part video on “Soul of Leadership” (optional, but highly recommended):  
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N-xUqOaOLDI

**Discussion board:** Is leadership an art or science? What is one characteristic that you believe every leader should possess and why?

**Week 10: 7/29 to 8/4 – Ethics in the Public Service**

Kenneth Ashworth Pages 82-87 and 152-167
- The kinds of pressures and influence used on you
- Ethics and morality in the public service
Introduction to Public Service
Dr. Meghna Sabharwal

Quiz 4: Due August 4 at 11:59pm (covers all materials from weeks 9 and 10)

Week 11: 8/5 to 8/9 - Social entrepreneurship

“Social entrepreneurship” is a phrase widely used today in the nonprofit sector, business, and even government. Social entrepreneurship can be defined minimally as the establishment and management of successful social mission-driven ventures. While entrepreneurship for commercial gain (in for-profit organizations) has been studied extensively, the study of entrepreneurship for social gain is in its infancy.


Discussion board: What is social entrepreneurship? Is it different from public service? What does it really accomplish?

Assignment: Book review “Driving Social Change” by Paul C. Light due August 9 at 11:59pm

Guidelines and rubric for doing a book review are posted on eLearning

NOTE: Final Exam is due at 11:59pm on August 11, 2013

Public Service: Information and Links

Several organizations are devoted to promoting public service and recognizing excellence in the new public sector. Please visit their websites to learn more.

Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation, Harvard University: "The Roy and Lila Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation fosters excellence in government around the world in order to generate and strengthen democracy." The Ash Institute operates the Innovations in American Government program that spotlights public sector excellence every year. The institute also has global programming related to its mission.

The Partnership for Public Service: "The Partnership works to make the government an employer of choice for talented, dedicated Americans through educational outreach, research, legislative advocacy, and hands-on partnerships with agencies on workforce management issues." Among the other features, this website provides numerous Profiles in Public Service of individuals who have contributed to the public good through their careers, and spotlights the Best Places to Work in the Federal Government.
USA.gov: This is the "home page" of the U.S. federal government, with information for citizens, businesses, and travelers on all aspects of the U.S. government and its programs.

Governing Magazine Online: "Governing is a monthly magazine whose primary audience is state and local government officials: the governors, mayors, legislators, council members, program directors, agency heads, policy advisors and other officials spanning the entire range of responsibility for state and local government. They are the men and women who set policy for and manage the day-to-day operations of cities, counties and states, as well as such governmental bodies as school boards and special districts." The website for this magazine offers access to coverage of numerous policy and management issues in state and local public service. The magazine also recognizes Public Officials of the Year and their profiles are available online.

ICMA, the International City/County Management Association, develops and advances professional local government management to create sustainable communities that improve lives worldwide. ICMA provides member support; publications; data and information; peer and results-oriented assistance; and training and professional development to nearly 9,000 city, town, and county experts and other individuals and organizations throughout the world. The management decisions made by ICMA's members affect millions of individuals living in thousands of communities, from small villages and towns to large metropolitan areas.

NOTE: The instructor reserves the rights to make changes to the syllabus