NELSON A. ROCKEFELLER COLLEGE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND POLICY  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION & POLICY  

Spring 2017  

PAD 506  Foundations of Public Management  

Professor Mitchel Y. Abolafia  
Office Hours: Thursday, 3:00-4:00  
and by appointment  
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Course Description  

This course is designed to offer students a tool kit of behavioral skills needed by today’s public managers. The course will integrate theory and practice. Students use alternative theoretical perspectives as tools for analyzing organizational situations. They will learn to integrate this analysis with the practice of a diverse set of managerial skills to enhance effectiveness in these situations. The objective is to learn how to apply these theories and skills in real managerial situations.  

Course Requirements  

Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the material and participate in exercises. There will be an application exercises, a case analysis, and a Semester Project. The Semester Project is described in more detail at the back of this syllabus.  

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>Case Analysis</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>Application Exercise</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Semester Project</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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Course Materials  

2) Quinn, Robert et al., *Becoming a Master Manager*, 6th edition  
3) Packet
Course Schedule

1/26 Introduction to Public Management
   Management as a process of perceiving, analyzing, and acting

2/2 Public Organizations as Machines and Organisms
   Readings: Morgan: Chs. 1-3
   Packet: Readings #77 and #27

2/9 Public Organizations as Brains and Cultures
   Readings: Morgan: Chs. 4 & 5
   Packet: Readings #83, #84

2/16 Public Organizations as Political Systems and Psychic Prisons
   Readings: Morgan: Chs. 6 & 7
   Packet: Readings #97, #67, Meadville State Prison

2/23 Applying the Metaphors

   Assignment: Case Analysis – Assume that you are an organizational consultant hired by the Department of the Interior to assess the tragic events of Mann Gulch. Employing the material in the Maclean reading as data, identify two of Morgan’s metaphors that are most useful for understanding the organizational failure and use them to make sense of what happened. How would an organizational analyst explain the performance of the smokejumpers unit? **Hint: Don’t retell the story, rather use the models to explain the organizational failure in Mann Gulch.** Give brief recommendations based on this analysis. 3 pages. Double spaced. Due in class.

Video Analysis: Bolero

3/2 Managers as Thinkers and Communicators
*Some activities in the Quinn text will be done in class. Please do the “Assessments” and read the “Learning” sections in each assigned Competency. Assessments are for your own use and growth. Go as far as you can with them.
Readings: Quinn, et. al. The Competing Values Approach (pp), and Module One, Competency 2.

Reflection Assignment: Do Competing Values Survey in packet or online by going to http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-EHEP001762.html, click on Resources for Students, the Student Companion Site, the Competing Values Questionnaire. Do self-scoring at end.

3/9 Public Managers as Mentors and Facilitators
Readings: Quinn et al., Module One, Competencies 1, 3, 4: (pp., pp.)
Reflection Assignment: Do Assessment on pp. 70-72 for class discussion. Answer questions at end of assessment. (One page, double-spaced).

3/16 Spring Break Classes Suspended

3/23 Group Dynamics and Conflict
Readings: Module One, Competency 5, (pp.)
Assignment: Work on semester project. Submit a short (1 page or less) proposal for your Semester Project. Identify the organization you plan to study, the nature of the managerial issues involved (if you now them at this point), and how you will get the data. Design 10 to 15 interview questions, begin lining up subjects, scheduling interviews, etc. Students may work in teams of two on this project.

4/30 Public Managers as Champions and Innovators
Readings: Quinn et al., Module 4 Competencies 1,2, and 5 (pp.).
Reflection Assignment #1: Watch President Obama’s “Enough is Enough” speech given at Newtown, Connecticut. (Just Google it or retrieve it at http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/the-fix/wp/2012/12/16/president-obamas-enough-is-enough-newtown-speech/). Using the SSSAP framework in Competency 2, analyze the effectiveness of the speech. Be prepared to discuss your analysis in class. Do not hand in.
Reflection Assignment #2: Do the Assessment exercise on page 310. Keep your assessment in your notebook for later class session. (One page or less).
4/6 Public Managers as Monitors and Coordinators
Readings: Quinn et al., Module 2, Competencies 3 and 4 (pp.)
Reflection Assignment: Do Analysis exercise on p 154. Develop five performance measures for St. Angela’s and write a brief report (250 – 300 words) that answers questions 1, 2, and 3 in relation to those five measures. (Hand in at end of class).

4/13 Public Managers as Goal-setters and Evaluators
Readings: Quinn et al., Module 3, Competencies 2, and 3 (pp)
Reflection Assignment: Read James Cranston case in packet and prepare for a meeting with Gene that will include goal-setting and evaluation.

4/20 Applying the Competing Values Framework
Readings: Quinn et. al., Learning (pp)
Renn Zaphiropoulous (P)
Fred Henderson (P)

Application: Leadership Assessment – In this assignment you will do a performance assessment of a boss you have had. Describe his or her weaknesses in terms of two of the Competing Values roles (mentor, facilitator, innovator, etc). Illustrate. What specific things would you suggest to improve performance? Next, describe his or her strengths in terms of two of the roles and give illustrations. Use Figures C1 and C2 (334-5) to evaluate your manager’s balance of roles. Does this manager have the qualities needed to achieve lift? Three pages, double-spaced.

4/27 Class Cancelled

5/4 Lessons Learned and Wrap Up. Projects Due in Class.

Semester Project

In this project you will apply the metaphors and roles studied during the semester to an organizational problem of your own choosing. The purpose of this case study is to create an opportunity to use and integrate the ideas and concepts discussed in class and in the readings in the analysis of a real organizational situation. Your choice of problem will be an important one, and will call for considerable judgment and discretion on your part in deciding whether it is feasible to use it for the purposes of the case study. Be sure
to maintain a professional stance in relation to matters that are sensitive and confidential, and disguise the source of your project (unless it is drawn from public records) through use of appropriate pseudonyms. Confidentiality and the general conduct of the project is entirely your responsibility, so proceed with caution and great care.

Students may work in teams of two.

In essence, the case study invites you to do the following:

(a) Identify an organizational **problem** for the purpose of analysis (the situation must be sufficiently complex to generate enough material to satisfy the specifications described below). Use interviews, archives, observation, etc.

(b) Consider how the images, concepts and competencies discussed in class, help to **make sense** of the situation. Develop a focused analysis.

(c) Write up as a case study in a way that relates evidence to theory, to provide an appropriate analysis and explanation of the situation described. Integrate images (Morgan) and roles (Quinn) in your analysis.

Successful organizational analysis rests in an ability to examine an organization/organizational problem so that its fundamental characteristics are made clear. It is not simply a question of spotting problems and applying appropriate solutions. Rather, it hinges on questions such as: What is going on in the situation that I am analyzing? How can I account for its characteristics and the way they’re changing? In short, how can I make sense of the situation and arrive at an interpretation that allows me to say something concrete about it? Organizational analysis involves a process of thinking about a situation, constructing and reconstructing it in different ways that seem consistent with its nature, so that one can say something that may provide a basis for intelligent action. If the analysis has been done well, then the course of action, which is appropriate for managing or changing the situation, will become apparent.

In this course, we will be examining a number of different ways of viewing organizations. Each way provides a “lens” that highlights different aspects of organization. These different lenses may apply with varying effect to the situation you are studying—just as a particular set of spectacles may allow you to see a situation more clearly than others. Your task is to attempt to view through the different lenses and decide which, if any, are appropriate for making sense of the situation with which you are dealing.

The first few weeks of the course will involve learning to see through the different lenses, and gaining familiarity with the organization you are studying. Next will come the task of making some determination of the relevance of these different perspectives for explaining the situation. Third will come the task of writing the results of your analysis on paper, in a way that allows the reader to see and understand the nature of the situation you have been studying.
The Final Report

The purpose of this report is to produce a professional analysis of the situation being studied. You are now required to (a) present the problem you have studied as a 5 or 6 page case description followed by (b) your analysis of the situation—the critical evaluation illustrated in the Multicom case. Be sure that the problem is well specified in the opening paragraphs of the case. The case should offer an illustration of the nature of the problem before getting to the analysis. The analysis should be a critical evaluation of the causes of the problem defined in the case. (See Ch. 11 of Images of Organization for an example).

The report should not exceed 15 double-spaced typewritten pages.

It is my experience that the different metaphors and roles that we discuss in class fit different situations with different effect. Which metaphor, or combination of metaphors and roles best accounts for your situation? In the final report, I expect you to use the insights that have emerged from this process to produce the best analysis or “story-line” that you can (see Chapter 11 of Images of Organization). This will call upon your ability to use your data and to judge its significance. For example, you may find that your case is best understood as a situation of organizational politics, one of classic bureaucracy, or one which is best understood in terms of the inability of the organization to adapt to its environment. Only time will tell. You cannot make this judgment now—you will have to wait until you have finished the preliminary analysis. If you are successful in this final stage of the project, you will find that you have a much deeper understanding of the situation studied than you did at the beginning of the course. Your task in writing the final report is to communicate this understanding to the reader. If the idea of viewing organizations through metaphors or competencies has served its purpose, the metaphors will have generated useful insights. Your task now is to use these in any way you can, to generate a convincing causal analysis of the case—hopefully, one that will have important action implications.

Criteria for Evaluating the Reports

The following criteria will be used to evaluate the preliminary and final reports:

(a) The professionalism with which the report is presented.

(b) The comprehensiveness and care with which the case situation being analyzed is described.

(c) The complexity of the case (cases that are very simple and offer little challenge will not necessarily earn a high grade).

(d) Demonstrated understanding of relevant theories and concepts which can be used to explain the case situation; a discussion of alternative ways of viewing
the case will be particularly valuable when relevant. A continuous focus on the problem is critical.

(e) The quality of discussion linking theory to data, i.e. the convincingness of your analysis and general conclusions. Keep it focused on just a few key themes to be convincing.