Course Description

This module, *Foundations of Public Management*, focuses on the ways that public managers and leaders mobilize resources to achieve important public purposes. We will discuss the roles and responsibilities of managers in the design, implementation and evaluation of public programs and policies. Since leaders try to anticipate and manage change strategically, they must have an appreciation of the integrative, interdependent nature of organizations, their environments, and their stakeholders.

Some of the themes of the course are reflected in the following questions:

*What are the differences between management and leadership?*

*What are the constraints that public managers face?*

*How does a public manager set goals, create priorities and evaluate performance?*

*What are the resources available to public managers?*

*How does a manager motivate staff and subordinates?*

*How does a manager coordinate with other organizations?*
These questions are used to organize the readings and cases that we will discuss in class. Many of the cases have a primary protagonist, usually a senior manager who operates in a complex political and organizational environment. The senior manager is often faced with a decision-forcing situation. One question that should always guide you when you finish reading a case is the following: what should the senior manager do? You should try to identify the manager’s objectives, the resources available to reach the objectives, the steps necessary to implement the objectives and the obstacles that must be overcome.

**Course objectives**

1) Provide students with an understanding of how public, private, and nonprofit organizations differ from one another.
2) Enhance understanding of core competencies necessary to shape the organizational environment (broadly defined).
3) Increase awareness of the managerial tools and strategies available to the manager, and the conditions under which certain practices may be used to improve overall organizational effectiveness and achieve programmatic results.

**Skills**

Some of the skills that will be reinforced in the course include:

1) **Analytic, integrated and systematic approaches to problem solving.** In addition to what you have already learned from previous courses, you will also be introduced to organization and management analytic frameworks, and strategies and tools to reinforce your abilities to diagnose management problems and prescribe solutions.

2) **Political skills.** You will be exposed to cases where you can observe and understand the politics of bargaining, negotiation and the management of conflict.

3) **Management skills.** You will also be exposed to cases where you will have the opportunity to learn management skills such motivating, delegating, organizing, staffing, and evaluating.

4) **Communication skills and ethical reasoning.** You will be given opportunities to reinforce your written and oral communication / persuasion / rhetorical skills as well as opportunities to practice ethical reasoning in managerial situations.

**Assessment**

1) **Participation in class discussions (15%).** You will be assessed in terms of your contribution to case and required readings discussions. Please read them before coming to class and be prepared to be an active participant in these discussions. If you are not in class, by definition, you cannot participate. I will often call on you to describe the key takeaways from the readings. Cases involve active participation. It is best to read the cases at least twice before the class—the second time as close to the class session as possible.
2) **Assignment one (20%)** This assignment is based on the Muni Maintenance case. You are Anne Branston. You have become well known in professional public management circles for your efforts at Muni. As a result, you have been asked to discuss your experiences at Muni. You have a presentation that outlines the challenges you faced including those that you did not anticipate going into the job. In your presentation you offer broad guidelines for public managers about how to turnaround a failing organization. Prepare a five page paper that identifies your challenges and how you addressed them. Describe what you believe are the broad takeaways for public managers that go beyond the specifics of MUNI as an organization. Due October 4, 2017. Late papers will not be accepted.

3) **Assignment two (20%)** Select a government agency that you are familiar with or a government agency that interests you. Imagine that you are a senior manager in that organization responsible for “monitoring and improving organizational performance.” How will you accomplish this objective? What are some of the indicators and measures that you will use as you try to accomplish this task? Describe in a four to five page paper. You will likely have to do additional reading to complete this assignment. Due November 29, 2017. Late papers will not be accepted.

4) **Assignment three (20%)** You will be assigned one of the questions (in italics) on the syllabus. This will be done randomly at the first class. Your responsibility is to prepare an answer to the question based on your research which you will deliver orally to the class (approximately 10 minutes followed by questions from the class and the instructor) as well as a three to four page memo and one page executive summary that will be handed to the class at the beginning of your oral presentation. You may use slides (no more than four), organization charts, handouts, etc. as part of your presentation.

5) **Final examination (30%).** The final examination will be comprehensive and include questions that cover one or more subjects from the beginning of the course. The final examination will be a take-home examination and you will have two days to complete it.

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**Academic integrity:** “Every student has the responsibility to become familiar with the standards of academic integrity at the University. Faculty members must specify in their syllabi information about academic integrity, and may refer students to this policy for more information. Nonetheless, student claims of ignorance, unintentional error, or personal or academic pressures cannot be excuses for violation of academic integrity. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the standards and behaving accordingly, and UAlbany faculty are responsible for teaching, modeling and upholding them. Anything less undermines the worth and value of our intellectual work, and the reputation and credibility of the University at Albany degree.” (University’s Standards of Academic Integrity Policy, Fall 2013)
Class format

Classes are designed to be interactive. I will often use a PowerPoint (PPT) presentation to present concepts and outline readings. This will be usually be followed by a case analysis (or two) and/or an in-class exercise. Cases are drawn from several case banks. Your responsibility is to read and prepare the case carefully and come to class prepared to actively participate in case discussion and analysis. I will send a few questions to the class via email about the readings and the cases. You should be prepared to answer these questions in class. If you are unprepared you will be considered absent from the class. A few rules for the classroom:

- Attendance is required. Three unexcused absences will result in a failing grade. Excused absences include sickness or family emergencies. Work and internship conflicts are not legitimate excuses.
- Computers, IPADs and smart phones may be used to take notes and other activities related to the class session ONLY. They are not to be used for checking your email, Facebook, etc. during the class. If you violate this rule I will ask you to leave the class and this will constitute an unexcused absence.
- During class discussion courtesy, respect and professionalism are expected.

Required Readings

Readings include journal articles, unpublished papers, government documents, and cases. All of the readings are on Blackboard with the exception of cases marked HP that must be purchased from the website below:

http://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/66121628

About the Instructor

Jeffrey D. Straussman is Professor of Public Administration and Policy, Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy. Previously he was Professor and Vice Dean (Executive Education) at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore from 2011 to 2013. He was Dean, Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy, University at Albany, State University of New York from 2006 to 2011. He was previously a member of the faculty of the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University. He was Associate Dean and Chair of the Department of Public Administration from 2000 to 2006. His areas of expertise include public management and leadership, public expenditure management and administrative reform in developing and transitional countries. In 1992 he was a Fulbright Scholar at the Budapest University of Economic Sciences (now called Corvinus University) where he taught public management and policy analysis and assisted Hungarian faculty in the development of a public affairs department. He has lectured and consulted internationally on subjects including managing for performance, leadership, public budgeting, and public affairs education. His work has taken him to Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Israel, Venezuela, Italy, Czech Republic, China, Bulgaria, Brazil, Portugal, Russia, Jordan, Lebanon, Zimbabwe, Kazakhstan, Thailand, Malaysia, India, and Vietnam.

Straussman received his B.A. in political science from Hofstra University, a M.A. in political science from Hunter College, and his Ph.D. in political science from the Graduate Center, City University of New York. He is a Fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration.

**Public Organizations, Public Managers, and Public Value** 8/30 and 9/6

**Reading:**


**Cases:**

Granite City Building Inspectors (sent to you via email before first class--August 30th)

Ellen Schall and the Department of Juvenile Justice

Massachusetts Department of Revenue (A) and (B)

**Question 1:** Moore’s concept of public value is abstract. Show how it can describe one government organization of your choice. Next, assume you are the head of that organization. How will you communicate your idea of public value to the employees and the public?

**Strategy** 9/13

**Reading:**


**Cases:**

Massachusetts Department of Revenue (C) and (D)

Budget Woes and Worse Ahead…Pine Street Inn, Boston’s Iconic Homeless Shelter, Re-Thinks Its Strategy

**Question 2:** Select a government agency of your choice and assume that you are the head of that agency. Describe how Porter’s five forces model helps you outline your strategy.

**Stakeholders**

**Reading:**


Freeman, R. and Mc Vea, J. (nd) *A Stakeholder Approach to Strategic Management* (Darden working paper 01-02).


**Case:**

Rebuilding the New Orleans Public Schools: Turning the Tide? (abridged)

**Question 3:** You are a senior advisor to the new president of the University at Albany. He wants you to brief him about the university’s stakeholders and, in particular, he wants to know which ones are more influential and which ones less so.

**Organization Culture**

**Reading:**

Chatman, J. and Cha, S. (2002). *Leading by Leveraging Culture*

The example of Chiune Sugihara

http://www.eagleman.com/sugihara/

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kAwqhytNAjY

Cases:

Muni Maintenance

Massachusetts Department of Revenue (E)

**Question 4:** Select a government agency of your choice and describe the essential features of its culture. Assume that you are the new head of the agency. Are there any aspects it the culture that you will try to change?

**ASSIGNMENT ONE DUE**

**Managing and Motivating People**

**Reading:**


**Cases:**

Karen Hannen and Robert Welch

Homestead Airforce Base

Massachusetts Department of Revenue (F)

**Question 5:** You are the head of a government unit that is staffed by highly trained specialists with advanced university degrees in the sciences. Based on research that you have read, what are likely to be the best methods to motivate your employees?
Managing Conflict and Negotiation in a Networked Environment

**Reading:**


**Cases:**

Homelessness in Harvard Square: Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration in Action (HP)

Goodbye to Happy Hour

**Question 6:** Imagine that you are a senior manager tasked with forming an inter-agency team to brainstorm solutions to the opioid epidemic in New York. What criteria will you use in deciding who to select for your team?

Managing Ethical Complexities

**Reading:**


**Cases:**

An Interview with Al Zuck

Atlanta Schools (HP)

**Question 7:** Are Codes of Conduct for government employees effective?
Managing Across Sectors

Reading:


Cases:

Oklahoma Milestones Reimbursement System: Paying for What You Get

Coast Guard Deepwater Program (IBM Business of Government report)

Political and Organizational Constraints on Policy Implementation 11/8

Reading:


Cases:

California Assistance Adoption Program

Costs and Constraints in the Arizona Inmate Medical Transport System

Obtaining Compliance from Program Targets 11/15


Soman, D. The Last Mile: Using Behavioural Insights to Create Value.
Question 8: You are the new Commissioner of Health in New York. Based on recent evidence (especially from Mexico), it seems that a consumption tax on sugary soft drinks has a positive effect on childhood obesity. However, this idea, floated by a previous commissioner under Governor Patterson went nowhere. What will you do differently?

Managing for Performance

Reading:


Materials on Compstat

Cases:

NYPD New

Massachusetts Department of Revenue (G)

Question 9: How would you apply the lessons from Police Commissioner Bratton to “soft” agencies such as social services or aging?

ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE

Alternative transformation journeys: what went right, what went wrong

Reading:


Case:

Michelle Rhee’s IMPACT on the Washington D.C. Public Schools (HP)