

**University of Washington Bothell  
Master of Arts in Policy Studies**

BPOLST 504: Organizational Theory:  
Understanding and Managing Contemporary Organizations in Policy Environments

Fall Quarter, 2005. 5:45-10pm, Thursdays UW1-070

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**Introduction**

This course will provide you with a strong foundation in understanding the nature and processes of modern organizations. We will study how culture, leadership, and resources of contemporary private and public organizations shape the structure and outcome of policies. We will investigate real-world practical issues of organizational management and apply theory-based knowledge in a variety of local, regional, and global challenges.

There will be an emphasis on critical analysis of the relationships within private firms and public agencies and their relationship to policy. Analysis of leadership styles, the approaches employers and employees use to handle conflict and distribute gains within the agency and their impact on policy will be included. Beyond the internal mechanisms of agencies, we will also critique the effectiveness of how private firms and public agencies work together to manage macro-level policies.

**Saturday Workshops**

In order to give you plenty of time to submit your capstone proposals due on November 1<sup>st</sup>, and also learn how to complete a human subject review application, we will have two half-day Saturday workshops devoted to each, respectively. The workshops run from 9am-12pm. Coffee, rolls, and juice will be provided.

Schedule for Saturday Workshops:

1. October 8th      Capstone Development Workshop
2. November 5th    Human Subjects Review Workshop

## Books

The following books have been reserved for you to purchase at the University Bookstore.

1. *Smoking and Politics: Policy Making and the Federal Bureaucracy* (5th Edition) (Paperback) by A. Lee Fritschler, James M. Hoefler. Prentice Hall.
2. *Public Organization Management* by Jamil Jreisat. Praeger Publishing.
3. *The Modern Firm: Organizational Design for Performance and Growth*. By John Roberts. Oxford University Press.
4. *Weirdos in the Workplace : The New Normal--Thriving in the Age of the Individual*. By John Putzier. (Financial Times Prentice Hall Books) (Paperback)

## Articles

In addition to the books required for this class, there are a number of articles that have been assigned as well. These will be placed online for you to download and print at your convenience through the blackboard site. The site for this class is available through blackboard. There will be additional news worthy articles that are very short that we may pass out in class that highlight the theoretical and substantive claims analyzed in class. These will be provided to you in plenty of time for you to read through blackboard.

## Assignments

There will be weekly homework as well as a take home exam that we will expect you to complete in order to get credit for this class. In order to successfully acquire credit you must achieve at least a 2.7.

The breakdown of credits is as follows:

- **Weekly Exercises: 20%** based on the content and application of the assigned reading: Questions will be posted to the course web site on Friday of the week prior to the date the readings will be discussed in class. Students should write answers to the questions (maximum of 200 words per question) and be prepared to discuss them in class. We will collect your answers and grade them at random intervals during the quarter, so that each student submits a total of four sets. We will collect one in October, two in November, and one in December.
- **Comprehensive Final Exam: 35%** Take-home, consisting of three 500-word essays and several short-answer questions, to be posted by Monday, December 5, and due Thursday, December 15.
- **Capstone Proposal 20% Rough Draft Due October 18<sup>th</sup> (not graded), Final Draft due November 1<sup>st</sup> (graded).**
- **Participation in Class Discussions: 25 %**  
Engaging in class discussion and group exercises are important components of this class. Well thought out questions, comments as well as participation in small groups and full class will reflect in your class participation grade.

\* Please be aware of the University of Washington's Student Code of Conduct. It can be accessed at: [http://www.uwb.edu/safety/uwb\\_rights.pdf](http://www.uwb.edu/safety/uwb_rights.pdf)

## **Class Schedule**

**Be sure to complete all readings before the scheduled class meeting!**

### **Thursday, September 29th                      Introduction**

Introductions and logistics  
Lecture: What is an Organization?  
Discussion and self-assessment  
What is an organization?

### **Thursday, October 6th                      Models of Individual Decision Making**

Reading:

- *The Paradox of Choice: Why More is Less*. 2004. Barry Schwarz, Chapters 1-2
- *The Wisdom of Crowds*. 2004. James Surowiecki. Chapter 1
- Jreisat, *Public Organization Management*, pp. 5-7, Chapter 2
- Putzier, *Weirdos in the Workplace*. Chapter 1.

Discussion – Are you a satisficer or maximizer? Why does it matter?

### **Thursday, October 13<sup>th</sup>                      Decisionmaking: Individuals and Groups**

Reading:

- Jreisat, *Public Organization Management*, Chapters 5, 7, and 8
- “Groupthink: The Desperate Drive for Consensus at Any Cost.” By Irving Janus. From *Classics of Organization Theory*, Sixth Edition. Jay Shafritz et al. Belmont, CA; Wadsworth Publishing. 2005.

Case Study: Decision making in response to crisis: Apollo 13 (Film and group exercise)

**-DUE-** Draft of Capstone Proposal on October 17th, 2005. Please send copy by email to us for review and comment.

### **Thursday, October 20<sup>th</sup>                      Organizational Design and Structure**

Reading:

- Fritschler, *Smoking and Politics*, Chapters 1 & 2
- Roberts, *Modern Firm*, Chapters 1 & 2

Case Studies: Nokia, Federal Trade Commission. Be prepared for group exercise.

**Thursday, October 27<sup>th</sup>                      Federal Bureaucracy—Oversight vs. Autonomy**

Reading:

- Fritschler, *Smoking and Politics*, Chapters 3-8

Case Study: Crafting Regulation of the Tobacco Industry.

-DUE- Capstone Proposal to MAPS office Tuesday, November 1<sup>st</sup>-

**Thursday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>                      Human Relations and Cooperation: Market Failure, Agency, and the Problem of Motivation**

Reading:

- Jreisat, *Public Organization Management*, Chapter 6
- Roberts, *Modern Firm*, Chapters 3 and 4

Case Study: Motivation in the workplace.

**Thursday, November 10<sup>th</sup>                      Models of Leadership**

Reading:

- Jreisat, *Public Organization Management*, Chapter 9
- “What Makes a Leader?” Daniel Goleman. *Harvard Business Review*. January 2004.
- On George Washington. 1776. David McCullough. New York: Simon and Schuster. 2005. Selected Chapters.
- “Lincoln’s Great Depression.” Joshua Wolf Shenk. *Atlantic Monthly*. October, 2005.

Case Study: What is an effective leader? PBS Documentary: Martin Luther King  
Pop culture’s “leaders” consider: BBC’s *The Office*.

**Thursday, November 17<sup>th</sup>                      Organizational Culture**

Reading:

- “Changing Organizational Cultures.” Harrison M. Trice and Janice M. Beyer. From *Classics of Organization Theory*. Jay M. Shafritz et al. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing. 2005.
- Jreisat, *Public Organization Management*, Chapter 10
- Putzier, *Weirdos in the Workplace*, Chapter 2

Case Study: Managing Creative People

**Thursday, November 24<sup>th</sup>**

**No Class—Thanksgiving Break**

Happy Thanksgiving!

**Thursday, December 1st**

**Managing Organizational Change and  
Harnessing the Creativity of Employees**

Reading:

- “Ambidextrous Organizations: Managing Evolutionary and Revolutionary Change.” Michael L. Tushman and Charles A. O’Reilly III. *California Management Review*. Summer 1996.
- Jreisat, *Public Organization Management*, Chapter 11.
- Putzier, *Weirdos in the Workplace*, Chapters 3-4.
- Articles on Microsoft and Sony—To be distributed in class.

Case Study: Organizational change at Sony and Microsoft

**Thursday, December 8th**

**When Organizations Fail: The Enron Collapse  
and What We can Learn from It**

Reading:

- “Gaming California” from: *The Smartest Guys in the Room: The Amazing Rise and Scandalous Fall of Enron*. Bethany McLean and Peter Elkind. New York: Portfolio Books. 2003
- “The Fall of Enron.” Paul M. Healy and Krishna G. Palepu. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*. Spring 2003; p.3-26.

PBS Documentary: *Blackout*

--Hand Out Take Home Final

**Thursday, December 15th**

Final exams due in class at 5:45.

Have a great winter break!