Trachtenberg School of Public Policy & Public Administration

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Draft Syllabus

The Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration

Spring, 2015

Course Number: PPA 6085, Section 15

Course Title: Innovation in the Public Sector

Time and Place: Tuesdays 6:10-8:00pm, MPA building, Room 603 (**Please note that we will not meet in the assigned classroom #170, 1776 G St. Instead, we will meet in a conference room (603) in the MPA building.**)

Professor: Patricia McGinnis

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202-669-2990

Office hours: Tuesday after 2pm by appointment; other times can also be scheduled

Overview:

Innovation is a term, derived from the Latin verb*, innovare*, which means to renew or change.

Public Sector Innovation is change that has impact in the public interest.

In this course, we will look at public sector innovation in three interrelated dimensions:

1. **Policy**—designing new services, products or approaches to improve outcomes for the public (the what);

2. **Execution**—changing how we manage people, budgets, processes and other resources to improve outcomes for the public (the how); and

3. **Communication**—understanding and engaging the people, who, as customers, citizens, employees/colleagues, stakeholders or potential partners (the who), have an important role in the design, management and improvement of public programs.

We will explore real world leadership, management and communications practices by analyzing case studies and current challenges facing the public sector.

The class discussions will be interactive, with guest speakers invited to talk about case examples. Analysis, insights and recommendations will be presented in short memos, individual and team presentations, and a final memo to a public sector leader.

Key elements of Public Sector Innovation to be explored in this course:

- **Leadership** that cultivates, encourages and recognizes creativity, collaboration, evidence based learning from successes and failures, understanding of context, communication and feedback, and accountability for progress and results in the public interest;
- **Management** that translates and implements new ideas and policies through effective, accountable and collaborative actions that are designed to improve performance and results in the public interest;
- **Accountability** for improving performance by testing old and new approaches, assessing what works and what doesn't, and sharing experience and insights to spread successes and avoid pitfalls.
- **Dynamic Communications** that engage internal and external partners, stakeholders and customers in the design, implementation and evaluation of new approaches to achieve important public goals and to foster learning, renewal and change in the public interest;

At a time when public confidence in government is at a low point, Innovation is not the word that comes to mind when most people describe the public sector. On the other hand, survey research has shown that when Americans are reminded of past innovations and successes of government, confidence rises and the potential for future innovation and impact seems possible.

Consider the text of an ad, which was placed in the Wall Street Journal a few years ago by the Ford Foundation's Innovation in American Government Program:

They invented the internet…they cleaned up our air and water…they set the standards for safety in air travel… they decoded the human genome…they made sure our children were immunized.

Where can you buy shares in a company like this?

You can't because it's already yours.

It's your federal, state and local government.

So, what does it take to innovate in the public sector? What can we learn from a variety of approaches and examples? What is the role of innovation in the public sector to meet the challenges ahead?

Objectives of this course are to:

- Examine leadership and management concepts that encourage innovation in the public interest and frameworks for their effective use;
- Analyze and discuss illustrative case examples of the development and implementation of innovative ideas and approaches in the public sector;
- Apply concepts and insights through interactive class discussions, short memos, individual and team presentations, and a final memo to a public sector leader.

Student Outcomes:

The course is designed to encourage and enable you to:

- Think imaginatively and strategically about public problems and solutions;
- Work collaboratively as part of a team;
- Analyze issues, problems and solutions based on facts, trends and evidence;
- Understand the importance of context in leading, managing and communicating effectively in the public arena;
- Write succinct, clear memos and communicate effectively through interactive class discussions, individual and team presentations;
- Understand how to hold yourself and your colleagues accountable for progress and results in the public interest;
- Develop your potential to be a successful public entrepreneur.

Course Requirements and Grading:

- **Short memos**: Individuals will develop several short 1-3 page memos on course topics. The purpose of the memos is to sharpen writing and analytic skills. Memos will analyze concepts or problems and apply the leadership and management frameworks and tools in the readings, with specific examples of how they can be used in real life situations.

- **Class participation**: Overall class participation will be an important part of the assessment. Students must prepare for class and actively participate during class. A downward adjustment in grades may be made if a student misses a significant number of classes or fails to actively participate in discussions.

- **Team exercises:** The class will be divided into several teams to lead class discussions on case examples or course topics. Each team that leads a discussion of a case study will also submit a three page written case analysis. Team members will be given feedback from classmates and graded on the content of the presentation and the degree of class involvement in the discussion. More detail on team case study presentations and memos will be provided.

- **Final Memorandum to a leader of a government or nonprofit organization:** Each student will write a 10-15 page memorandum to the leader of a government agency or a non-profit organization. The memo will analyze a significant problem or challenge the organization faces and propose an innovative approach or solution. Students will make short oral presentations of their memoranda at the end of the semester. A short write-up of your topic for the final memo is to be submitted to me half way through the semester. More detail on the final memo, oral presentation and short write-up will be provided.

Your final grade will be based on class participation, short and long written assignments and oral presentations. I will be using the +/- grade system.

- Short Memos   20%
- Team Case Analysis*   20%
- Final Memorandum*   40%
- Overall Class Participation 20%

*Final memorandum and team case analysis to be assessed half for oral presentation and half for written presentation.

Readings:

The books listed below are required for the course. In addition, you will be reading several Harvard case studies and other articles that will be provided electronically.

- Jim Collins and Morten T. Hansen, Great by Choice: Uncertainty, Chaos and Luck— Why Some Thrive (New York, HarperCollins, 2011)

- William Eggars and John O'Leary, If We Can Put a Man on the Moon…Getting Big Things Done in Government (Harvard Business Review Press 2009)

- Joseph S Nye, *The Powers to Lead, (*Oxford University Press, 2008)

Harvard case studies:

Team 1: Moving to Universal Coverage: Massachusetts Health Care Reform: Harvard Business School case 712466

Team 2: Assertive Policing, Plummeting Crime: NYPD Takes on Crime in New York City: Harvard Kennedy School Case C16-99-1530.0

Team 3: Hurricane Katrina (A): Preparing for "The Big One" in New Orleans (1914.3); Hurricane Katrina (B): The Looming Storm (1915.3); and Hurricane Katrina (C): Responding to an "Ultra-Catastrophe" in New Orleans (1916.3), Harvard Kennedy School cases

Team 4: Managing a Press Feeding Frenzy: Gregory Coler and the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services: Harvard Kennedy School case C16-92-1135.0; sequel C16-16-92-1135.

Class Schedule and Assignments:

Session 1, January 13   **Introductions and Course Overview**

We will introduce ourselves and discuss our leadership experiences, insights, goals for the course, team assignments and the readings.

Readings: John Gardner, "On Leadership" pp 1-23; John Kotter, "What Leaders Really Do"; and selected articles on innovation to be posted on blackboard.

Assignment: Please be sure to e-mail your resume and your response to the student questionnaire (to be provided electronically and posted on blackboard) to pmcginni@gwu.edu by 5:30 pm on January 12.

Session 2, January 20   **Innovation: The Policy Dimension**

Reading: Eggars and O'Leary, *If We Can Put a Man on the Moon…,* pages 1-105

Class discussion of Eggars and O'Leary framework and examples

Assignment: Short (2-3 page double spaced memo) to me on the most valuable takeaways from the Idea, Design and Stargate phases of Eggars and O'Leary's Universal Journey to Success (p 11) and application to examples (real world examples and your own observation/experience).

Session 3, January 27

Innovation: The Management Dimension

Reading: Eggars and O'Leary, pp. 106-241

Assignment: Be prepared for team and class discussions of the Implementation, Results and Reevaluation phases, drawing upon examples in the reading and from your observation or experience.

Session 4, February 3   **Team Led Discussion of Massachusetts Health Care Reform**

Reading: Massachusetts Health Care Reform HBS case; articles to be posted on Blackboard

Assignment: Team 1 memo and presentation followed by class discussion.

Session 5, February 10   **The Discipline of Innovation in Challenging Times**

Reading: Collins, Great by choice, pp. 1-149

Assignment: Short memo (2-4 pages) on *Great by Choice* with the most valuable takeaways from the books and how they can be used by public sector leaders and managers, including you.

Session 6, February 17   **Innovative Policing: Managing and Measuring Performance**

Team led discussion of cases: Using Performance Data for Accountability: The New York City Police Department's Compstat Model of Police Management; NYPD New.

Reading: NYPD Harvard cases

Assignment: Team 2 memo and presentation; class discussion

Session 7, February 24   **Innovator's Toolkit**

Discussion of strategies and tools to improve performance and accountability to better serve the public.

Readings: Article on strategic planning, backward mapping, benchmarking, performance management, communications technology and social media, to be posted on blackboard.

Assignment: Short memo (2-3 pages) on the value of tools for innovators with examples of how these can be used.

Guest Speaker: Dustin Brown, Deputy Associate Director for Performance

Session 8, March 3   **Change and Renewal—Big Tests**

Team led discussion of cases: Transforming Government: The Renewal and Revitalization of FEMA, by Steven Daniels; Hurricane Katrina (A): Preparing for the Big One in New Orleans; Hurricane Katrina (B): The Looming Storm; Hurricane Katrina (C): Responding to an Ultra Catastrophe in New Orleans.

Readings: FEMA transformation and Katrina A, B and C cases

Assignment: Team 3 memo and presentation

Guest Speaker: RADM (ret) John Acton, Department of Homeland Security

No class, March 10(Spring Break); note that short write up of final memo topics due March 17

Session 9, March 17   **Importance of Context**

Reading: Nye, *The Powers to Lead*, pp 1-145

Assignment: Short memo (2-3 pages) to me on the most valuable takeaways from the book and examples (other than in the book) of key concepts, including hard power, soft power and smart power; transformational v. transactional leaders; and good leadership (effective and ethical) v. bad leaders.

Session 10, March 24   **Media and Public Perception**

Discussion of case: Managing a Press Feeding Frenzy: Gregory Color and the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitation Services; sequel.

Readings: Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services, A and C; "Government In and Out of the News".

Assignment: Be prepared to discuss case, media coverage of government and impact on innovation.

Session 11, March 31   **Tying It All Together: Your Innovation Toolkit**

Class Discussion of how you can use the frameworks, case examples and other insights from readings and discussions.

Readings: review course readings

Assignment: Preparation of your individual Innovation Toolkits, drawing on course readings and case discussions.

Session 12, April 7   **Presentations of final memoranda**

Session 13, April 14   **Presentations of final memoranda**

Session 14, April 21   **No class; work on final memos**

Final memoranda are due <u>no later than</u> May 2.