

## Syllabus

### Innovation in the Public Sector

#### The Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration

Spring, 2019

**Course Number:** 201901 PPPA 6085, Section 12

**Time and Place:** Tuesdays 6:10-8:00pm, 104 Bell Hall, 2029 G Street, NW

**Professors:** Patricia McGinnis, [pmcginni@gwu.edu](mailto:pmcginni@gwu.edu), 202-669-2990

Frank Digiammarino

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

#### Course Overview:

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

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

In this course, we will explore the role of innovation and specific tools including the use of digital communications and analytics to accelerate changes that solves problems and improves lives across the globe. We will examine the role and potential of innovation in the public sector innovation in four interrelated dimensions:

1. **Policy**—designing programs, services or approaches to improve outcomes for the public (the what);
2. **Execution**—changing how we manage people, budgets, technology, and other processes and 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) who are the owners of government, employees/colleagues inside government, stakeholders or potential partners (the who), have an important role in the design, management and improvement of public programs.
4. **Collaboration**—reaching out strategically to develop win-win partnerships across the public and private sectors and with the public to leverage resources and accelerate constructive change.

We will explore examples of real world leadership, management and communications by analyzing case studies and developing innovative approaches and solutions to 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 encourages imaginative thinking and innovative approaches to achieve significant outcomes for the beneficiaries of public programs and services.
- **Management** that delivers solutions through effective, accountable and collaborative actions that improve the performance and results of public programs;
- **Accountability** for meaningful progress and results in collaboration with key stakeholders and beneficiaries.
- **Dynamic Communications** that engage and interact with internal and external partners, stakeholders and customers or beneficiaries in the design, management and evaluation of new approaches.

At a time when public confidence in the U.S. and other governments is at a low point, Innovation is not the word that comes to mind when most people describe the public sector. Especially in the innovative use of digital technology, governments trail the private sector. However, 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.***

And, across the globe, especially in developing countries, the challenges require innovative policies, management, communication, collaboration and the strategic use of digital technology to make significant improvements in the lives of people served.

So, what does it take to innovate in the public sector? What can we learn from a variety of approaches and examples? What combination of innovative tools and approaches will produce effective solutions to the challenges ahead?

**Objectives of this course are to:**

- Examine leadership and a variety of tools and approaches to 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 tools, 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; change the lens through which you see public problems and solutions;
- Develop a toolkit of innovative approaches to achieve important outcomes;
- Understand the importance of context in leading, managing and communicating;
- Write succinct, clear memos and communicate effectively through interactive class discussions, individual and team presentations;
- Develop your potential to be a successful public entrepreneur.

**Course Requirements and Grading:**

- **Short memos:** Individuals will develop several short 2-4 page memos on course topics. The purpose of the memos is to sharpen writing and analytic skills. Memos will apply the leadership and innovation tools and approaches in the readings to specific challenges and present specific examples of how you can use them in real life situations. **PLEASE SUBMIT ALL MEMOS AS WORD DOCUMENTS.**
- **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 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 set of case

study will also submit a 6-8 page memo to a public sector leader. Team members will be given feedback from classmates and graded on the quality of the written and oral presentation, and the degree of class involvement in the discussion. More detail on team case study presentations and memos will be provided. **PLEASE SUBMIT ALL MEMOS AS WORD DOCUMENTS.**

- **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 address a significant problem or challenge the organization faces and make recommendations, drawing on course tools and approaches. 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. **PLEASE SUBMIT FINAL MEMO AS WORD DOCUMENT.**

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 memoranda and presentations 20%
- Final Memorandum and Presentation 40%
- Overall Class Participation 20%

### 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 Eggers, *Delivering on Digital: The Innovators and Technologies that are Transforming Government*, (New York, Deloitte University Press)

### Harvard case studies:

**Link to Harvard coursepack (to purchase articles and cases at discount prices):**

<https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/595535>

**Team 1:** Ashoka: Innovation for the Public (Stanford Business School Case SM203); Reducing Child Nutrition in Maharashtra, India; From Start Up to Grown Up: The Future of the Israeli Innovation System.

**Team 2:** Health Care Reform in Massachusetts: Impacts on Public Health; Oregon's Experiment with Coordinated Care Organizations; Tom Santel and a Community Based Approach to Early Childhood Health.

**Team 3:** NYPD New; Edward Norris and the Baltimore Police Department (A); Crossing the Thin Blue Line: The City of Moncton's Struggle with Policing Services.

**Class Schedule and Assignments (weekly readings and assignments to be provided on Blackboard):**

Session 1, January 15

**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 posted on blackboard) to [pmcginni@gwu.edu](mailto:pmcginni@gwu.edu) by 5:30 pm on January 14.

Session 2, January 22

**Innovation and Innovators: Types, Value and Characteristics**

**Reading:** The Four Types of Innovation and the Problems They Solve; Eggers, *Delivering on Digital*, pages 1-70

**Assignment:** Be prepared for in-class discussions with examples from your observation or experience.

Session 3, January 29

**Governments going Digital**

**Reading:** Eggers, *Delivering on Digital*, pages 1-70

**Assignment:** Be prepared for in-class team and class discussions of the business models and practices, with examples

Session 4, February 5

**Innovation in Delivery, Procurement and Silos**

**Reading:** Eggers, pages 71-179

**Assignment:** Short (2-4 page double spaced memo) to me on the most valuable takeaways, an in-depth summary of what you learned from one example from the reading, and a description of how the tools and insights can be used by public sector leaders, including you. Please email short memo to me by 6pm on the day before class.

Session 5, February 12

**Bad News and Good News: Cybersecurity and Reimagining Government**

**Reading:** Eggers, pages 179-269

**Assignment:** Be prepared for in-class team and class discussions of the insights from the reading with examples from the reading or from your own observation.

Session 6, February 19

**The Discipline of Innovation in Challenging Times**

**Reading:** Collins, *Great by choice*, pages 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. Short memo due by 6pm the day before class.

Session 7, February 26

**Team Led Discussion of Case Studies on International Development**

**Reading:** Ashoka, Inter-American Development Bank and Digital Opportunity Trust case studies

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

Session 8, March 5

**Team Led Discussion of Case Studies of Health Care Reform**

**Reading:** Massachusetts, Washington State and Alameda County, California case studies

**Assignment:** Team 2 memo and presentation; class discussion

**No class, March 12 (Spring Break); short write up of final memo topics due March 19**

Session 9, March 19

**More Innovation Strategies and Tools**

**Readings:** Articles on strategic planning, backward mapping, benchmarking, performance management and disruptive innovation posted on blackboard.

**Assignment:** Short memo (2-4 pages) on the value of tools for innovators with a specific example of a real world challenge and your recommended approach, drawing on these tools. Short memo due by 6pm on day before class.

Session 10, March 26

**Team Led Discussion of Policing in New York, Boston and Coventry, UK**

**Reading:** NYPD Harvard cases: Assertive Policing, Plummeting Crime: The NYPD takes on Crime in New York City; NYPD Epilogue; Revisiting Gang Violence in Boston; and Going It Together: Coventry Community Safety Partnership

**Assignment:** Team 3 memo and presentation; class discussion

Session 11, April 2

**Communications, Media and Public Perception**

**Readings:** To be posted on Blackboard

**Assignment:** Be prepared to discuss communications tools and examples and impact.

Session 12, April 9

**Tying It All Together: Your Innovation Toolkits**

Class Discussion of how you can use the concepts, 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 13, April 16

**Presentations of final memoranda**

Session 14, April 23

**Presentations of final memoranda**

**Final Memoranda are due no later than April 28**



## Policies in Trachtenberg School Courses

- 1. Incompletes:** A student must consult with the instructor to obtain a grade of I (incomplete) no later than the last day of classes in a semester. At that time, the student and instructor will both sign the CCAS contract for incompletes and submit a copy to the School Director. Please consult the TSPPPA Student Handbook or visit our website for the complete CCAS policy on incompletes.
- 2. Submission of Written Work Products Outside of the Classroom:** It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that an instructor receives each written assignment. Students can submit written work electronically only with the express permission of the instructor.
- 3. Submission of Written Work Products after Due Date: Policy on Late Work:** All work must be turned in by the assigned due date in order to receive full credit for that assignment, unless an exception is expressly made by the instructor.
- 4. Academic Honesty Integrity Code:** Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information. For the remainder of the code, see: [studentconduct.gwu.edu/code-academic-integrity](http://studentconduct.gwu.edu/code-academic-integrity)
- 5. Changing Grades After Completion of the Course:** No changes can be made in grades after the conclusion of the semester, other than in cases of clerical error.
- 6. The Syllabus:** This syllabus is a guide to the course for the student. Sound educational practice requires flexibility and the instructor may therefore, at her/his discretion, change content and requirements during the semester.
- 7. Disability Support Services:** Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Rome Hall, Suite 102, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: [gwired.gwu.edu/dss/](http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/)
- 8. Mental Health Services 202-994-5300**  
The University's Mental Health Services offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students' personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include: crisis and emergency mental health consultations confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals. [counselingcenter.gwu.edu/](http://counselingcenter.gwu.edu/)

## **9. University Policy on Religious Holidays**

- Students should notify faculty during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance.
- Faculty should extend to these students the courtesy of absence without penalty on such occasions, including permission to make up examinations.
- Faculty who intend to observe a religious holiday should arrange at the beginning of the semester to reschedule missed classes or to make other provisions for their course-related activities