PPPA 6004: Managing Public Organizations

**Semester:** Fall 2015  
**CRN:** 63666, 63667  
**Location:** MPA 310 (3:30-5:20 p.m.), (6:10-8:00 p.m.)

**Instructor:** Dr. Jasmine Johnson  
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Office phone: 202-994-3808

**Office Hours:** By appointment [https://jasminejohnson.youcanbook.me/](https://jasminejohnson.youcanbook.me/) (by phone or in person)

**Course Description (from bulletin):**

PPPA 6004. Leadership in Public Administration and Public Policy. 3 Credits.

Organizational dynamics, management approaches, and workplace relationships that affect behavior in public organizations. Prerequisite: PPPA 6001.

**Focus of Course:**

While technical knowledge and skills are a necessary foundation for success in one’s chosen *occupation*, it is increasingly apparent that understanding the behavior of people in organizations, as well as developing a self awareness about your own managerial and leadership effectiveness are the pivotal factors to success over your *career*. The purpose of this course is to help you understand how people and organizations function, based on the latest social science research on work, workers, and organizations.

The theme of using evidence in decisions and organizational diagnoses is based on the realities that despite the vast scientific evidence we have accumulated contemporary managers are heavily swayed by habit, fads, convention and unrealistic levels of confidence (March, 2010; Pfeffer & Sutton, 2006). This course helps students learn an approach to management and leadership which incorporates the utilization of social science evidence alongside stakeholder input, personal expertise and judgment based on organization specific information.

**Learning Objectives:**

By the end of the course, you will have honed the following skills:

1. Identify and clearly define a management and/or leadership problem/issue;
2. Analyze and question evidence in a rigorous manner;
3. Organize evidence to support arguments and recommendations;
4. Make decisions with imperfect/incomplete data within a clearly defined timeframe;
5. Present concise and clear recommendations and effectively defend your positions;
**Connections Across Courses:**
Be advised that you may have been exposed to similar concepts across your MPA curriculum. There is utility to revisiting some of these topics, particularly as you approach the end of your program of study, and have gleaned new perspectives along the way.

**Course Format:**
Scientific evidence strongly supports the effectiveness of active student participation in learning activities (Ambrose et al., 2010; Armstrong, 2010; Tough, 1971) and this course is consequently discussion based. The quality of our class discussions will depend on how well prepared you are and how willing you are to share the results of that preparation with the class. Remember that you (your unique insights and thoughts) are a source of learning to the rest of the class.

During this class, expect your beliefs to be challenged. You will be exposed to social science research that may conflict with your current beliefs or the ways that work is currently being done in the organization you work for (Armstrong, 2010; Batson, 1975). During discussions my job is to co-lead (with the class) discussions on a particular topic. Your job is to actively question your own beliefs (and others’ including the instructor’s), critically appraise evidence uncovered during class, ask yourself under what conditions you might use this information, and if not why not.

You are expected to have read the assigned material prior to each class. We may not discuss all of the readings explicitly in each class. Instead, we want to enhance and build on (not repeat) what you have read. Be prepared to answer questions regarding the readings and more importantly to ask them. You are not expected to have all the right answers in every class, nor are you expected to dominate every in-class discussion. You are, however, required to be prepared and contribute regularly to our class discussions.

While doing each reading you should continually ask yourself the following two questions:
(a) Do I understand the theory and/or principles of this material?

   Note: There is an Ask the Professor Discussion board on Blackboard where questions about readings can be asked
(b) So what? What are its implications? How would I apply this as a manager?

**A note about your Professor**
I am passionate about this course and truly believe that the skills learned and practiced here, when applied in your future careers, will help you succeed. **Being successful as a leader or manager is not achieved by chance, inherent ability, or hiring the perfect staff.** Together I will help you learn how to practice your skills, take informed risks, search for evidence, evaluate your decisions, commit to ongoing personal development, focus on the best in people, and allow yourself to fail and learn from your mistakes – you will be amazed at what you will achieve and the people you will assist along the way.

**Grading:**
Grades will be based on the following standard percentages.
Assignments and Reading List available on Blackboard

**Grade Distribution:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
<th>Week of Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Co-Lead Narrative Reading Quizzes</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>Sign up Sheet goes around 1st Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>Must complete 4 of 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Paper/Exam 1 Developing your Leadership Profile Midterm Paper/ Exam 2</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Sunday, October 25th, Noon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>November 4th, beginning of course time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Wednesday, December 9th, beginning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>of course time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

***Note, I teach this class to approximately 50 students and will need at least 2 weeks to grade the assignments***

**General Assignment Instructions**

**Format**

1. All assignments should be in Microsoft Word, no pdfs.

2. Many assignments are designed to help you build the skills needed in various careers. Each assignment will have a rubric (see Rubric button on blackboard), but, in an effort to replicate the uncertainty we face in real-world endeavors, no sample assignments will be provided. Working through the uncertainty and being creative is part of the learning process.

3. For in text citations please cite both readings from in class and any external readings you use. Use the following format for in text citations (Author name, YEAR). However, a reference list/bibliography is only needed for those readings we have not covered in class.

**Turning in Assignments**

1. All assignments and exams should be uploaded to blackboard (Turn in Assignments Here button) by the time indicated in the syllabus. Please allow plenty of time to upload your assignments to blackboard. Grades are lowered for late assignments. Please see course policies at the end of the syllabus.

2. I will only e-mail those students whose assignments or exams I do not receive via blackboard. If I haven’t e-mailed you within 24 hours assume I received your assignment.
**Course Policies: Grades**

**Late Work Policy:** There are no make-ups for any exams. Assignments turned in late will be assessed a penalty: a full letter grade for anything late, even 30 minutes. **Students will not receive credit for any assignments turned in after 24 hours.**

**Extra Credit Policy:** There is no extra credit.

**Rewrite Policy:** No assignments or exams are eligible for rewrites.

**Grade Dispute:** If students have questions about an assignment or exam grade, they must write a detailed e-mail to the Professor with concerns. The Professor has 1 week to respond and will annotate a students assignment or exam. If questions remain after that the student and Professor will meet in person.

**Returned Assignments and Exams:** I teach this class to over 50 students. Please be patient as it takes approximately 2 weeks to grade across both classes.

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**Course Policies: Technology and Media**

**Email:** I will respond to all e-mails within 72 hours.

**Blackboard:** This course exclusively relies on blackboard for all assignment uploads, grading, readings and other classroom information. Please expect to log onto blackboard at least once a week.

**Laptop and Cellphone Usage:** If you use a laptop during class to take notes, please only take notes. However, you may want to read the emerging evidence about taking notes on laptops [https://hbr.org/2015/07/what-you-miss-when-you-take-notes-on-your-laptop?utm_source=Socialflow&utm_medium=Tweet&utm_campaign=Socialflow](https://hbr.org/2015/07/what-you-miss-when-you-take-notes-on-your-laptop?utm_source=Socialflow&utm_medium=Tweet&utm_campaign=Socialflow)

If the Professor notices that a student is frequently conducting outside classroom activities on a cellphone or laptop the Professor will individually ask the student to refrain from using these devices. If you must take a phone call, check texts or e-mails please exit the classroom. It is extremely distracting to your classmates.

**Recording Classroom Lectures:** Lectures can only be recorded with the permission of the Professor.

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**Course Policies: Student Expectations**

**Attendance Policy:** There are no participation points but attendance is expected in every class. Excused absences must be communicated with the Professor before class. More than 2 absences (excused or unexcused) will result in a letter grade reduction to the final grade.

**Professionalism Policy:** Per university policy and classroom etiquette; mobile phones, iPods, etc. **must be silenced** during all classroom lectures. Those not heeding this rule will be asked to leave the classroom immediately so as to not disrupt the learning environment. Students who habitually disturb the class by talking, arriving late, etc., and have been warned will result in a letter grade reduction to their final grade.
Department Policies in Public Administration and Public Policy 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 [http://www.gwu.edu/~ccas/faculty/files/Incomplete_poli0.pdf](http://www.gwu.edu/~ccas/faculty/files/Incomplete_poli0.pdf) 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:** All examinations, papers, and other graded work products and assignments are to be completed in conformance with the George Washington University Code of Academic Integrity. (see [http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html](http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html))

   Note especially the definition of plagiarism: “intentionally representing the words, ideas, or sequence of ideas of another as one’s own in any academic exercise; failure to attribute any of the following: quotations, paraphrases, or borrowed information.”

5. **Changing Grades After Completion of 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, revise content and requirements during the semester.

7. **Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:** 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 Rome Hall, Suite 102, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: [http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/](http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/)

8. **University Counseling Center:** The University Counseling Center (UCC), 202-994-5300, 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

   [http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/CounselingServices/AcademicSupportServices](http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/CounselingServices/AcademicSupportServices)

9. **Emergency Preparedness Information.**