**The College of Charleston**

**POLS 200-001 -Introduction to Public Administration**

Spring 2009

Tuesdays/Thursdays - 10:50 A.M. – 12:05 P.M.

Maybank 111

**Instructor:** Marguerite Archie-Hudson, Ph.D.

**Office hours:** Tu-Th 3:15- 5:00 P.M. and by appointment

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**Syllabus**

**Course Description**

This course is designed to provide a comprehensive overview of public administration in our American system of government. Public administration is, in its simplest form, the execution of the public laws, regulations, court decisions and public policies that form the core of our constitutional form of government. The course will examine the foundations, organization, financing and management of this administrative responsibility.

Public administration in America is commonly known as government “bureaucracy.” In recent years, however, the term “administrative state” has been used to describe the rapid growth in administrative functions as citizen demands of government have markedly increased, leading to the development of new public policy issues, rapid growth in administrative agencies and major increases in governmental budgets. The growth and complexity of public administrative functions have led to new roles and relationships between government and the private and non-profit sectors.

A second important goal is to create an informed understanding of the profound impact of public administrative processes and procedures on the daily lives of citizens. Public administrators direct, supervise and/or manage virtually every aspect of public services provided by our tax-supported system of government. For example, at the federal level public...
administrators tax our salaries and wages, protect our food and water supply, control how aircraft travel in air space, insure our bank deposits and have responsibility for our domestic security. State public administrators manage our welfare system, supervise highway construction, oversee public education, operate our prisons and license our career professionals. Local administrators run agencies that provide fire and police protection, run utilities and public transportation, administer hospitals and health clinics, manage our garbage collection and disposal, provide parks and recreational facilities and supervise the elections of our public officials.

**Course Requirements**

A. Attendance- Regular class attendance is expected of all students.  
B. Grades will be based on a midterm examination, two short written assignments, a research paper, class participation and a final examination as follows:  
   a. Written assignment # 1  10%  
   b. Written assignment # 2  10%  
   c. Midterm Examination  20%  
   d. Policy Research paper  25%  
      i. Policy paper = 20%  
      ii. Class presentation = 5%  
   e. Final Examination  25%  
   f. Class attendance and participation  10%  

**Required Textbook**


**Additional recommended Public Administration references:**

The American Society for Public Administration. [www.aspanet.org](http://www.aspanet.org)  
The Congressional Budget Office. [www.cbo.gov/](http://www.cbo.gov/)  
National Academy of Public Administration. [www.napawash.org](http://www.napawash.org)  
Public Management Research Association [www.pmranet.org](http://www.pmranet.org)  
The Federal Office of Management and Budget [www.whitehouse.gov/omb](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb)  
State Legislative Sourcebook. Government Research Service, Topeka, KS

**Additional readings**—On January 20, 2009 a new administration will take control of the federal government. Will there be a major reorganization of our federal bureaucracy? What will remain
constant and what will undergo significant changes in the mission and management of the federal bureaucracy? What effect will these changes have on the functions of government at the state and local level? You will be expected to keep abreast of current public administration issues and controversies as they are defined and handled by the Obama administration. In order to stay current it is strongly advised that you read a daily national newspaper. The New York Times and The Washington Post provide very good coverage of national government and both are available online (www.nytimes.com, www.washingtonpost.com) at no charge. The Post and Courier reports state and local government news and is available at www.charleston.net at no charge.

**Course outline and reading assignments**

**January**

Tu 13  Introductions and class overview

Th 15  Defining Public Policy

Tu 20  **No class. Assignment:** The Inaugural Address of President Barack Obama. (Required for Writing Assignment # 1).

Th 22  Defining Public Administration

Kettl, Chapter 2

Tu 27  Defining Public Administration

Th 29  The Functions of government

Kettl, Chapter 3

**Assignment # 1 due**

**February**

Tu 3  The Tools of government – administrative mechanisms

Kettl, Chapter 3

Th 5  The Tools of government – administrative mechanisms

Tu 10  Theory of Administrative Organization- the Classical Model

Kettl, Chapter 4
Th 12  Theory of Administrative Organization - the Classical Model
Tu 17  Theory of Administrative Organization - The Bureaucratic Model
        Kettl, Chapter 4
Th 19  Theory of Administrative Organization - The Bureaucratic Model
Tu 24  The Federal Bureaucracy - The Executive Branch - Office of the President
        Kettl, Chapter 6
Th 26  Midterm Examination

March
Tu 3   Spring Break – No class
Th 5   Spring Break – No class
Tu 10  The Executive Office of the President
Tu 12  The Cabinet Departments
Tu 17  The federal agencies and commissions
        Assignment # 2 due
Th 19  Interagency administration -coordination and conflict
        Kettl, Chapter 7
Tu 24  Intergovernmental administration
        Kettl, Chapter 12
Th 26  Intersectoral administration
Tu 31  Intersectoral administration – Contracting out
        Kettl, Chapter 12

April
Th 2   Funding the bureaucracy
        Kettl, Chapter 11
Tu 7  Staffing the bureaucracy
Kettl, Chapter 8
Th 9  Bureaucratic reforms

Research paper due

Tu 14  Class presentations – research projects
Th 16  Class presentations
Tu 21  Class presentations
Th 23  Class presentations

April 30  Final Examination
8:00 A.M.- 11:00 A.M.
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Required Assignments

Writing Assignment One – On January 20, 2009 Barack Obama will be sworn in as the nation’s 44th President and make his Inaugural Address to the nation. In his Inaugural address the President sketches his vision for the country—the goals he hopes to achieve during his first term of office, the major programs and initiatives he intends to enact and any significant changes he plans to make in the administration of the federal government. You assignment is to write a 3-5 page commentary on President Obama’s Inaugural address. Your commentary must answer the following questions:

1. Based on his inaugural address, what will be the top three priorities of the Obama administration?
2. Will these priorities be implemented through new programs or new regulations or new agencies or restructuring of existing agencies or other means? (ex: a stimulus plan)?
3. How does the President describe the current state of the U.S. economy?
4. What are the basic components of the President’s stimulus plan? How much will this plan cost? How will it be funded? What is the goal of this stimulus plan?
5. Is your initial assessment of the new President’s plans for administering the federal government positive or negative? Give a reason for your position.

Writing Assignment Two – Select one (1) of the administrative priorities defined in President Obama’s inaugural address and write a 3-5 page commentary that answers the following questions:

1. Why is this issue an administrative priority for the President? Be specific as to his reasons.
2. What federal Cabinet or agency will have primary administrative responsibility for carrying out this priority? Will these administrative responsibilities require new laws or regulations?

3. Will these administrative responsibilities entail specific relationships with state or local governments?

4. Provide a brief history of this agency including the public law(s) or Acts that created it, its primary mission, an organization chart and a profile of the secretary who will head this agency in the Obama administration.

**Research Paper**

President Barack Obama has stated the need to reform what he described as “a weak and outdated regulatory system” in the federal government. The agencies listed below have all come under heavy scrutiny in recent months regarding the sufficiency of the regulations that direct their administrative operations. The purpose of this assignment is to help you understand the significance of laws, policies and regulations in the administrative operations of a major agency of the federal government. The agencies from which you will select all have enormous impact on the overall well-being of both citizens and the American economy.

Please review the research assignment options below and select one for your semester research paper. You will then research the agency’s mission, operations and performance and draw a conclusion about its effectiveness in carrying out its administrative responsibility.

Several students will work on each assignment and your research findings will be presented to the class in a group presentation. You will be graded on both your individual paper (20% of semester grade) and your participation in the joint class presentation (5% of semester grade).

**Please select one of the following topics:**

1. The Securities and Exchange Commission-guaranteeing the integrity of the U.S. financial markets.
2. FreddieMac and Fannie Mae – managing the federally subsidized housing (subprime) market –
3. The Social Security Administration – entitlement reform
4. The Central Intelligence Agency – legal rights of enemy combatants

Once you have selected your topic, please answer the following questions:

1. Describe the major laws and regulations that direct the operations of this agency.
2. Which of these laws and regulations specifically govern the topic of your research?
3. What specific program or bureau in the agency has specific responsibility for carrying out the above functions?
4. Is there evidence of specific weaknesses in the laws and regulations of this agency? What is the evidence?
5. What has been the specific effect(s) of these failures? Be very specific about the effects of these failures on the economy/citizens in general or specific sectors. Cite sources.

6. What specific regulatory reform is being proposed by the Obama administration?

7. What is your analysis of the sufficiency or effectiveness of these proposed reforms? What additional reforms would you recommend?

Charts and graphs, reports, etc. are acceptable as appendices and will not be counted against the length requirements for the paper.

All assignments are due at the close of class on the designated date. Assignments sent via e-mail will not be accepted as their receipt cannot be guaranteed due to spam and other unanticipated problems. Late assignments will have an automatic 10 point grade deduction for each day the assignment is late up to 5 days. After 5 late days the assignment will receive a grade of “F.”