

PADM 3420
Bureaucracy and Public Policy
Fall 2025

Professor: [Hee Soun Jang, Ph.D.](#)

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Office hours: XXX or by appointment

<https://unt.zoom.us/j/4857410232>

Teaching Assistant: XXX

Office hours: XXX or by appointment @ Chilton 114

Zoom link:

Class modality

This course is an **asynchronous fully online UNT internet course**. You are able to be self-paced within structured timeline for module instruction. Course instructions are based on scheduled online materials presented on CANVAS modules. I am incorporating synchronous learning by keeping my online office hours. And participation of office hours is not required nor affects grade.

Course Description

The course introduces students to the essential role of bureaucracy in the American political system. The course explores how public administration functions within a constitutional democracy, with a focus on the interplay between political institutions, public managers, and the policymaking process. Students will examine how bureaucratic agencies implement laws, interact with elected officials, and respond to public demands, while navigating issues of performance, accountability, and democratic values. Topics such as federalism, organizational theory, ethics, budgeting, and administrative law are explored to provide a foundational understanding of the policy process and public sector governance.

The course emphasizes critical thinking and real-world application, encouraging students to engage with contemporary policy challenges through the lens of public administration theory and practice. Through case studies, writing assignments, and interactive discussions, students will gain insight into the dynamics that shape public service delivery and learn to assess the effectiveness and equity of bureaucratic institutions. By the end of the course, students will be equipped with a deeper understanding of how administrative systems affect everyday governance and public policy outcomes.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Understand the Role of Bureaucracy in Democratic Governance

Describe how public bureaucracies function within the U.S. political system, including their constitutional foundations, administrative responsibilities, and relationships with the executive, legislative, and judicial branches.

2. **Analyze the Structures and Functions of Public Agencies**
Explain how different types of governmental organizations are designed and structured, and how those designs influence administrative behavior, decision-making, and policy implementation across federal, state, and local levels.
3. **Evaluate the Policy Process from an Administrative Perspective**
Identify and assess how public administrators participate in agenda setting, policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation. Understand the administrative tools and constraints involved in achieving policy outcomes.
4. **Apply Organizational Theories to Public Management Challenges**
Examine key organizational and managerial theories and apply them to public-sector contexts to understand problems such as bureaucratic inefficiency, interagency coordination, and administrative reform.
5. **Assess the Principles of Public Sector Accountability and Ethics**
Evaluate mechanisms of bureaucratic accountability, including political oversight, administrative law, public performance measures, and ethical frameworks guiding public service.
6. **Develop Critical Thinking on Contemporary Administrative Issues**
Use analytical tools to explore current challenges in public administration, including civil service reform, budget constraints, regulation, and citizen engagement, with an emphasis on equity, transparency, and responsiveness.
7. **Communicate Effectively about Public Policy and Administration**
Improve written and oral communication skills by producing clear, persuasive policy memos, case analyses, and research-based papers that demonstrate understanding of public administration principles.

Reading Materials

Kettl, Donald F. (2024). *Politics of the Administrative Process* (9th Edition). CQ Press. SAGE

Class activities and Grading Items

Assignments	Quantity	Points each	Total points
Quizzes	6	50	300
Discussion postings	4	50	200
Midterm policy memo	1	150	150
Bureaucracy case paper	1	150	150
Final exam	1	200	200
			1000

Grading

A: 1000-900

B: 899-800

C: 799-700

D: 699-600

F: 599 and lower

50 Let me

1. Discussion postings (50 points*4 postings=200)

You are required to participate in four graded discussion postings throughout the semester. Each posting is worth 50 points. These discussions provide opportunities for students to reflect critically on course concepts, connect theory to current policy and administrative issues, and engage with peers in an asynchronous dialogue.

Your **initial post** is due by **Wednesday 11:59 PM** of the assigned week, and you must **respond to at least one classmate's post by Friday 11:59 PM**. Your grade will reflect the depth of analysis, clarity of communication, use of course materials, and timeliness of participation.

To ensure meaningful and respectful interaction:

- Be civil and constructive in your tone.
- Stay focused on the topic and relate your comments to the readings.
- Proofread your posts before submission.
- Cite sources appropriately when referring to texts or external materials.

2. Quizzes (50 points* 6 quizzes= 300)

Six quizzes are assigned across the semester to reinforce your understanding of key concepts from the readings and lectures. Each quiz consists of multiple-choice and short-answer questions that test your knowledge of public administration theory, government structures, and policy dynamics.

Each quiz is due by **Sunday 11:59 PM** of the assigned week. Late submissions may not be accepted. Quizzes are open-book, but individual work is expected. Pay close attention to Canvas announcements and module guidance for study tips and scope of each quiz.

Note: Always refer to the course syllabus and announcements for any updates or changes to the quiz schedule or submission guidelines.

Midterm Policy Memo (1 memo = 150 points)

This memo-style writing assignment asks you to analyze contemporary public policy or administrative issue and provide a concise, well-supported recommendation to a hypothetical government decision-maker. You are expected to:

- Identify the issue clearly and explain its significance.
- Use evidence from course materials and reputable sources.
- Recommend a course of action based on administrative principles and policy analysis.

The assignment is due by **Sunday 11:59 PM** at the conclusion of Module 9. Detailed instructions and a grading rubric will be provided. Late submissions will follow the course late policy.

Bureaucracy Case Paper (1 paper = 150 points)

This short analytical paper will focus on a real-world example of bureaucratic behavior—such as a regulatory failure, agency reform, or administrative conflict. You will apply concepts learned in the course (e.g., organizational theory, accountability, political oversight) to analyze the case and assess lessons for public management.

Papers should demonstrate your ability to interpret administrative decisions and evaluate them from multiple perspectives. The paper is due by **Sunday 11:59 PM** of Module 13. Module guidance will include prompts and formatting expectations.

3. Final exam (200points)

The final exam will be a cumulative assessment covering all major concepts and topics from the course. It will consist of a combination of multiple-choice, short-answer, and essay questions that assess your understanding of public administration theories, bureaucratic institutions, policy processes, and governance challenges.

The exam will be open for a 48-hour window during **Finals Week** and must be completed by **Monday, xxx at 11:59 PM**. No late submissions will be accepted due to university grading deadlines. More information and a study guide will be provided in **Module 15**.

Submissions

Submissions should be through CANVAS on the respective assignment page unless notified otherwise. You can generally expect assignments to be graded within a week of the deadline.

Late/Make-up Exams and Assignments

- **Timely Submission:** Assignments must be submitted by the specified due dates to receive full credit.
- **Late Submission Penalty:** Late assignments will incur a 10% deduction past the due date.
- **Student Responsibility:** It is the student's responsibility to inform Dr. Jang and TA, Mr. Subedi, immediately upon submitting late work to Canvas; otherwise, it will not be graded.

- Acceptance Period for Late Work: Late submissions are accepted up to one week (7 days) after the original due date; assignments submitted beyond this period will receive a grade of zero.
- Final Project Exception: The final project paper, due on May 5, is exempt from the late submission policy; no extensions or late submissions will be accepted due to university grading deadlines.
- Communication: If you anticipate difficulty meeting a deadline, contact the instructor in advance to discuss possible accommodations.

CANVAS

CANVAS will be used to supplement work in this course. Checking CANVAS frequently is advised in order to stay abreast of any and all announcements, and changes. On occasion, the instructor will send emails to the entire class via UNT student assigned email accounts.

Academic Dishonesty: POLICY ON CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

Notice of this policy shall be given in all public administration classes each semester, and written copies shall be available in the public administration office.

Definitions

The UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline defines cheating and plagiarism “as the use of unauthorized books, notes, or otherwise securing help in a test; copying other’s tests, assignments, reports, or term papers; representing the work of another as one’s own; collaborating without authority with another student during an examination or in preparing academic work; or otherwise practicing scholastic dishonesty.”

Penalties

Normally, the minimum penalty for cheating or plagiarism is a grade of “F” in the course. In the case of graduate departmental exams, the minimum penalty shall be failure of all fields of the exam. Determination of cheating or plagiarism shall be made by the instructor in the course, or by the departmental faculty in the case of departmental exams.

Cases of cheating or plagiarism on graduate departmental exams, papers, theses, or dissertations shall automatically be referred to the departmental Curriculum and Degree Programs Committee. Cases of cheating or plagiarism in ordinary course work may, at the discretion of the instructor, be referred to the Curriculum and Degree Programs Committee in the case of either graduate or undergraduate students. This committee, acting as an agent of the Department, shall impose further penalties, or recommend further penalties to the Dean of Students, if they determine that the case warrants it. In all cases, the Dean of Students shall be informed in writing of the case.

Appeals

Students may appeal and decision under this policy by following the procedure laid down in the UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline.

Special Needs

The Department of Public Administration, in cooperation with the Office of Disability Accommodation, complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Please present your written accommodation request during regular office hours before the 12th class day of regular semesters.

Course Schedule and Assignments

Note: The schedule and assignments may be revised as the course progresses and new material becomes available.

Module	Topics & Readings	Major Activities & Due dates
1	Course Introduction	Discussion Post 1
2	Introduction to Public Administration (Kettl, Chapter 1)	Quiz 1
3	Accountability in Public Administration (Kettl, Chapter 2)	Discussion posting 2
4	Government Functions and Structures (Kettl, Chapter 3)	Quiz 2
5	Defining Public Administration (Kettl, Chapter 4)	Quiz 3
6	Organizational Theory in Public Administration (Kettl, Chapter 5)	Discussion posting 3
7	The Executive Branch (Kettl, Chapter 6)	Quiz 4
8	Policy Memo Development	
9	Midterm assignment- Policy Memo	Policy Memo Submission
10	Organizational Challenges and Administrative Reform (Kettl, Chapter 7 and 8)	Discussion Post 4
11	The Civil Service (Kettl, Chapter 9)	Case paper assigned
12	Human Capital Management (Kettl, Chapter 10)	
13	Decision Making in Public Administration (Kettl, Chapter 11)	Case paper submission
14	Implementation and Performance (Kettl, Chapter 13)	
15	Accountability and Oversight (Kettl, Chapter 15)	Prepare final exam

16	Final exam	Final exam submission