

University of North Texas

PADM 3420 - Summer 2026

Bureaucracy and Public Policy

Instructor Information

Faculty:	Hyo-Jun Kim
Pronouns:	him/his/he
Office:	Zoom is available after an appointment
Office Hours:	Mon & Wed 1:00 PM- 3:00 PM. Anytime by appointment
Class Type:	Online course
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Please note: This Syllabus can change in response to UNT Policies. If this were to occur, students would be given advanced notice and a copy of the changes.

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

Upon completing this course, students should 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.

Course Structure

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.

Required Materials

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

Course Syllabus

It is imperative that you keep a copy of the syllabus. It contains important information relative to the course including the schedule, reading assignments, deliverables, and grade structure of the course. Furthermore, it contains information I expect you to utilize in the preparing of assignments. Failure to follow specific instructions will impact your grade. I retain the right to alter the syllabus, as needed. While alterations are not planned, if any changes are made to this document, they will be clearly announced at the beginning of class periods. The Department of Public Administration's policies on cheating and plagiarism, disability accommodation, use of laptops and cellphones and student behavior are included at the end of the syllabus.

Course Policies

I expect all students to conduct themselves with professional courtesy, which includes but is not limited to the following:

(1) Reading Assignments: Reading assignments should be completed in advance, and class members should be prepared for daily class discussions. I love to lecture, but at this level of your education your participation is required. When the readings are discussed it will be assumed you will be prepared to lead a discussion and or participate significantly.

(2) Cheating or Plagiarism: In accordance with departmental policy (attached), cheating or plagiarism will result in a grade of F for the course. Any work submitted for a grade should be the original work of the student. **Remember, plagiarism** is a violation of acceptable student conduct. Long quotations should be avoided. Text or unique ideas taken directly from an author (quoted or paraphrased) should be cited and that citation should

include a page number for the text. Violations will not be treated lightly, and disciplinary action will be taken should such violations occur. Please see the professor if you have any questions about academic integrity in general or as it relates to particular requirements for this course.

(3) Late Work: Just as you would expect to turn in a work assignment in a timely manner, so also should you submit class assignments in a timely manner. Late work will be subject to a penalty of a grade-a-day deduction unless an arrangement is made well in advance of the due date of an assignment. There will be a 5 % point deduction per day (every 24 hours) if the late policy is applied.

(4) Respect for fellow students, the field, and the instructor: Although some of the issues we will cover can be controversial and may evoke an emotional response, please treat other students respectfully. When I am in front of the class lecturing or addressing a question from a student, I expect your full attention. This means no talking with other students or in any way distracting me or the class from the lecture/discussion. Please wait your turn if you would like to contribute to the discussion. Do not carry on a conversation with someone else in the class or you may be asked to leave the classroom – And Please Turn off your Ring thingies.

(5) Limited use of GenAI

Throughout the semester, you will or may use specific Generative AI (GenAI) tools, such as Chat gpt, Gemini, Claude etc., for certain assignments, with guidance on responsible use. These assignments help build ethical resilience and GenAI literacy, preparing you for careers in a GenAI-oriented workforce.

In accordance with the UNT Honor Code, unauthorized use of GenAI tools is prohibited. Using GenAI content without proper credit or substituting your own work with GenAI undermines the learning process and violates UNT academic integrity policy. If you're unsure whether something is allowed, please seek clarification.

This course allows limited use of Generative AI for assignments. If you want to use Gen AI in your work, you must disclose its use. Failure to disclose the use of Gen AI may result in a penalty to your grade.

(6) Syllabus Changes: I reserve the right to change, modify, add to, alter, delete, and otherwise rearrange the syllabus to make the learning process accessible and in response to changes in a situation. If this were to occur, students would be given advanced notice and a copy of the changes.

ODA accommodation statement

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of students.

For additional information, refer to the Office of Disability Access website (<http://www.unt.edu/oda>). You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.

Assessing Your Work

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 Friday 11:59 PM** of the assigned week, and you must respond to at least one classmate's post **by Sunday 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.

3. 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 on Sunday 11:59 PM**. Detailed instructions and a grading rubric will be provided. Late submissions will follow the course late policy.

4. 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, July 12, 11:59 PM.** Module guidance will include prompts and formatting expectations.

5. 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 Wednesday, July 22. 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 Week 9.

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.

Activity	Percentage of Final Grade	Points total
Weekly quiz	50 points x 6	300pts
Discussion postings	50 points x 4	200pts
Midterm policy memo	150 points	150pts
Bureaucracy case paper	150 points	150pts
Final Exam	200 points	200pts
Total Points	1000	1000pts

The standard scale below will be used for grading:

A = 900-1000 B = 800-899 C = 700-799 D = 600-699 F = 599 and lower

In most cases, I do not allow students to do extra work (i.e., an additional paper) to improve their grades in the course. This is not fair to other students who are not given the same opportunity. Late homework will be penalized unless the student has a legitimate excuse or crisis causing the delay in completing work (i.e., illness, family death, etc.). Also, I will only grant incompletes or extensions to students who have legitimate excuses or crises and who make requests before the end of the course.

You will lose 5% of your total score if you submit within 48 hours after the deadline. You will lose 10% of your total score if you submit beyond 48 hours after the deadline. Your assignment will not be accepted beyond 7 days of the deadline with no legitimate reasons or no communications with the instructor. Please email the instructor BEFORE the deadline to request an accommodation to waive the late policy.

Course Requirements/Schedule

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

Week	Date	Topic	Major Activities and Assignments
Week 1	May/18~24	Course introduction	Discussion Post 1
Week 2	May/25~31	- Introduction to Public Administration (Kettl, Chapter 1) - Accountability in Public Administration (Kettl, Chapter 2)	Quiz 1 Discussion Post 2
Week 3	Jun/1~7	- Government Functions and Structures (Kettl, Chapter 3)	Quiz 2
Week 4	Jun/8~14	Defining Public Administration (Kettl, Chapter 4) Organizational Theory in Public Administration (Kettl, Chapter 5)	Quiz 3 Discussion Post 3
Week 5	Jun/15~21	The Executive Branch (Kettl, Chapter 6) And Policy memo submission	Quiz 4 Policy memo submission
Week 6	Jun/22~28	Organizational Challenges and Administrative Reform (Kettl, Chapter 7 and 8)	Discussion Post 4
Week 7	Jun/29 ~July/5	The Civil Service (Kettl, Chapter 9) Human Capital Management (Kettl, Chapter 10)	Case paper assigned
Week 8	July/6~12	Decision Making in Public Administration (Kettl, Chapter 11)	Case paper submission
Week 9	July/13~19	Implementation and Performance (Kettl, Chapter 13) Accountability and Oversight (Kettl, Chapter 15)	Exam preparation
Week 10	July/20~24	Final exam	Exam submission

Grading Policies

Grades are based on mastery of the content. As a rule, I do not grade on a “curve” because that is a comparison of your outcomes to others. I do, however, encourage you to find opportunities to learn with and through others. Explore Navigate’s Study Buddy (<https://navigate.unt.edu>) tool to join study groups. Maximize your learning with our coaching staff at the Learning Center. Focus on areas where you are struggling in this course by attending scheduled study group sessions with me the week before each exam. Forward together! Every student in my class can improve by doing their own work and trying their hardest with access to appropriate resources. Students who use other people’s work without citations will be violating UNT’s Academic Integrity Policy. Please read and follow this important set of guidelines for your academic success (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>). If you have questions about this, or any UNT policy, please email me or come discuss this with me during my office hours.

Attendance and Participation

Because this course involves collaboration, participation is essential to learning. Our project-based activities require you to be actively engaged in discussions and group work. I understand tardiness and absences may occur. If you are late in submitting an assignment or taking a quiz, please drop me an email to let me know the circumstances. If you must miss class, please let me know before your absence.

Rules of Engagement

Rules of engagement refer to the way students are expected to interact with each other and with their instructors. Here are some general guidelines:

- While the freedom to express yourself is a fundamental human right, any communication that utilizes cruel and derogatory language based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law will not be tolerated.
- Treat your instructor and classmates with respect in any communication online or face-to-face, even when their opinion differs from your own.
- Ask for and use the correct name and pronouns for your instructor and classmates.
- Speak from personal experiences. Use “I” statements to share thoughts and feelings. Try not to speak on behalf of groups or other individuals’ experiences.
- Use your critical thinking skills to challenge other people’s ideas, instead of attacking individuals.
- Avoid using all caps while communicating digitally. This may be interpreted as “YELLING!”
- Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm in emails or discussion posts as tone can be difficult to interpret digitally.
- Avoid using “text-talk” unless explicitly permitted by your instructor.
- Proofread and fact-check your sources.
- Keep in mind that online posts can be permanent, so think first before you type.
- **Notice: Class recordings are reserved for use only by students in this class for educational purposes. The recordings should not be shared outside the course in any form. Failing to follow this restriction is a violation of the UNT Code of Student Conduct and could lead to disciplinary action.**

For more information on [Netiquette Guidelines](#):

<http://teach.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf>

Generative AI rule

If you want to use Generative AI in your assignments (essays), you must properly cite or disclose its use. Failure to do so may result in penalties or a reduction in your grade.

Standard policies

Every student in my class can improve by doing their work and trying their hardest with access to appropriate resources. Students who use other people’s work without citations will be violating UNT’s Academic Integrity Policy. Please read and follow this important set of [guidelines for your academic success](#), <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>. If you have questions about this or any UNT policy, please email me or come discuss this with me during my office hours.

Note: Students will be notified by Eagle Alert if there is a campus closing that will impact a class and describe that the calendar is subject to change, check the UNT’s policy on emergencies here, [Emergency Notifications and Procedures Policy \(PDF\)](#); [Academic Integrity Policy \(PDF\)](#), [https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/06.049_Standard%20Syllabus%20Policy%20Statements_supplement.p](https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/06.049_Standard%20Syllabus%20Policy%20Statements_supplement.pdf)
[df](https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/06.049_Standard%20Syllabus%20Policy%20Statements_supplement.p).

Also describe the standards for academic integrity in the course, citing the next website https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/06.049_Standard%20Syllabus%20Policy%20Statements_supplement.p
[df](https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/06.049_Standard%20Syllabus%20Policy%20Statements_supplement.p).

Communication Expectations

The primary tool of communication for this course is the Canvas course portal. You should send personal concerns or questions to me via Canvas e-mail. You will receive a response within 24 hours of your e-mail. If you

e-mail me on Saturday or Sunday, you may receive a response on Monday morning. I intend to post grades within 7 days of completing the assignment, quiz, or test. Please visit this site for online communication tips at <https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips>.

Supporting Your Success and Creating an Inclusive Learning Environment

Every student in this class should have the right to learn and engage in an environment of respect and courtesy from others. We will discuss our classroom's habits of engagement and I also encourage you to review UNT's student code of conduct so that we can all start with the same baseline civility understanding (Code of Student Conduct, <https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>).

Technology requirements for courses with digital materials:

This course has digital components. To fully participate in this class, students will need internet access to reference content on the Canvas Learning Management System. If circumstances change, you will be informed of other technical needs to access course content. Information on how to be successful in a digital learning environment can be found at [Learn Anywhere, https://online.unt.edu/learn](https://online.unt.edu/learn).

Technical Assistance

Part of working in the online environment involves dealing with the inconveniences and frustration that can arise when technology breaks down or does not perform as expected. Here at UNT, we have a Student Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues.

• UIT Help Desk

Website: <http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm>

Email: helpdesk@unt.edu

Phone: 940-565-2324

In Person: Sage Hall, Room 130

Walk-In Availability: 8 am-9 pm

Telephone Availability

-Sunday: noon-midnight;

-Monday-Thursday: 8 am-midnight;

-Friday: 8 am-8 pm;

-Saturday: 9 am-5 pm;

Laptop Checkout: 8 am-7 pm

For additional support, visit Canvas Technical Help,

<https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328>.