Focus and Scope of the Course

This course introduces and explores basic issues in the study of public policy in Canada. Not many policy areas can be treated here, but students should gain an encapsulated understanding of the artifactual nature of Canadian governance in a comparative perspective.

The course focuses, first, on the institutional artifacts and societal norms of Canadian public affairs, and, then, on critical issues in policy making and implementation. In the process, the course highlights (1) the variety of ways we can understand public affairs as human artifacts in a federal system; (2) the debatable tendency to treat many life goods as “in care of the state” when in fact they are also coproduced by multiple levels of government and ordinary citizens in everyday life; and (3) why we go beyond the dichotomy of “state and market” to understand the world of Canadian public life.

Items on Order in the McGill Bookstore

The following books have been ordered with the McGill University Bookstore and are available for you to acquire as part of your working library. Other works, listed under the topical outline, can be found in the Course Pack, or are on line.

Course Pack available in the McGill University Bookstore.
Method of Work and Requirements

The lectures will follow the general sequence of the topical outline. The development of effective work habits for independent scholarship is essential if students are to be able to pursue their scholarly and educational interests on their own. Each person will be responsible for sustaining an active reading program. Your readings should be distributed proportionate to the time spent on each topic.

Lectures: Your attendance is required. Specific material presented in the lectures will not be posted and cannot be accessed in any other way. Should you have to miss a number of lectures for reasons of illness or other types of emergency, you must notify me or the Teaching Assistant. The required readings complement the lectures. Hence class attendance, an active reading and listening commitment plus conference participation are required for the successful completion of the course.

Conferences: Conferences, scheduled to start around the 3rd week of class, will be held at various times to accommodate different student schedules. The attendance of the conferences is mandatory. The conferences are meant to facilitate the discussion of issues raised in the lectures as the conferences are designed to examine in greater depth particular questions or controversies.

Grading: For grading reasons, you will need to tell me in writing, and no later than a week after the mid-term exam results are in, which grading system you choose for the course, from one of two options listed below:

Option A: Mid-term exam (25%), conference participation (10%), paper (25%), and final, non-cumulative, exam (40%)

Option B: No paper, just: mid-term exam (40%), conference participation (10%), and final, non-cumulative, exam (50%).

Should you do the paper option, please note that your paper option should come from one of the policy areas covered in class. I urge you to check with me as you proceed. Please remember, papers must look professional in appearance - typed or word processed- containing a title page, authors properly cited for ideas and inspiration, bibliography and a list of sources. Consult a style manual if in doubt. Students who wish to plan ahead may want to devote some days early in the term to thinking about their topics. You should feel free to consult with me before finalizing the paper topics. My office is Leacock 518 but you can see me in class immediately after lecture.

Deadlines:
(1) There will be a midterm exam on February 18, 2020. Please note: there will be no make-up midterm exam.
If you choose Grading Option A, the individual paper is due 9 April 2020.
(3) The final exam is scheduled by the University.
Written work can be done in either English or French.

**Integrity:** McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism, and other academic offenses under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see [http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity](http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity) for more information in English and French.)

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**TOPICAL OUTLINE AND ASSIGNED READINGS**

All forms of human organization are artifacts that contain their own artisans.

*Vincent Ostrom 1980*

When thing do not work as they should, the fault is not men as they are the matter but as they are the makers and orders of [commonwealths]

*Thomas Hobbes 1651*

1. **Understanding the Public Realm in Canada (1 weeks)**

a) Traditional Interpretations, with emphasis on policy formation:

b) Beyond Prevailing Understanding: it is possible to reconcile and bring together universality and diversity in federalism?

c) A union of a) and b): the public realm: the answer to b)??


[optional: A. R. Migone and Kathy Brock 2017. “Academic research and engagement with the

Issues (and Remedies?)

2. Policy Artifacts and Counter-intentional Results (2 weeks)

a) Constitutional Arrangements
b) The Responsible Gov’t Model of the Policy Process
c) Street-level bureaucrats, public services and discretion


3. Multi-lateral Bargaining and Creativity: Over-promising and underdelivering? (2 week)

- The Jordan’s Principle? See also M. Papillon.
Midterm exam: February 18, 2020

Reading Week March 2-7, 2020

4. Universality and Exceptionalism in Social Policy (3 weeks)

[optional:

- Miljan, Public Policy in Canada, 209-233-266.
- S.E. D. Shortt. The Doctor’s Dilemma.
- Should school boards be abolished in Quebec?

5. Social Learning and the Creation of a Public Realm (2 weeks)
Miljan, Public Policy in Canada, 243-277.
POLI 321

- Recall the Oakerson reading
- The Evangeline Cooperative Experience in PEI.

6. Environmental Issues: the case of water (2 weeks)
Multiple-Use Resources and Source of Political Conflict
Water Resource Governance
Pollution beyond Walkerton
The transformation of the St. Lawrence from river to superhighway
Whose fish? Cases from the Atlantic and British Columbia

- Is fluoridated water a threat especially to children?
- Mark Sproule-Jones et al. *Canadian Water Politics*, all except chaps. 5 and 6.

Conclusions

Building an Open Realm:
Does Public Service currently lack a reform culture and appreciation of democratic administration?
Should we worry about the national debt? And the health and food establishments?
Academic Research and Public Service
Whistleblowing in Canada? And the SNC-Lavalin Scandal?