MCMASTER UNIVERSITY
PUBLIC SERVICE LEADERSHIP
Political Science 3FG3-E
Course Outline

Instructor
Greg Flynn
flynngl@mcmaster.ca

Office: KTH 543
Thursday 11:30 – 2:00

Class Meetings
Thursday 7:00 – 10:00
Building: LRW 1055

I. Introduction

This course examines the operations and functions of the federal public service as the organization which implements and administers government programs and thereby translates government policy into the services demanded by citizens in Canada. It is designed to provide students with insight into the actions and behaviours of the federal public service and the opportunities that exist for the exercise of leadership therein. It will focus on the four core leadership competencies identified by the public service as key to developing as a dynamic organization and to be developed in its future employees: values and ethics, strategic thinking, engagement and management excellence. In this context, students will be provided with opportunities to foster their own leadership skills and develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to be effective leaders and communicators in the federal public service.

II. Objectives

The course is intended to give students a broader understanding of the structure, functions and behaviours of the federal bureaucracy in Canada and insight into the potential opportunities that exist within it for leadership. In this regard, the course will serve as a precursor to students considering employment in the federal public service.

By the end of the course, it is anticipated that students will understand the role of the public servant in the functioning of Canada’s democratic and Westminster parliamentary system of government. They will learn about the four core leadership competencies of the federal public service and how they interact to provide for a more dynamic and democratic system of governance. In addition, they will also have a better understanding of and be more comfortable with the concept of leadership more generally, will recognize the various elements of leadership, have an increased awareness of the practices and purposes of leadership and the potential for it and the impact that they may have as employees in the federal public service.
III. Required Texts

Students will be assigned articles from academic journals or other sources concerning specific topics for discussion. These readings will be available electronically through the McMaster libraries. In order to fully comprehend and be prepared for class discussions, students should complete assigned readings prior to class.

IV. Class Schedule

Week 1  January 05, 2017  Introduction
No Readings

I. Elements of Leadership

Week 2  January 12, 2017  Leaders and Followers
No Readings

Week 3  January 19, 2017  The Role of the Public Service

First Weekly Reflection Due


Week 4  January 26, 2017  Environment and Context

Initial Report on Policy Brief Due


II. Core Public Service Leadership Competencies

Week 5  February 02, 2017  Values and Ethics

Briefing Note Due


Week 6  February 09, 2017  Values and Ethics


Heintzman, Ralph. 2007. “Public-service values and ethics: Dead end or strong foundation?” Canadian Public Administration 50(4), 573-602.

Week 7  February 16, 2017  Engagement


Week 8  February 23, 2017  Reading Week – No Classes

Week 9  March 02, 2017  Engagement

Interim Report on Policy Brief Due


Week 10  March 09, 2017  Strategic Thinking


**Week 11 March 16, 2017 Strategic Thinking**


**Week 12 March 23, 2017 Management Excellence**

*Take Home Exam Distributed*


**Week 13 March 30, 2017 Management Excellence**

*Take Home Exam Due*


**Week 14 April 06, 2017 Conclusions**

*Policy Brief Due*

No Readings
V. Teaching Methods

The class is scheduled for one three-hour session per week.

It will employ a combination of teaching methods, including lecture, seminar, group learning and self-directed learning. Student participation will be a significant component of the course experience and students are expected to be both well prepared for and participate in the class. The first two hours of the class will generally be used for group learning sessions while the third hour will be reserved for self-learning, group meetings or other course related activities.

In addition to formal class time, students are invited to meet with the instructor during regular office hours or by appointment to discuss course content or any other concerns.

VI. Evaluation

The following evaluations will determine the grade received by students.

1. Learning Reflection 10%
2. Initial Report on Policy Brief 05%
3. Briefing Note 10%
4. Interim Report on Policy Brief 10%
5. Take Home Examination 25%
6. Policy Brief 40%

Written assignments should be provided to the instructor, either at the beginning of class or during office hours prior to class. As a last resort, assignments can be submitted to the box outside of the political science office. Assignments will not be accepted by the Department of Political Science Office staff or that are slipped under the instructor’s or any other door. Papers received by e-mail or fax will not be accepted without the prior express permission of the instructor on each assignment.

In the event that students are unable to attend class or complete required assignments and have submitted the appropriate documentation to their faculty or received the approval of the instructor for the incomplete work, the instructor reserves the right re-allocate the missed grades to other assignments.

Late Policy

Students should make all reasonable attempts to submit papers on the due date. In the event that a legitimate extension is required, students should speak to the instructor in advance of the due date to make the appropriate arrangements for such an extension. Requests for an extension submitted by e-mail will not be considered – you must speak to the instructor in person.

Examinations and/or assignments related to other courses do not constitute or qualify as exceptional circumstances or legitimate excuses.
Late papers may be penalized at the rate of three percentage points per working day for each day of delay, up to a maximum of one week. After one week, the instructor may refuse to accept any late assignments in the absence of proper medical certification justifying an inability to fulfill academic requirements on a prolonged basis. Papers accepted after one week of lateness, in addition to the daily deduction, will be subject to a further deduction of one full letter grade (ie. A to B, B to C) per each week of lateness.

The instructor reserves the right to not provide any comments or feedback on papers submitted after the original deadline, whether an extension is granted or not and whether any other late penalties are applied.

*Students with Disabilities:*

Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University’s Policy for Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities.

*Academic Dishonesty*

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.
VII. Assignments

1. Learning Reflection – Weekly beginning January 19, 2017 10%

A significant component to developing strong leadership skills is the ability for self-reflection. Accordingly, students will submit a one-page, double spaced reflection paper on the previous week’s materials. Students will hand in a total of ten (10) reflection papers. Each paper that is handed in by the beginning of each class in which it is due will be given a grade of one percent for the assignment. Accordingly, if a student completes all ten assignments on time, they will receive 10% for the learning reflection assignment grade. Only those papers that are handed in at the beginning of class will receive the 1% grade. It is at the sole discretion of the instructor as to when he will no longer accept submissions to qualify for this grade.

Please note that weekly questions must be submitted in hard copy/paper format. Electronic copies will not be accepted or considered for grading.

2. Initial Report on Policy Brief – January 26, 2017 05%

Students will provide a single page summary of their progress on the policy brief exercise, including an identification of the policy area and specific policy problem to be researched with a brief explanation of its relevance for research (initial or continuing) from a public service perspective.

3. Briefing Note – February 02, 2017 10%

Students will write a two-page maximum briefing note on an issue of current relevance to the federal government in Canada. The briefing note is expected to provide a synopsis of a complicated issue facing the government and present a range of options, including a recommendation for action. A more detailed format for the brief will be provided to students in class by the middle of January.

4. Interim Report on Policy Brief – March 02, 2017 10%

Students will provide a two-page summary of their progress on the policy brief exercise, including a tentative definition of the policy problem, an identification of the range of stakeholders involved and the potential policy options or solutions to be researched.

5. Take Home Examination – Due March 30, 2017 25%

The final take home exam will be based on all materials covered in the lectures, seminars, discussions, practical exercises and assigned readings throughout the semester. It will provide the students with an opportunity to apply the course material they have learned over the course of the year in a general fashion and cover as much material as possible.
As this is an exam, it is due one March 30, 2017 and there will be no extensions or accommodations for any reason, including work in other courses, and MSAFs cannot be used to extend the deadline. As such, please plan your course and other work schedules accordingly.

6. Policy Brief – Due April 06, 2017 40%

Students will work in groups of four to provide a detailed policy brief along with supporting documentation outlining the issue, the positions of various stakeholders, the range and basis for various policy options, their recommendations for action as well as a suggestion on how to measure success of the recommended policy option. The brief should be comprehensive and involve consideration of the issues from the perspective of the various stakeholders associated with the policy issue. In this regard, students will be expected to consult academic and non-academic sources to research their briefs, including primary research where possible. The brief should be between 35 to 40 double spaced pages in length.

Unless agreed to in advance by all students in the group and the instructor, students will all receive the same grade for the assignment.

Statement on Electronic Resources

In this course we will be using Email and/or AvenueToLearn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.
COURSE MODIFICATION STATEMENT:

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.