Course outline

The course is designed to introduce students to the study of, and research in, public administration, in the context of an increasingly globalised world, in which public and private actions intersect in hybrid and multilevel governance regimes. It complements the course 'Public Policy: Theories, Traditions and Transitions', by exploring further the administrative dimension of policy processes.

In the first six weeks of the fall term, we will explore the specificities of public administration as a research discipline by reviewing the key research questions, theoretical traditions and methods of inquiry. The second part of the fall term is dedicated to specific challenges facing public administration in complex, democratic polities: the increasing strength of regulatory governance and the rise of independent regulators, the tension between efficiency, democracy and the rule of law, the problems of accountability in multi-level polities, the effects of globalization, and the role of the third sector. The winter semester focuses more closely on economic dimensions of public administration. The first five weeks highlight a number of issues in public administration that can be fruitfully explored with the tools of economic and political economy research: economic rationales for public intervention, the influence of economic actors and interests on the development of administrative structures and policies, motivation, performance and corruption within administration, and the relationship between public administration and development. The remainder of the term tackles the problems of financing and implementation of public policy projects: how are responsibilities divided among different levels of government, how the budgets come about, and how the decisions over the structure of taxation, privatization and risk management influence the provision of public goods.

The course takes the form of an interactive discussion seminar. The discussions are structured around the readings which are specified in advance for every weekly topic. The literature marked as „core reading” must be read by all course participants. Each student must, in addition, read at least one of the selected additional readings (each student should choose a different text) which will be presented and discussed during seminars. The students are also strongly encouraged to bring in materials for discussion from their own field of research and relate the themes discussed in the course to the development of their PhD project (‘tasks’).

Aims

The course aims to

- familiarize the students with the classic contributions and new research perspectives in the field of public administration
- identify and address core issues in public governance, through a comparative approach and bearing in mind of the challenges posed by global processes
- discuss public policy challenges in specific administrative areas (health, social insurance, taxation, energy, financial market, sustainability, diversity, etc.), of interest to the students

Learning outcomes

By the end of the course students should be able to:

- critically engage various disciplinary perspectives and theoretical approaches to the study of public administration and governance;
• understand the core theories, concepts and approaches used in various subfields of public administration;
• critically assess various administrative systems and modes of governance in specific policy contexts.

Communication and course materials
All core readings are available on the course website on e-learning.

Assessment
Class participation (10 %)
Class activity Fall term (15 %)
Class activity Winter term (15 %)
Course paper (50 %)

Participation includes active presence in all sessions, and familiarity with the required readings.
Class activity may include activity one larger presentation (based on 2 or more readings) or two smaller presentations (based on 1 core reading). The students are also encouraged to bring in empirical illustrations and debates from their own research which are relevant to the weekly topics. Presenters are required to submit their presentation outline (or draft) to instructor 2 days in advance of the class.
The course paper is due at the end of the final exam period in March 2015 and should be 5,000 words long.

General readings (indicative list)
Aberbach et al (1981) Bureaucrats and Politicians in Western Democracies
Lane, J.E. (2009). State Management – An enquiry into models of public administration and management (Routledge)


Peters, B.G. and Pierre, J. (eds), Handbook of Public Administration (Sage)


R.J Stillman (2009), Public Administration - Concepts and cases (9th ed)

D. Waldo (1948), The Administrative State (http://ia700306.us.archive.org/34/items/administrativest030066mbp/administrativest030066mbp.pdf)

---

**PART 1 Fall Term**

1. **Why are we here?**

What is your own background (discipline(s), country(ies)), research tradition(s)? What previous research have you undertaken? Why did you decide to embark upon doctoral research in Public Policy? Why at CEU? What kind of PhD research do you want to do? Why? What do you expect this course to be about? What is public administration for you? How does it relate to your own research?

What are the trends in Public Administration/Governance research? What are the ‘blindspots’? What could be your contribution to the field?

**Core reading**

C. Reichard and W. Kickert (2008), 'PhD Education in Public Administration and Management in Europe’ in G. Jenei and K. Mike (eds) Public administration and public policy degree programmes in Europe: the road from Bologna (NISPAcee Press) 55-80


**Additional reading on research methods in PA**
2. Public administration as a subject and as a field

What is 'public administration'? What is public administration’s role and functions in modern societies and governance set-ups? What are the limits to what the state/administration can do? What is the relationship between the private/third sector and public administration? As a field of study, is it still relevant? Has it not been replaced by (new) public management and governance? What are the key issues in Public Administration (and have they evolved over time?)

Core reading


Additional reading


3. Public Administration research: questions, visions and traditions

How did the (US) ’classics’ shape the way we approach Public Administration research? Did this legacy create specific paths? What are the differences between the managerial, political and legal approaches to PA? What do different disciplines and national research traditions bring to PA research? How does your own research project relate to PA research trends? Which fields does it/will it draw upon?

Core reading

W. Wilson (1886) – The Study of Administration (Essay)


Task: Each student should identify a book chapter/article dedicated to a particular national/regional tradition of PA research (either amongst the reference list below or through their own library search) and present a critical assessment to the seminar participants. They should be ready to discuss these contributions in the seminar and also to expose their own ‘perspective’ on public administration.

Task-related references


4. The comparative approach

Are there different national models of state administration? Can the study of public administration travel? Does administrative legacy undermine the potential of CPA to inform administrative reform? How does practice influence scholarship? What are the benefits and pitfalls of CPA? What are the biggest challenges for CPA? Where is CPA looking for inspiration/to inspire?
Task: Identify a chapter/article which offers a CPA analysis in your own field of interest, read it, assess it in the light of the mandatory reading, and present your conclusions to the class.

Core reading

Additional reading


5. Organizational approaches and administrative structures

Questions: What are dominant theoretical paradigms in public administration? What do organizational approaches bring to our understanding of public administrations? What are their blindspots? Do administrative structures matter?

Core reading
Background reading
B.G. Peters (2010) *The Politics of Bureaucracy – An Introduction to comparative public administration* (Routledge) Ch. 2 Political culture and public administration & Ch. 4 Problems of administrative structure 33-80 and 125-164

Theoretical perspectives


Task: Find an article/book chapter which applies an organizational approach focused on administrative structure to a specific PA/PP issue in your field of interest/research. Prepare a brief assessment to present during the seminar.

6. ‘New’ institutionalism(s) in Public Administration

What roles do institutions play in determining administrative and policy outcomes? How are institutions defined? What is the respective influence of formal and informal arrangements? Are public institutions efficient? How does cost-benefit analysis help us understand policy
outcomes? What else influences administrative/policy outcomes? What are administrative values? How do they matter? How do we know?

Core reading

Additional reading

Task: Find an article/book chapter which applies a new institutional perspective in your field of interest/research. Prepare a brief assessment to present during the seminar.

7. The rise of regulatory governance
What explains the increased importance of regulation? What are the different forms of regulation? What is the respective role of governments, market actors and the third sector in regulation? What are the challenges of risk regulation? What explains the creation and development of regulatory agencies and networks? What role do independent regulators play in public administration and governance? What kind of challenges does regulation pose for public administration? How do accountability frameworks adjust to the globalization and privatization of regulation?

Core reading

Additional reading


Task: Identify one article/book chapter addressing regulatory issues in the field of your research or in a policy area which interest you (e.g. energy, migration, internet, chemicals, financial services, telecoms, etc – see indicative list below) and present it critically.

Suggested readings on specific policy issues


8. The scope for administrative action: tensions between efficiency, democracy, responsiveness, transparency and rule of law

How acute are the conflicts between these principles of public administration? How are they reconciled? Does law really impose limits on governments? How does it contribute to or undermine administrative legitimacy? Do judicial review mechanisms affect regulatory and administrative processes?

Core reading


Additional readings


Task: Students should identify, in their field of research, situations in national public administration and/or governance settings which pose particular legal challenges or where legal frameworks limit policy options/create specific opportunities.

9. Accountability

What is accountability in the context of public administration? Are there different types of accountability? Why, how, how much and to whom should public administration be accountable? How can accountability be assessed? How can it be improved? How does globalization and privatization affect accountability mechanisms?

Core reading


Additional reading (read one of these texts)
10. Public administration and globalization

How is public administration affected by the globalization of governance processes? What challenges does globalization pose for public administration? Does globalization provide opportunities for public administration?

Core reading


Additional reading


11. Participatory and collaborative public administration: the role of the third sector

To what extent can private actors contribute to ‘public’ functions (delivery of public services, etc.)? What theoretical approaches emphasize the role of private actors (citizens, market, third sector, etc.) in public service delivery? How can citizens play a more active part in the delivery of public goods and services? What are the challenges to the involvement of private actors in the delivery of public goods? Are NGOs the new ‘welfare state’? Which theoretical approaches contribute to understanding the functioning of collaborative networks?

Core reading


Additional reading


Task: In your field of interests, indentify relevant public/private actors involved in the delivery of public services/goods/policies, etc and assess their interrelationship, as well of researching these interactions and their effects.

PART 2  Winter Term

1. The Economics of Public Administration

What is the economic approach to public administration? What are examples of the efficiency perspective (transaction cost, principle agent relationships, asymmetric information)? How do they differ in explaining the genesis of administrative structures?

Core readings:


Additional readings:


Task: Find an article/book chapter that discusses a particular problem in your own research area from an economic perspective. Are administrative structures involved a cause or a solution to this problem? What are the merits/blind spots of the economic approach?

2. The Political Economy of Public Administration

What is the difference between an economic efficiency perspective and a politico-economic perspective? What are examples of politico-economic perspectives (interest groups, voting models, bureaucracy models)? How do they differ in explaining the genesis of administrative structures?

Core reading:


Additional readings:


Task: Which political economy approach describes best the current policy equilibrium in your field of interest? Identify the key actors and the channels through which their interests affect the policy and discuss how the balance of power has changed in the past.

3. Development and Bureaucracy

What does public administration contribute to the long-term evolution of the society? Are rich countries better administrated? How big is a good administration?

Core reading

Additional readings


Task: Have a look at the World Bank Good Governance Indicators. How are these related to the countries’ levels of development? Select a group of countries/indicators that are of particular interest to you and have a look at the rankings. Are there any unusual patterns? Which important dimensions may be missing?

4. Corruption in Public Services

What are the origins of corruption in public administration? What is corruption? How to pay civil servants to get corruption low? Is corruption greasing or sanding the wheels of economy?

Core reading


Additional readings

C. Van Rijckeghem, and B. Beatrice Weder. "Bureaucratic Corruption and the Rate of Temptation: Do Wages in the Civil Service Affect Corruption, and by How Much?" Journal of Development Economics 65: 307-31. (‘an economic study how much wages to pay for civil servants not to be corrupt’)


5. Intergovernmental Relations/Fiscal Federalism and Budgeting

Which level should finance public goods? Which level does finance public goods? What modes of financing are there? How are budgets made?

Core reading:

Additional readings:

Task: Identify an area in your field of research that is most prone to corruption. Use the materials presented in the readings to explain how the current administrative set up facilitates or limits the scope for corruption.


6. Taxation

Why do we tax? How do reasons for taxation affect the structure of taxes? To what extent have these changed as a consequence of economic globalization? Who really pays the tax? How can tax compliance be improved?

Core reading


Additional readings


Discuss the problems of financing in a policy area in your field of research. Using the readings from weeks 6-8, discuss how the financing in this field is affected by the structure and levels of decision-making? Have these been changing in the recent past? What would be a more efficient or just way of providing finances for this issue?
7. **Privatization and contracting**

When should the market deliver a good? When does the market deliver goods? Why? Who wants privatization? What is the division of labour between the state and the market? When is contracting out reasonable? What are the effects of privatization?

**Core reading**


**Additional readings**


---

**Task:** Identify an issue within your area of research that has been subject to debates over privatization/subcontracting. Present arguments in favour and against this proposal, and be prepared to justify your own position in this matter.

8. **Insurance, Risk, and Risk Management**

Is insurance a public good? Who wants it? How is it delivered?

**Core reading**


**Additional readings**

Task: Consider your own country. What approaches to risk management are adopted, which debates are hot currently?

9. Social insurance

What options does the state have when dealing with income risks? How does social insurance work, and what are the key policy questions? What social insurance policies are applied around the globe – and do they work?

Core reading


Additional readings


Task: What approach to insurance management is appropriate for advanced societies? What ethical principles should prevail in the debate, utilitarian, Rawlsian or other? What is really the role of the state?

10. Governance of labor markets

How can public policy deal with labor market imperfections? What are the key issues? How do public policy responses affect labor market outcomes?

Core reading

Tito Boeri and Jan van Ours, The Economics of Imperfect Labor Markets, Princeton University Press, 2008, Chapter 12

Andrea Bassanini and Romain Duval, Employment patterns in OECD countries: Reassessing the role of policies and institutions, OECD Economics Department Working Paper No. 486 pp. Chapter 1, The determinants of structural unemployment, 7-36

Additional readings

Marco Manacorda and Barbara Petrongolo, Skill Mismatch and Unemployment in OECD Countries, Economica 66: 1999, 181-207


Bertola, Giuseppe, Francine D. Blau, Lawrence Kahn, Labor Market Institutions and Demographic Employment Patterns, CEPR DP 3448


Task: Consider youth unemployment in Europe and around the globe. What are the key challenges, what are the key differences? What is the role of labro policy, what can educational policy achieve?
11. Policy Evaluation and Evidence-Based Policy Making

Core reading


Additional readings


**Task:** What are the most common gaps in the discourse about policy evaluation in the media and in the policy realm? Consider some of the recent press releases of the EC or your government about the effects of their economic/labor programs, and critically assess to what extent draw on adequate policy evaluation.

12. Wrapping Up