



Emerging Issues in Public Administration

Winter 2025

MPA Elective (4 Credits)

Master of Public Administration Program

MPA Mission Statement: Our students, faculty and staff create learning communities to explore and implement socially just, democratic public service. We *think* critically and creatively; *communicate* effectively; *work* collaboratively; *embrace* diversity; we *value* fairness and equity; *advocate* powerfully on behalf of the public; and *imagine* new possibilities to accomplish positive change in our workplaces and in our communities.

"Be the change."

Class Meetings & Locations:

Weekend 1

Friday, February 21, 2025, 6-9:00pm SEM 2 E3107

Saturday & Sunday, February 22&23, 10am-3:50pm

Weekend 2

Friday, March 7, 6-9:00pm SEM 2 E3107

Saturday & Sunday, March 8&9, 10am-3:50pm

Faculty:

Jeffrey Callen, MPA, PhD jeffrey.callen@evergreen.edu

Course Description:

In Emerging Issues in Public Administration we begin with a survey of contemporary scholarship in Public Administration and Social Theory. We then turn to realtime local, regional, and world events and evaluate how these events are related to public administration praxis and theory. The class is intended to prepare students to be able to face changing conditions (socioeconomic, political, climate, technological, etc.) and to be able to quickly and effectively provide leadership with useful and relevant responses and guidance. Students will bring news and reports of current events to class sessions for discussion, debate, and collaborative response planning.

Learning Objectives:

1. Become familiar with contemporary scholarship and theories in public administration.
2. Ability to apply scholarship and theory to evaluate real-time events through the lens of public administration praxis.
3. Develop and communicate to stake-and right-holders actionable, well-reasoned responses to current and emerging challenges.

Canvas

A Canvas site for the course will be made available by end of Fall Quarter 2024.

Schedule

Pre-session assignments and readings, along with session schedules will be available on Canvas.

Readings

There are no books to purchase for class. All readings will be available on Canvas.

Assignments

Assignment descriptions are below. Assignment details and specifics will be available on Canvas. All assignments are posted to discussion boards on Canvas which allows for you and your peers to see each other's work and provide feedback.

Assignment 1: Contemporary Governance Issue

Due Friday February 21st, @5:59pm.

You will research a contemporary issue in public administration (e.g., a policy initiative, technological disruption, or social movement) that is grounded in contemporary public administration scholarship and theory.

- 5-7 page (double-spaced) analysis integrating contemporary public administration theory and practice.
 - 10 minute presentation in class during Weekend 1 emphasizing theoretical relevance and real-world implications.
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Assignment 2: Individual Briefing

Due Friday March 7th @5:59pm

You will expand on your research topic from Assignment #1 or select a new issue (with faculty approval) and identify actionable strategies or responses and prepare an individual briefing document summarizing your findings.

- 2-3 page briefing document (single-spaced, 1,250-1,500 words):
 1. Briefly describe the issue including background, context, what is presently happening, and relevance to public administration.
 2. Outline and describe key challenges and opportunities
 3. Recommend actionable solutions or responses, grounded in public administration theory and research.
 4. Summary.

Assignment 3: Rapid Response Group Activity

In Class, weekend 2

In teams, based on thematic similarities from the individual assignments, students will develop practical, real-time responses to contemporary public administration challenges.

- Review and synthesize the individual briefing documents submitted by group members.
- Collaborate to craft a unified rapid response plan for an agency to address a real-time issue selected by faculty.
- Prepare a short (<3minutes) public service announcement (PSA) to communicate the agency response to a general audience.
 - Teams will choose an appropriate format of the PSA for web, TV, or radio distribution (i.e. video or audio).

Final Assignment

Due Friday March 14th @5:00pm

As teams, students will integrate their individual research and group work into a professional-grade white paper and PSA intended to convince an agency or stake/right-holders to implement the team's plan.

- White paper (2 pages single-spaced exclusive of references and appendices):
 - Executive Summary: A succinct, persuasive overview of the proposal (no more than 150 words)
 - Problem Statement: Clear articulation of the issue and why it matters.
 - Proposed Response: A concise summary of the group's actionable response strategies.
 - Call to Action: A persuasive conclusion encouraging the agency to support the initiative.
- Final PSA:
 - A 1-pager intended for the public that summarizes the issue and how the agency is responding.
 - A polished <3 minute public service announcement, delivered as a video, narrated slideshow, or audio recording.

Acknowledgement of the Squaxin Tribe for the Olympia campus of The Evergreen State College

We gratefully acknowledge and honor the Squaxin Island Tribe, upon whose traditional homelands the Evergreen State College Olympia campus is situated. For thousands of years, their ancestral families lived and thrived here. They named Budd Inlet Steh-Chass, and Eld Inlet where the campus is located Squi'Aitle. Today, the Squaxin Island Tribe continues to live on and steward the lands and waters of the Southern Salish Sea.

We also gratefully acknowledge the Puyallup Tribe whose traditional lands Evergreen's Tacoma Campus is located upon.

We respect and acknowledge the Squaxin Island and Puyallup Tribes, and other Tribes across the Americas, and their many contributions to The Evergreen State College (in support of education, Tribal sovereignty, environmental stewardship). This acknowledgement is one small step toward respect and collaboration with the aim of uplifting the voices, cultures and histories of the Tribes of these lands and waters.

Course Policies

Student Work: You are accountable for the work you submit. Within the classroom, all student work, conduct, and expectations are outlined in the student code of conduct, the MPA student handbook, our class syllabus, and our classes social conduct. Ultimately, you are responsible to your public. All graduate work can be considered practice for the practice of public administrations and hence help develop professional habits, embodying expected standards, and containing useful information that is trustworthy.

Late Assignments: Student presentations scheduled for a specific class session will not be accepted without discussing with faculty 1 week in advance of scheduled presentation. Other assignments are considered late if they are submitted more than 1 week after the due date *and no communication has occurred by then between the student and faculty regarding the assignment's submission*. If there is an unavoidable need to turn in an assignment late, the student should contact their faculty no later than the original assignment due date to discuss options. Assignments must be completed by the revised due date to ensure full receipt of course credit.

Human Subjects Review (HSR): *Students will NOT collect original data for this class.*

AI: The Evergreen State College is currently planning to create an implement College wide guidance for the use and implementation of AI tools by students, faculty, and staff. During the meantime, the use of AI is on a faculty-by-faculty basis.

Students should assume that the use of AI is not permitted in a class unless the faculty have

explicitly stated otherwise and provided clear guidelines for its use. Additionally, students should not assume that what is allowed in one class applies to all classes. Inappropriate and/or prohibited use of AI can be considered academic dishonesty under The Evergreen State College's Student Conduct Code ([WAC 174-123-170 \(1\)\(a\) Academic Dishonesty](#)).

If an assignment or activity in our class involves the use of AI, I will provide specific guidelines and expectations for its use on a case-by-case basis. At a minimum, you will be required to document and attach your research and writing strategies, all prompts used, and a copy of the resulting conversation.

Included in Evergreen's Microsoft 365 suite is an AI chatbot, Copilot. Copilot does not share your information and hence has privacy that others do not.

Format : Unless otherwise stated, all papers should be typed, double spaced, 12 point font, and follow APA format and citation style. APA Style <http://www.apastyle.org/learn/index.aspx> Purdue Writing & Grammar Guide <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/> All written work will be of high quality, grammatically correct, clear and without spelling errors. Students may request resource writing assistance from faculty and/or the Graduate Writing Assistant. You can contact our writing support at: EvergreenWritingAssistant@gmail.com ; 360-867-6820 ; LAB I, Room 3016. Also, a guide to student writing at Evergreen can be accessed through the campus Writing Center: <https://inkwellpublication.wordpress.com/>

Writing Style: Washington State has "plain talk" guidelines for all documents, websites, and publications that are public facing. As public administrators in Washington, you are encouraged to follow these guidelines. <https://governor.wa.gov/issues/efficient-government/plain-language/plain-language-guidelines>.

Participation & Attendance: Students are required to attend each class meeting in its entirety. Participation includes focusing on class content, speaking in class and seminar, listening to others, taking notes, completing class interactive exercises, avoiding distractions, and listening to and dialoging with the guest speakers. If an absence is unavoidable, faculty should be notified prior to a class and/or seminar absence.

After one absence per quarter (Ex. 3 hours on Friday is one absence), make-up work will be assigned. Makeup work must be completed by the end of Week 10 of the quarter in question for course credit. After 15 hours (Ex. one weekend) of absences total in one quarter, you may be denied full credit for the course. Also, after reoccurring absences (being late to class; regularly missing an hour of class weekend to weekend), you may be denied full credit. Finally, if you do miss a class, you are expected to do the reading for that class meeting and turn in any assignments that were due that class date.

Credit: Students will receive 4 graduate credits at the end of the course if all requirements have been satisfactorily completed. Students will be evaluated based upon their progress

towards the learning objectives, assessed from classroom, seminar, and assignment performance. ***As an elective, partial credit may be awarded which can only occur after a student-faculty conference regarding course expectations and requirements.*** Full loss of credit decisions will be made by the faculty team. Full loss of credit for two terms of core may result in dismissal from the MPA program. Plagiarism (i.e., using other peoples' work as your own) may result in total loss of credit for the class and may result in dismissal from the MPA program. See the [MPA Handbook](#) and [College statement on academic honesty](#) for more information. Failing to meet course requirements (ex. not completing one or more assignments, completing one or more assignments late, or multiple absences) may constitute denial of total credit at the discretion of the faculty. Students at risk of losing credit will receive written notification prior to the end of the quarter.

Evaluation: To receive credit, students are required to write 1) a self-evaluation and 2) a seminar faculty evaluation. All final evaluations are to be submitted via my.evergreen.edu. Evaluation conferences may occur over the phone or Zoom and should be scheduled with your seminar faculty. For more information about evaluations, see the section, "The Evaluation Process" at <https://www.evergreen.edu/our-learning-approach/narrative-evaluations>.

Multiculturalism & Diversity: Faculty and students will actively work towards contextually weaving multiculturalism and diversity throughout our learning as related to readings, lectures, seminar, and group projects. In a learning community students and faculty share the responsibility for the teaching and learning environment. Multiculturalism and diversity is to be understood as: aiming to promote constructive community discourse about issues of culture, power, and differences.

Technology Use & Learning Styles: We all have different ways of learning. Faculty will actively work towards providing information in multiple formats: tactile, auditory, visual, experiential, etc. However, we are limited to means appropriate for the classroom environment. Surfing the internet, checking social media, reading e-mail, playing with cell phones are not appropriate. Consult your faculty to discuss technology use and learning style options.

Reasonable Accommodations will be provided for any student who qualifies for them through a working relationship with Access Services. To request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact the office of Access Services for Students with Disabilities (867-6348 or 6364). If the student is already working with the office of Access Services the faculty should have received a letter clearly indicating the student has a disability that requires academic accommodations. If any student has a health condition or disability that may require accommodations in order to effectively participate in this class, please do the following: Contact faculty before class and Contact Access Services to receive a letter of accommodation. Information about a disability or health condition will be regarded as confidential. Please refer to TESC's [Students with Disabilities Policy](#).

Conduct & Conflict Resolution: Please refer to the MPA Student Handbook: <https://www.evergreen.edu/mpa/studenthandbook/conflictresolution>

Discuss any problems involving others in the learning community directly with the individuals involved (so long as the concerned party feels safe doing so). Possessing respect for others is fundamental to an open, free, and educational dialogue. All students are expected to support and contribute to a well-functioning MPA classroom and learning community. Behavior that disrupts the learning community may be grounds for disciplinary action, including dismissal from the MPA program. All students will be held accountable for maintaining the highest of academic standards.

We will abide by the [social contract](#): WAC 174-121-010 College philosophy.

We will abide by the [student conduct code](#) (including academic integrity and plagiarism): Chapter 174-123 WAC, Student Conduct Code & Grievance/Appeals Process: <http://www.evergreen.edu/studentaffairs/student-conduct>

We will abide by the [non-discrimination policies and procedures at TESC](#)

Guest policy: Guests are welcome to visit our learning community during class time and seminar meetings with approval from course faculty in advance of each requested visit. It is the host student's responsibility to contact the faculty with details about the requested guest visit and await approval. Prospective students may visit one class meeting of first year Core without advance faculty approval, but must notify faculty that they are present prior to the beginning of class. All guests must abide by all social contract, conduct code, and nondiscrimination policy guidelines as aforementioned in this handbook. Per faculty discretion, guests may be asked to leave and not permitted to return to class if these guidelines are violated in any way including behavior that disrupts the learning community. All guests are expected to minimize their participation in class and seminar discussions.

Inclement Weather: In the event of bad weather or emergencies students should check with for announcements of campus closures. Students can call the main campus line 360-867-6000 to get the latest news regarding a campus closure or delay. Faculty may decide to cancel a class meeting even if campus is open and we will send an all-class email prior to the start of class. Students are responsible for checking email and ensuring viable transportation options are available to them.

Communicating: Email and Canvas are our primary means of communication. Students are responsible for checking their Evergreen email and Canvas regularly.

Use of Student Work Posted to Canvas: Students post their work to an online learning platform known as "Canvas". Our class Canvas site is accessible to faculty and students registered for this course only. The work students post on canvas is their private intellectual property and may not be used or distributed without their expressed consent. Some work may also be owned by Tribal governments, Tribal organizations, or Indigenous communities. Their informed and voluntary consent would also need to be obtained for use and

appropriate cultural protocols would also need to be followed.

Audio or Video Recording: No audio or video recording may occur during class without the informed and voluntary consent of the students and faculty involved.