
School of Government
MMPM 521 / MAPP 530
COMPARATIVE PUBLIC MANAGEMENT
(15 Points)
Trimester One 2008
COURSE OUTLINE

Contact Details

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Module Dates, Times and Locations

Module One:	Tuesday, 19 February	8.30am – 6.00pm
Module Two:	Tuesday, 15 April	8.30am – 6.00pm
Module Three:	Tuesday, 3 June	8.30am – 6.00pm
Locations:	Classes will be held on the Pipitea Campus of Victoria University. You will be advised of your classroom one week before each module by email.	

Note: Course Outline and Study Guide

This Course Outline will be accompanied by a Course Study Guide which introduces each topic in the course; directs you to the appropriate reading; and suggests questions for you to think about or respond to in class or on Blackboard.

Course Objectives

Introduction

1. This course is about how governments develop their public management systems to serve public purposes. As a policy-maker or adviser or public manager how would you use the public management system to achieve policy objectives or reform the system to help achieve them better?
2. The course will therefore examine public management both as:
 - An instrument of public policy: the role of public management in implementing policy intentions in the public sector; and
 - A set of policy choices: what constitutes “good” public management in terms of its purpose and how can it be achieved?
3. The course focuses on public management in OECD countries but if there are participants from other countries in the class, I hope that we will be able to draw on their experience as well. The second-trimester course in Development Policy and Management will concentrate specifically on public management in developing countries.

Learning objectives

4. At the end of this course, you should feel competent to:
 - Form your own views about what constitutes good public management;
 - Advise on the development or improvement of public management systems;
 - Design and argue the case for a public management reform programme.

Linking assessment to learning objectives

Form your own views about what constitutes good public management.	Blackboard Question 1
Advise on the development or improvement of public management systems.	Blackboard Question 2 Essay One
Design and argue the case for a public management reform programme.	Blackboard Question 3 Essay Two

Approach

5. My general approach is to encourage discussion and debate in class. I will introduce topics with short presentations, but the main objective of class time is for you to be able to discuss questions in public management, not listen to lectures. To prepare for class therefore you must have read the Study Guide and the recommended texts.

Course Content

Note: the references are to the required or recommended reading for each module. References with an asterisk () will be supplied in hard copy. References with a printer symbol (≡) will be included in the course resources on Blackboard. Other references can be obtained from the University library. Please also read the Study Guide sections on each Topic before each Module.*

First module – public management and the public organisation

Topic 1: The study of public management

6. Comparative public management: what should we be comparing and why? Cross-temporal and cross-national comparisons. Things to look at: the public management “system” itself (rules, authority and resources, incentives and behaviour); the relationship between politics and public management; relationships between government, markets and civil society.
7. How to argue about public management: appeals to values, doctrines and evidence. The role of case studies.
8. Reading: Hood and Jackson (1991), Chapter 2; Brans (2003); Barzelay (2001), Chapter Three; Jones et al. (2008).

Topic 2: The nature of public management

9. What is public management? The nature of “management” as an activity in and between organisations. The meaning of “public” and ideas of the role of the public sector and evidence on its scope in OECD countries. The differences between public management and generic management in objectives, stakeholders, resources and productive processes.
10. Reading: Hughes (2003), Chapter 4*; Allison (1982)*; Moore (1995), pp 27-56*; Alford (1993)*; Bovaird and Löffler (2003), Chapter 1.

Topic 3: The public organisation and the public sector

11. How has public management evolved? Some theoretical and empirical frameworks for analysis of public organisations, starting with classical bureaucracy and its critiques. The main ideas of New Public Management and New Public Administration.
12. Reading: Hughes (2003), Chapters 2 and 3; Rainey (1997), pp 22-53*; Gruening (2001)*; Denhardt and Denhardt (2000) ☐.
13. Approaches to analysis of public organisations in their environment. How are public organisations held accountable? What is the role of the public organisation in public production? Strategy and strategic management in public organisations.
14. Reading:

Accountability - Hughes (2003), Chapter 13;

Strategy and strategic management- Hughes (2003), Chapter 7; Bovaird and Löffler (2003), Chapters 5 and 6; Johnson and Scholes (1997), pp 137-181*; Laking (2000) ☐;

Modes of production - Savas (2000), Chapter 4*.

Second module – themes in public management

15. Study in this module will be based on discussion of particular topics and comparative analysis in OECD countries: those countries selected for analysis are New Zealand, United Kingdom, Germany and Sweden. You may contribute on other countries as well if you prefer. The approach in class will follow the general one taken by Pollitt and Bouckaert. First there will be a general discussion of how to compare different public management systems. Then discussion will focus on:

- describing the political and administrative systems in each country; and the role of the public sector and the distribution of public functions between levels of government; and
- analysing and comparing main features in:
 - Organisational form and governance;
 - Management of performance and resources; and
 - Civil services and public employment.

16. All students should read at least the references giving an overview on comparative analysis, differing administrative traditions and approaches to comparative study (Topic 1). For the specific aspects of public management (Topic 2) you will be invited to nominate a specific country for study so you can contribute from that country's experience at the seminars. Your reading should focus first on the references related to your country. You may also need to search for material in the Library and on the Internet.

Topic 1: An approach to comparative analysis

17. Identifying basic features of political and administrative systems and roles of the state.

18. Reading:

- Role and size of the state*: Jackson (2003)*;
- Different administrative traditions*: Pollitt and Bouckaert (2000), Chapter 3*; Luton (2003); Rugge (2003); Ziller (2003); Craig (2003);
- Basic country data*: Pollitt and Bouckaert (2000); relevant sections from Appendix of Country Files; OECD (Directorate for Public Governance and Territorial Development) (2007): gateway to individual OECD country pages;
- Individual country references*:
 - New Zealand: Boston et al. (1996); Norman (2003); Petrie and Webber (2001)■;
 - United Kingdom: Ling (2002)■; Wall and West (2002)■; Dunleavy (1989a); Dunleavy (1989b); Hyndman and Eden (2001)■;
 - Germany: König (1983)*; Derlien (2003)■; Klages and Löffler (1998)*; Reichard (1997); Wollmann (2000)■;
 - Sweden: Schwartz (1994)*; Premfors (1998)■.

Topic 2: Specific themes in public management

19. *Organisational structure*: What principles and practices apply to the overall organisation and governance of the public sector? Where is direct political control appropriate and where should principles of separation be applied? What is the appropriate relationship between "separating" and "joining up"? Reading: Rainey (1997), Chapter 8; Laking (2005)■; Gill (2002)■.

20. *Managing performance and resources*: How should objectives and tasks be specified and monitored in the public sector? Different national approaches to performance management, financial management and accountability. Reading: Hughes (2003), (Chapter 8 and Chapter 9)*.

21. *Civil services and public employment*: What are the special characteristics of employment in the public sector? Reading: Hughes (2003), Chapter 8.

Third module – issues and priorities in reform

Topic 1: Models of reform and reform agendas

22. *Reform processes*: what are the main factors driving reform processes in the public sector? Reading: Pollitt and Bouckaert (2000), Chapter 2; Toonen (2003)*.

23. *Overviews of trends and differences in reforms*: How have reform agendas played out in OECD countries? What issues do they raise? Reading: Pollitt and Bouckaert (2000), Chapter 4; Löffler (2003)*; Matheson and Kwon (2003)*.

Topic 2: A case study: Department of Work and Income

24. A discussion of the public management issues in the establishment and operation of the New Zealand Department of Work and Income. On the basis of your reading, please come prepared to discuss the following issues:

- What was the policy environment for DWI: the national employment and income situation and the government policies for dealing with it? What operational tasks were required to implement the policies?
- Why was a merger of the Employment Service and Income Support chosen? What were the strategic objectives behind the merger and the changes required as a result of it?
- What are the measures of success and failure of DWI strategically and operationally? Did DWI succeed?
- What were the management problems in DWI? What problems were there of objectives, structure, performance management, “values” and “culture”?

25. Reading:

Required: Hunn (2000)■. You should read the main report and the following Annexes:

- Annex H: “Benefit Receipt and Employment Assistance: An Analysis of Trends”;
- Annex I: “The Objectives That Led to the Establishment of the Department of Work and Income”; and
- Annex L: “The Performance of the Department of Work and Income”.

Additional: Petrie (1998).

Topic 3: Future issues for public managers.

26. What should be future reform priorities in New Zealand and other countries? A concluding discussion.

Learning Commitment

27. The learning objectives set for each course are demanding. To achieve them, candidates must make a significant commitment in time and effort to reading, studying, thinking, and completion of assessment items outside of contact time. Courses vary in design but all require preparation and learning before the first module. Regular learning is necessary between modules (students who leave everything to the last moment rarely achieve at a high level). Expressed in input terms, the time commitment required usually translates to 65-95 hours (excluding class contact time) per course.

Group Work

28. There is no assessed group work in this course, but you will get more out of the course and contribute to the learning of others (including the course coordinator) if you contribute freely to discussions in the classroom and on Blackboard.

Readings

Copyright

29. Due to copyright law, the School is restricted in what readings it can copy for you. In this outline, I have marked those readings that will be provided within the rules for copyright. I have also recommended two texts that I will be drawing on extensively. Further references will need to be obtained from the Internet or the Library.

How to use references

30. References in the text are indicated in the form Author (Date). You can look up the full reference in the Reading List on page 12 of this Outline.

Readings

31. There are several general texts in the field. All of them are on 3-day reserve in the Commerce Library. Hughes (2003) is recommended as a good introduction to public management¹. On comparative analysis of public management, I recommend Pollitt and Bouckaert (2000). Other general surveys of the field include:

- Rainey (1997): a thorough and scholarly American classic, particularly useful on the contribution that the general management literature can make to the study of public management;
- Bovaird and Löffler (2003): its treatment of some topics is inadequate (e.g. public organisations and human resources) but it contains some useful study questions and discussion topics;
- Richard Norman's book evaluating the New Zealand public management reforms (Norman (2003)) is a useful resource for New Zealand students and has some valuable insights particularly on performance management;
- Ferlie et al. (2005) is a collection of articles on most aspects of public management covering basic frameworks, historical development of the subject, the perspectives of different disciplines, current themes and functional areas; and tackles many topics from a comparison of practice in different countries;
- Pierre and Peters (2003) includes some useful articles on the theoretical basis of public administration (and public management) and on administrative traditions in different jurisdictions and how to study them comparatively.

32. In the section on Course Structure and Readings, I have suggested priority readings for each seminar topic. Hughes is minimum reading in the first module but you should try to read the other recommended texts on the same topics. In the second and third modules, you will need to sample from a collection of more detailed country and topic studies. In the third module you will need to have read the assigned case study in detail.

33. Here are further references on selected topics in addition to those specifically noted under recommended reading above:

¹ For this and other texts, there may be later editions.

- Comparative analysis in public administration and management: Castles (1991); Barzelay (2001), Brans (2003);
- General discussions on public management: Antonsen and Jørgensen (1997), Behn (1995), Behn (1996), Hood (1986), Hood and Jackson (1991), Wilson (1989);
- Characteristics of public bureaucracies: Crozier (1964); Lipsky (1980); Merton and others (1952); Gulick and Urwick (1973);
- Theoretical basis of study of public management and public organisations: Boston, Martin et al. (1996) – Chapter 2, Beer (1966), Davis et al. (1997), Simon (1976), Perrow (1986); Kymlicka (1990); Ranson and Stewart (1989); Fukuyama (1996); Rawls (1971); Williamson (2000);
- Case studies of public management issues: Ferlie et al. (1996), Lawton and McKevitt (1996); Laking et al. (2003); Laking (2004); Stent (1998);
- Argument about the new public management: Gregory (1991), Mintzberg (1996); Kettl (1997), Schick (1998), Scott (2001); Schick (2003); Kerr (2003); Gregory (2006);.
- Public finance and public management: Buchanan and Musgrave (1999); Musgrave (1959); The Treasury (New Zealand) (1996).

Materials and Equipment

Internet access

34. To participate in this course, you have to be able to:

- (1) Write and submit essays electronically and be able to read my feedback and assessment also in electronic form;
- (2) Send and receive messages and attachments by e-mail;
- (3) Access the course website on Blackboard, the University's Web-based educational software, and be able to use its basic functions.

35. *E-mail*: I can correspond with you individually using your preferred e-mail address. However, any e-mails I send to the whole class will be sent from Blackboard and will only go to your student account e-mail address. Therefore, you should either check this address regularly for new mail, or arrange for all mail sent to that address to be forwarded to your preferred e-mail address.

36. Please send me your essays as attachments to e-mail messages. I do not require hard copy of assignments. I will send you back your essay also as an electronic document, with comments and an assessment via the Student Drop Box in Blackboard. To read all my comments, you need to use "Track Changes" in Microsoft Word.

37. *Blackboard*: the course pages on Blackboard are the essential central location for all course announcements, electronic resources, discussions and returned assignments. As soon as you have your student e-mail account, log onto Blackboard and our course. Make sure you know how to access Announcements and use Course Resources, Discussion Groups and the Drop Box.

Electronic document formats

38. All assignments have to be in a form that I can read using Microsoft Word on a PC. The standard format for course resources will be in Adobe PDF. Some of these will be quite

large files, and you will benefit from having broadband access to download them. If you really have difficulty downloading large files, I can make a CD available.

Assessment Requirements

Assessment Calendar

Assignment	Due Date	Course Weighting
Blackboard Introductions	Friday 15 February*	5%
First Blackboard Question	Monday 10 March	10%
First Essay	Monday 7 April	30%
Second Blackboard Question	Monday 28 April	10%
Third Blackboard Question	Monday 19 May	10%
Second Essay	Monday 9 June	35%

*Extended to “as soon as possible” if you aren’t registered on Blackboard by 15 February.

Blackboard Exercises

Introductions (to be posted by Friday, 15 February) – 5%

39. As they say in golf, this is a “gimme”. Please post an entry to the discussion group with some words introducing yourself to others in the class, where you come from, something about your work, and why you are taking this course.

First question (all entries to be posted by Monday, 10 March) – 10%

40. This is an exercise on the nature of reasoning about public management topics, in the form of a discussion on Blackboard. I will post a number of propositions about public management to a Blackboard discussion group. You can argue the case for or against one of the propositions, or analyse the arguments of others. Details will be supplied at or before the first module.

Second question (all entries to be posted by Monday, 28 April) – 10%

41. References are to questions in the Study Guide. Please comment or respond on at least one of the following:

- (1) Study Question 3. From your own experience or reading, give examples which fit Allison's classification of what public managers do (be specific).
- (2) Study Question 25. Why do you think my friend can't get coffee delivered to the new meeting room? Can you think of examples from your working life which seem to reflect these pathologies?
- (3) Study Question 37. To whom should public servants be accountable or responsive?
- (4) Study Question 43. In your view, how should politicians and officials distinguish their roles? What grey areas or problems are there with this distinction?
- (5) Study Question 48. What arguments might be raised for and against outsourcing management of a database of information about visas and immigration status?

Third question (all entries to be posted by Monday, 19 May) – 10%

42. Please comment or respond on at least one of the following:

- (1) Study Question 64. Is change a deliberate process that we can call “reform”, or does it “just happen” as a result of political systems responding to pressure?
- (2) Study Question 66. In your country of choice, what barriers or opposing forces may limit implementation of reforms?
- (3) Study Question 74. [For your country of choice] What in your view are the main priorities for future change?

Essays

General requirements

43. You need to complete two essays during the course. You should select one topic from each of the groups in the topic list below. The target length of each essay is 1500 words. Please submit both essay assignments as an email attachment to: rob.laking@vuw.ac.nz. Please keep a copy of all submitted work.
44. Plagiarism is academic misconduct and you need to be familiar with the University procedures when plagiarism is suspected. I will use Turnitin to check submitted assignments and will follow University procedures in case of suspected misconduct.
45. There is plenty of advice about how to avoid plagiarism. It should not be a problem if you follow the general rules about using other people’s words or ideas:
 - (1) Always keep careful records of your sources when taking notes on your readings and particularly when copying chunks of text from the Internet or elsewhere.
 - (2) If you are using other people’s words, you must put them in quotation marks, followed by an inline reference. Example: “There are no penguins in Lapland” (Jefferson (1929)).
 - (3) If you are using their ideas, rephrased into your own words, you must still give credit, in the form of an inline reference to the original source. Example: Some writers have observed an absence of flightless cold-climate avians in Lapland. (Jefferson (1929), Lennon (1966)).

First essay due Monday 7 April – 30%

46. Choose **one** of the following:

- (1) Discuss trends in a major public service such as correctional services, health services or post-secondary education over the last twenty years. Illustrate with figures for expenditure and changes in numbers of clients or users. Speculate on the likely main factors over the next twenty years. What are the implications (or options) of these trends for organisation and delivery of the service?
- (2) Is the public organisation you work for a bureaucracy? What bureaucratic characteristics does it have? Where do its structure or processes differ from that of a classical bureaucracy?
- (3) A “wicked problem” in the public sector is one requiring contributions from many different individuals and organisations and where the relationship between public sector action and improved outcomes is uncertain. Examples could be: dealing with vandalism in urban areas; prevention and detection of child abuse; reducing hard core unemployment; reducing road traffic accidents. Use a specific example to discuss the different contributions to “co-producing” a better outcome. In your example, what are

the roles of public organisations in making contributions directly or facilitating the contributions of others?

Second essay due Monday 9 June – 35%

47. Choose **one** of the following:

- (1) Consider a public service such as prisons, hospitals or schools. Assume that the service will continue to be funded from the public purse. What are the alternatives to development and delivery of the service by centrally-directed public organisations? How would the alternative modes of provision be organised? What are the advantages and problems with these alternatives?
- (2) Describe a significant innovation in the processes of a specific public organisation designed to lead to more efficient outputs or more effective performance in terms of outcomes. How did it originate? What were its advantages? What were the biggest problems of implementation?
- (3) In a country of your choice, if you were reporting to political decision-makers on desirable reforms to public management (either general systems or a specific organisation), what would you advocate and why? What would you advise the decision-makers on the implementation of the changes?

Basis for assessment of assignments

Blackboard questions

48. I will award you marks out of 10 (accompanied by a brief comment) for your contribution to each of Questions 1-3. The mark will be a subjective assessment of how well you addressed the topic.

Essays

49. I assess your essay under two main headings:

- (1) Aspects specific to the topic -- generally about three sub-headings. These vary with the topic, but should be evident from the question. For example, the first topic in group 1 would require you to produce some information about past trends (perhaps an outcomes, outputs, or resource costs), have some ideas about the major influences on future demand for the services (maybe demographic, economic, or lifestyle changes), and then some views on how these factors might affect service organisation or delivery;
- (2) General essay qualities -- under two subheadings:
 - (a) Quality of argument: a good university essay will give attention to definitions (if you go to write an essay about bureaucracy, start by defining "bureaucracy"), make claims about the subject under discussion (statements that something is true or probable), support them with warrants (appeals to evidence or authoritative opinion), and discuss any significant qualifications, exceptions or counterclaims relating to the argument; for a fuller discussion;
 - (b) Quality of presentation: the obvious things like layout which is easy to read, grammar and spelling and punctuation (and putting in page numbers) but also the liberal use of subheadings, so it is easy to follow the structure of the essay, and (very importantly) clear and precise citation of sources: each citation in the text must be linked to a full reference in the bibliography (this is not just academic

nitpicking: I do actually go to check your references sometimes, particularly when you cited some writing that I wasn't aware of²).

50. In my feedback on your essay, I will give each of these aspects a grade EX = "Excellent", VG = "Very Good", G = "Good", S = "Satisfactory" and "U = Unsatisfactory". These grades are to indicate where I thought your essay had particular strengths or weaknesses. They do not add up arithmetically to the overall essay grade (A to E). I take an overall look at your essay before making that assessment. However, generally I give about three-quarters of the weighting to the specific aspects and about one quarter to the general. I will also give you some general comments supporting my assessment and suggesting areas where you might usefully further develop your argument or think about further aspects of the topic.

Mandatory Course Requirements

51. To fulfil the mandatory requirements for this course, you must:

- (1) Attend all contact sessions of the course; and
- (2) Submit all assignments by the due date.

Penalties

52. I expect you to attend all three course days in full. Presentations and discussions in class are an important part of the learning for the course. There are no formal penalties for failure to attend class, but I will consider your attendance record when assessing an overall course grade.
53. The ability to plan for and meet deadlines is a core competency of both advanced study and public management. Failure to meet deadlines disrupts course planning and is unfair on students who do submit their work on time. It is expected therefore that you will complete and hand in assignments by the due date. Marks will be deducted at the rate of five percent of the total mark for each working day the assignment is submitted after the due date, and the assignment will not be accepted after five working days.
54. If ill-health, family bereavement or other personal emergencies prevent you from meeting the deadline for submitting a piece of written work or from attending class to make a presentation, you can apply for and may be granted an extension to the due date. Note that this applies only to extreme unforeseen circumstances and is not necessarily awarded. You should let me know as soon as possible in advance of the deadline if you are seeking an extension.

Communication of Additional Information

55. I will post any additional information or information on changes as an announcement on Blackboard and generally send you an email as well. But do check Blackboard regularly.

Withdrawal Dates

56. Students giving notice of withdrawal from this course after 3 March 2008 will NOT receive a refund of fees.
57. Students giving notice of withdrawal from this course after 30 May 2008 are regarded as having failed the course, unless the Associate Dean subsequently gives approval to withdraw.

² For which I am always grateful.

Reading List

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- DERLIEN, H.-U. (2003) German Public Administration: Weberian Despite 'Modernization'. IN TUMMALA, K. K. (Ed.) *Comparative Bureaucratic Systems*. Lexington Books., pp 97-122.
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- FERLIE, E., LYNN, L. E. & POLLITT, C. (Eds.) (2005) *The Oxford Handbook of Public Management*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- FUKUYAMA, F. (1996) *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity*, Free Press.
- GILL, D. (2002) Signposting the Zoo – From Agencification to a More Principled Choice of Government Organisational Forms. *OECD Journal on Budgeting*, 2:1, 27-80.
- GREGORY, R. (1991) Some broad trends in New Zealand public sector reform.
- GREGORY, R. (2006) Theoretical Faith and Practical Works: De-Autonomizing and Joining-Up in the New Zealand State Sector. IN CHRISTENSEN, T. & LAEGREID, P. (Eds.)

- Autonomy and Regulation: Coping With Agencies in the Modern State.* London, Edward Elgar, pp
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Manaaki Pihipihinga is an academic mentoring programme for undergraduate Māori and Pacific students in the Faculties of Commerce and Administration, and Humanities and Social Sciences. Sessions are held at the Kelburn and Pipitea Campuses in the Mentoring Rooms, 14 Kelburn Parade (back courtyard), Room 109D, and Room 210, Level 2, Railway West Wing. There is also a Pacific Support Coordinator who assists Pacific students by linking them to the services and support they need while studying at Victoria. Another feature of the programme is a support network for Postgraduate students with links to Postgraduate workshops and activities around Campus.

For further information, or to register with the programme, email manaaki-pihipihinga-programme@vuw.ac.nz or telephone (04) 463 6015. To contact the Pacific Support Coordinator, email pacific-support-coord@vuw.ac.nz or telephone (04) 463 5842.