

School of Government

PUBL 402

ASPECTS OF PUBLIC POLICY: THEORY

(15 Points)

Trimester One 2009

COURSE OUTLINE

Names and Contact Details

Course Co-ordinator: Professor Bob Gregory
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Trimester Dates

Monday 2 March to Wednesday 1 July 2009 (including the mid-year exam period).

Class Times and Room Numbers

The course is taught on a modular basis, conjointly with MAPP 524: Institutions and the Policy Process. The three modular days are:

Friday 27 February 2009

Friday 24 April 2009

Friday 12 June 2009

Each day runs from 8.30am to 6.00pm.

Withdrawal dates: Information available via
<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx>

Course Content

The course examines the political and institutional context of public policymaking in New Zealand, but with wider application. General topics covered include theories of the state, the nature of bureaucracy and executive power, professionalism, accountability and responsibility, 'governance', bureaucratic politics, and major systemic changes such as state sector reform and MMP.

1. The historical context

The founding 'pillars' of the state sector include notions of political neutrality, ministerial responsibility, a career service, anonymity, and a unified public service. The origins and on-going relevance of these institutional pillars, as a prelude to an examination of some contemporary issues in public management and administration.

2. The nature of the state and the relationship between the state and civil society.

The focus is primarily on the executive branch of government, and its political and administrative dimensions. The relationship between economic and political power. Pluralist, elitist, corporatist, and Marxist theories of the state. The state, civil society, and the market.

3. The nature of bureaucracy

Max Weber's 'rationalization' – 'the master trend of history'. The essential elements of bureaucracy as a generic organizational form. The nature of professional power. The evolving character of New Zealand governmental bureaucracy. The bureaucratic paradox.

4. The constitutional context

New Zealand's constitutional arrangements, and the formal/legislative, and informal/conventional elements of these arrangements. The doctrine of ministerial responsibility. Political neutrality and public service 'bargains'. The constitutional significance of the Treaty of Waitangi and the application of Treaty principles to the policy process. New Zealand's electoral system, and the implications of the change from FPP to MMP.

5. State sector reform in New Zealand: 1988-2008

The ideas and theories that informed the revolutionary re-shaping of the New Zealand state in the mid to late 1980s and early 1990s. Assessments of these reforms, and contemporary issues in state sector reform.

6. Accountability and responsibility

The concepts of governmental accountability and responsibility; the effect of the organisational context on the way people think and act; authority, individual responsibility and moral choice.

7. Government and governance

The distinction between government and governance, and the dimensions of traditional and emerging modes of governance, including network theory and practice, the marketization of public goods and services, contractualism and the 'hollowing out of the state'.

Course Objectives

By the completion of the course, participants will be able to:

- Explain theories of the state; and the relationship between the state, civil society, and the market.
- Identify the main elements of New Zealand's constitutional system.
- Explain the historical process of 'rationalization' (Max Weber) and how it informs the character of modern governmental systems.
- Critically assess the nature of bureaucratic rationality and action, bureaucratic and professional power, and bureaucratic politics.
- Examine the changing political context for public administration and management within New Zealand, including the impact of the move to MMP, and the emergence of the 'governance' paradigm.
- Distinguish between the concepts of accountability and responsibility in government, and how these ideas explain the behaviour of governmental officials, both elected and appointed.

Expected Workload

This is a 400-level, 15-point, course, so you should expect to spend at least 10-12 hours per week throughout the academic trimester on reading and assignments.

Readings

There will be no set text for this course. Instead, a set of course readings should be purchased from VicBooks, Student Book Centre, Pipitea Campus.

Additional course material may be handed out to the class during the course.

Students will also find the following books particularly relevant:

- J. Boston et al (1996) *Public Management: The New Zealand Model*, Oxford University Press.
- J. Boston et al (1999) *Electoral and Constitutional Change in New Zealand: An MMP Source Book*, The Dunmore Press.
- T. Christensen and P. Laegreid (eds.) (2006) *Autonomy and Regulation: Coping with Agencies in the Modern State*, Edward Elgar.
- T. Christensen and P. Laegreid (eds.) (2007) *Transcending New Public Management: The Transformation of Public Sector Reforms*, Aldershot UK: Ashgate.
- M. Hill (1997) *The Policy Process in the Modern State*, Third Edition, Prentice Hall/Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- C. Hood and M. Lodge (2006) *The Politics of Public Service Bargains: Reward, Competency, Loyalty - and Blame*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- R. Hummel (1994) *The Bureaucratic Experience: A Critique of Life in the Modern Organization*, 4th edn., New York: St. Martin's Press.
- E. McLeay (1995) *The Cabinet and Political Power in New Zealand*, Oxford University Press.

- R. Miller (ed.), (2006) *New Zealand Government and Politics*, Fourth Edition, Oxford University Press.
- R. Mulgan (2003) *Holding Power to Account: Accountability in Modern Democracies*, Palgrave Macmillan.
- G. Palmer and M. Palmer (2004) *Bridled Power: New Zealand's Constitution and Government*, Oxford University Press.
- R. Shaw and C. Eichbaum (2008) *Public Policy in New Zealand: Institutions, Processes and Outcomes*, 2nd edn., Pearson/Prentice Hall.

Assessment Requirements

Essay I (relating to the first three course learning objectives), 2,000 words: 35%

Essay II (relating to the second three course learning objectives), 2,000 words: 35%

In class test: 30%

Essay topics and due dates will be distributed in the first class.

Assignments are to be deposited in the secure box at School of Government reception (8th floor Rutherford House) during the office hours, which are 8.30am – 5.00pm. Students should keep a copy of all submitted work.

Penalties

Course members are to complete and hand in assignments by the due date. Marks may be deducted where assignments are submitted late.

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 your Course Co-ordinator know as soon as possible in advance of the deadline if you are seeking an extension.

Mandatory Course Requirements

To meet mandatory course requirements students must:

- (a) Submit the two essays
- (b) Sit the in-class test
- (b) Attend fully **all three** modules

If a student fails to meet the MCRs he/she will receive a K grade (non-pass) if they still manage to achieve a final course mark of 50% or more. If they do not fulfil the MCRs, and their final course mark is 49% or below, they will receive a D or E grade, as the case may be.

Communication of Additional Information

Announcements will be posted on Blackboard, as will a range of course resources.

Faculty of Commerce and Administration Offices

Railway West Wing (RWW) - FCA Student and Academic Services Office

The Faculty's Student and Academic Services Office is located on the ground and first floors of the Railway West Wing. The ground floor counter is the first point of contact for general enquiries and FCA forms. Student Administration Advisers are available to discuss course status and give further advice about FCA qualifications. To check for opening hours call the Student and Academic Services Office on (04) 463 5376.

Easterfield (EA) - FCA/Education/Law Kelburn Office

The Kelburn Campus Office for the Faculties of Commerce and Administration, Education and Law is situated in the Easterfield Building on the ground floor (EA005). This counter is the first point of contact for :

- Duty tutors for student contact and advice.
- Information concerning administrative and academic matters.
- Forms for FCA Student and Academic Services (e.g. application for academic transcripts, requests for degree audit, COP requests).
- Examinations-related information during the examination period.

To check for opening hours call the Student and Academic Services Office on (04) 463 5376.

Use of Turnitin

Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine <<http://www.turnitin.com>>. Turnitin is an on-line plagiarism prevention tool which identifies material that may have been copied from other sources including the Internet, books, journals, periodicals or the work of other students. Turnitin is used to assist academic staff in detecting misreferencing, misquotation, and the inclusion of unattributed material, which may be forms of cheating or plagiarism. *At the discretion of the Head of School, handwritten work may be copy-typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin.* You are strongly advised to check with your tutor or the course coordinator if you are uncertain about how to use and cite material from other sources. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted materials on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions will not be made available to any other party.

General University Policies and Statutes

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the Victoria University Calendar or go to www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy/students.aspx

For information on the following topics, go to the Faculty's website www.victoria.ac.nz/fca under Important Information for Students:

- Academic Grievances
- Student and Staff Conduct
- Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments
- Student Support

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means *no cheating*. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

Note: including the work of others will not be considered plagiarism as long as the work is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalised severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course
- suspension from the course or the University.

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website:

www.victoria.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html

Manaaki Pihipihinga Programme

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 phone (04) 463 6015. To contact the Pacific Support Coordinator, email pacific-support-coord@vuw.ac.nz or phone (04) 463 5842.