

**THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION 9903a:
ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOUR IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

Fall 2012

Instructor: Martin Horak

**Tuesdays 11:00am – 1:00pm
Committee Room #4, 2nd Floor, London City Hall
300 Dufferin Avenue**

Course Objectives

This course will introduce you to selected aspects of the academic literature on organizational behaviour (OB), and it will apply theories and concepts from OB to public sector organizations, with a particular emphasis on local government administration. Among the questions we will address in the course are the following:

- How do the purposes and organizational context of public administrative bodies differ from those of private-sector organizations?
- How do organizational structure and culture affect the functioning of local government administration? How do structures and cultures change?
- How does power work in organizational settings?
- How can local government organizations become more equitable workplaces?

Course Format and Readings

This is a mixed format course. While there will be some lecture segments, the emphasis is on an interactive approach, in which you will be asked to contribute examples and insights to our discussion; we will also conduct a number of group exercises. The course will include informal discussions and role playing exercises, as well as four “seminar” weeks run by students themselves.

The course requires you to read all of the assigned reading material before each class (with the exception of Week 1). Advance reading is a necessary prerequisite for doing well in this course (see “Course Evaluation” below), and will help make the discussions and exercises exciting and dynamic for all of us. There are several required texts, all of which are available through the UWO bookstore. The required textbook is:

- Mills, Albert J. et al. 2007. *Organizational Behaviour in a Global Context*. Peterborough: Broadview Press.

This text will be available for purchase at the UWO bookstore. In addition to this text, several articles (available on-line or as handouts) will be used.

Course Evaluation

The final grade for this course will be composed of three elements:

1. Participation in class discussion and activities (15%)

Discussion and group activities among students are at the heart of learning in this course. Attendance in every class of the term is mandatory. All students are expected to contribute to class discussions and group activities. Your participation mark will be based not so much on the quantity, but on the quality of your contributions.

2. Seminar (25%)

Weeks 4, 7, 9 and 10 of this course are structured as seminars, each of which will be led by a different group of students. During the second week of the course we will split into four groups, and each group will select a week that it will be responsible for. The purpose of the seminar is to give you experience in working as part of a team in order to structure learning for the class by applying the concepts introduced in the readings to local government examples or settings.

A full set of guidelines for seminar presentations will be distributed during the second week of the course.

3. Research project (60%)

Your primary independent piece of work for this course will be a research project on a topic of your choosing. The project should investigate a key issue or aspect of local government administration or management, making use of theories and concepts introduced in the course, and applying these to empirical cases of local administration “on the ground”.

A three page proposal for your research project, worth 15% of your course mark, will be due in class in Week 6. A final research report of approximately 10 pages, worth 45% of your mark, will be due in Week 11 (see schedule for details).

A full set of guidelines for the research project will be distributed in class during the third week of the course.

Note on deadlines for written work:

Written work handed in late will be subject to a penalty of 2% per day, weekends included. All written work is due *in class*. In general, the late penalty can be wholly or partly waived only due to medical or family emergencies.

Instructor contact

Students are encouraged to bring any questions or concerns about course material, requirements or assignments to the instructor. My office hours will take place at a time to be announced in class, in SSC room 4142. You can also send me questions or concerns by e-mail to: mhorak@uwo.ca. I will usually respond within 24 hours, except on weekends. Finally, you can call me at: 519 661 2111 ext. 85002

COURSE OUTLINE AND READING SCHEDULE

- *The required readings are best read in the order listed on the schedule below.*
- *Readings that are not from the required text will be available either via internet sources or as handouts. Availability is listed on the schedule below.*

Week 1 (Sept 11): Introduction to the Course and to Organizational Behavior

Our first session will introduce the study of organizational behavior, and will also provide an overview of the structure, aims and requirements of the course. For this week only, you may read the required reading after the class.

Required reading:

Mills et al., Chapter 1

Week 2 (Sept 18): The Aims and Organizational Environment of Local Administration

Required reading:

Stewart, John and Stewart Ranson. 1994. "Management in the Public Domain". In David McKeivitt and Alan Lawson, eds., *Public Sector Management*. London: Sage, pp. 54-70.

Availability: handout.

Svara, James. 1999. "The Shifting Boundary Between Elected Officials and City Managers in Large Council-Manager Cities". *Public Administration Review* 59(1), pp.44-53.

Availability: UWO Library e-journals

Week 3 (Sept 25): Organizational Structure and the Public Service

Required reading:

Mills et al., Chapter 15

Kernaghan, Kenneth et al. 2000. *The New Public Organization*. Toronto: IPAC, Chapter 1.

Availability: handout.

Olsen, Johan P. 2005. "Maybe It Is Time to Rediscover Bureaucracy". *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 16(1): 1-24.

Availability: UWO Library e-journals

**** NO CLASS OCTOBER 2 ****

Week 4 (Oct 9): Perception and Decision-Making in Organizations

**** Seminar week ****

Required reading:

Mills et al., excerpt from Chapter 4 (pp. 123-133)

Robbins, Stephen P. and Nancy Langton. 2004. Excerpt from Chapter 9 in *Fundamentals of Organizational Behavior*. Toronto: Pearson Education Canada, pp. 285-302.

Availability: handout.

Week 5 (Oct 16): Organizational Culture

Guest speaker: **Tim Dobbie**, Interim City Manager, City of London

Required reading:

Mills et al., Chapter 14

Hartmann, Jim and Anne M. Khademian. 2010. "Culture Change Refined and Revitalized: The Road Show and Guides for Pragmatic Action". *Public Administration Review* 70(6): 845-856.

Availability: UWO Library e-journals

Week 6 (Oct 23): Public Administration and the Public: Openness and Participation

Guest speaker: **Cathy Saunders**, City Clerk, City of London

**** Proposal for Research Project Due in Class ****

Required reading:

King, Cheryl Simrell, Kathryn Feltey and Bridget Susel. 1998. "The Question of Participation: Toward Authentic Public Participation in Public Administration". *Public Administration Review* 58(4), pp. 317-326.

Availability: UWO Library e-journals

Week 7 (Oct 30): Groups and Teams

**** Seminar week ****

Required reading:

Mills et al., Chapter 9

Week 8 (Nov 6): Motivation and Stress

Required reading:

Mills et al., Chapter 7

Kernaghan, Kenneth. 2010. "An honour to be coveted: pride, recognition and public service". *Canadian Public Administration* 44(1): 67-83.

Availability: UWO Library e-journals

Mills et al., Chapter 8

**** NO CLASS NOVEMBER 13 ****

Week 9 (Nov 20): Diversity, Inequality and Local Government Administration

**** Seminar week ****

Required reading:

Mills et al., Chapter 10

Mills et al., Chapter 11

Week 10 (Nov 27): Power and Politics

**** Seminar week ****

Required reading:

Mills et al., Chapter 13

Kanter, Rosabeth Moss. 1979. "Power failure in management circuits". *Harvard Business Review* (July-August): 65-75.

Availability: <http://ils.unc.edu/daniel/131/cc04/Kanter.pdf>

Week 11 (Dec 4): Leadership and Organizational Change

**** Research Papers Due in Class ****

Required reading:

Mills et al., Chapter 16

Wright, Bradley E. and Sanjay K. Pandey. 2009. "Transformational Leadership in the Public Sector: Does Structure Matter?" *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 20(1): 75-89.

Availability: UWO Library e-journals

Ford, Jeffrey D. and Laurie W. Ford. 2010. "Stop Blaming Resistance to Change and Start Using It". *Organizational Dynamics* 39(1): 24-36.

Availability: UWO Library e-journals