Western University  
Department of Political Science  
**Local Government Management**  
Public Administration 9904b  
Winter 2016

**Thursdays 11am-1pm**  
Committee Room 4, London City Hall

Instructor: Joe Lyons  
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**Course Information**

**Calendar Description:** Drawing upon theories and research findings in public administration and management, this course examines administrative approaches, issues and debates arising in local governments in a changing environment. Students will learn how the complex and unstable environment of public sector organizations produces both challenges and opportunities for public sector managers, and will work through case material that requires them to apply insights from management and public administration literature to real-world local government settings.

**Course objectives:** This course provides an overview of selected research and issues in the field of local government management.

**Course Organization:** The course will consist of a combination of lectures, student debates, and class discussions

**Readings and Materials:** Students should obtain their own copy of the following book, which is available in the university bookstore:


All other assigned readings will be available through Western Libraries or the course’s OWL site. Assigned reading should be done **Before** the class in which it is to be discussed.

**Requirements**

1. **Class Participation.** Two items make up the class participation grade:
   
a. **Attendance and Participation.** You must attend all classes, keep up with the readings, and participate during discussions. If you are unable to attend a particular class, you should advise the instructor in advance.
b. **Structured Debates.** You will be required to participate in at least one structured debate. Students will sign up for their debate during the first class. Every debate will feature two contradictory propositions, with each student speaking in support of their assigned proposition for approximately five minutes. Afterwards, the debate will be opened up to the rest of the class. You must also submit a one-page summary of your main arguments on the day of your debate.

2. **Group Assignment.** During the final two classes of the semester, students will be divided into groups and provided with documents from one of three public inquiries: the Elliot Lake Commission of Inquiry, the Toronto Computer Leasing Inquiry, or the Waterloo Inquiry. Each group will submit a 1,500-word paper that: (1) summarizes the events described in their assigned reports, (2) identifies the roles played by key actors (especially the municipal ones), (2) explains what went wrong, and (3) analyzes whether the most important recommendations are capable of addressing root causes. Groups should incorporate course material wherever possible. During the final class, each group will make a 15-minute presentation on their paper.

3. **Final Paper.** Students must submit a 3,000-word paper by April 14th. You must choose one of the following two options:
   a. Under **option one**, students write an essay using one of the assigned debate propositions as their central thesis. Students are encouraged to draw heavily from the assigned readings, but will need to consult outside sources as well.
   b. Under **option two**, students write an extended book review of Leaders in the Shadows. The first section of this essay (no more than one third of the total length) will describe the book’s main arguments and summarize the approach taken. The rest of the essay will evaluate the book’s arguments, using material from the course. Students should reference as many relevant readings as possible. Students choosing this option are not required to reference sources beyond the assigned course readings.

**Note:** Overdue submissions will be penalized two percentage points for each day (including weekends) that the paper is late. Extensions will be granted only in the event that written confirmation of any extenuating circumstances is provided.

**Evaluation:**
1. Class Participation:
   - Attendance and Participation  25%
   - Structured Debates   10%
2. Group Assignment:  20%
3. Final Paper:     45%

**Note on academic offences and plagiarism:**
Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at: [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf)
Note for students with disabilities:
Please contact poliscie@uwo.ca if you require any information in plain text format, or if any other accommodation can make the course material and/or physical space accessible to you.

Course Schedule and Required Readings

Jan. 7  Organization and Introduction

Jan. 14 Public Management Theories


Jan. 21 The Leadership Literature and the Role of the CAO

Readings: Siegel, chapter 1.

Jan. 28 Council-Staff Relations

Siegel, chapter 2.

Feb. 4 Managing in a Council-Manager System

Dantico, Marilyn and James Svara. 2015. Professionalized Government:

Feb. 11 **Ethics, Ethical Dysfunction, and Corruption**


Feb. 18 **No Class – Reading Week**

Feb. 25 **Community and Citizen Engagement**


Siegel, chapter 4.

Mar. 3 **Performance Management**


Siegel, chapter 3.

Mar. 10 **Managing Change**


Siegel, chapter 6.
Mar. 17  No Class – March Break

Mar. 24  Contracting Out and Inter-local Agreements

Siegel, Chapter 5.

Mar. 31  Group Work: What Went Wrong?

Apr. 7  Group Presentations: What Went Wrong?