PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION 9917
Issues in Local Government

Martin Horak  June 2017
e-mail: mhorak@uwo.ca
tel: 519-661-2111 x. 85002
office: SSC 4142

Course Dates and Times

The class will meet from 9:00am until 12:00 noon and 1:00pm until 4:00pm from Monday to Friday, June 12 to 16 inclusive in SSC 3026. We will take one 20-30 minute break each morning and afternoon. On Friday, we will take our lunch break a bit early, and plan to end the class around 2:30pm (see detailed schedule).

Objectives

This is the ‘capstone’ course in the MPA program. The objectives are two-fold:

First, the course provides a venue for students to review and apply what they have learned in other courses, by discussing a selection of topics related to local government. A couple of these topical discussions will be introduced by the instructor. In addition, the course will feature three guest presenters. Students will also apply what they have learned in the MPA program to a short written response to a recent book on local / urban issues (see below).

Second, the course provides a venue for students to get constructive critical feedback on their final MPA research projects. About ½ of the course time is devoted to hearing and discussing student presentations, and all students are expected to be active participants in critiquing and questioning the work of their peers.

Reading

The reading load for this course is kept to a minimum. Two of our guest speakers have assigned some brief recommended reading, listed in the course schedule. However, the only required reading involves one book of your choice (see below), to which you will write a short critical response paper, due one week after the end of class.

Course Evaluation

Your grade will be composed of the following:

- Participation in class discussion: 20%
- Presentation on research project (see below): 40%
Critical response assignment (see below): 40%

**Participation:**

Each of you will participate actively in the class by asking questions and providing feedback to your peers on their project presentations, and by engaging with guest speakers and the instructor.

**Presentation on research project:**

You will prepare a short presentation – *no more than 10 minutes* – on your final MPA research project. The main purpose of this presentation is to allow for constructive critical input on your MRP-in-progress from the instructor and your peers.

The content of your presentation will vary depending on how well advanced your project is. In general, I expect you to: State the research question; briefly outline your research design; present a couple of highlights of what you have done so far, if anything, and what you still need to do; tell us about some challenges / issues / problems that you are facing.

Since a major purpose of the presentation is to allow for critical feedback, it is in your interest to acknowledge and discuss any significant challenges that you have faced. PowerPoint facilities will be available, but PowerPoint is not required (it’s your choice).

We will have time for about 15-20 minutes of discussion after each presentation.

**Critical response assignment:**

You will write a brief (about 2000 words, or 5-7 pages) *critical response* to one of the books listed below. “Critical” here means reflective and analytical – you may really like the book, but you’re invited to also reflect on its weaknesses. Guiding questions: What did you learn that you did not know before? What were the book’s most important and/or convincing arguments, and why? What weaknesses or omissions did you notice? You can use reading material from other courses to support your work if you like, but you need not do so.

The critical response will be worth 40% of your course grade. It will be due on Friday, June 23 (one week after the last class of the course).

I include a very brief annotation on each book below to help you make your choice. Many of these books are available at Weldon and other libraries, and all of them can be purchased for a reasonable price from major online booksellers such as Amazon.ca.

**Book list:**


A brand new multi-country overview of how to measure municipal fiscal health, and what those measures mean for policy.

An innovative book about how it takes more than zoning change to rein in sprawl.


A wide-ranging edited volume that examines how local governments in a number of Canadian cities connect to community actors and to other levels of government in order to address economic challenges.


A strong new edited volume in the series that has come out of Bob Young’s MCRI project on multilevel governance and public policy in Canadian municipalities.


A brand new historical study of special purpose bodies in Ontario, half of it devoted to a detailed history of ABCs in Kitchener. Lively and engaging writing on what may seem like a dry subject. Note that this book is only out in hardcover so far, so it’s a bit more expensive (but UTP is selling it with an online discount for less than $50).


Important reading for those who are interested in the OMB, this book presents lots of data on how the Board shapes development in Toronto.


A pathbreaking study of what it takes to be an effective CAO. Based on in-depth research into the careers of five respected Canadian CAOs.


Why does Ontario have separated cities, and should it still have them? This brand new book looks at these questions in historical perspective.


For students of political leadership, a readable account of (most of) the former Mississauga mayor’s remarkable political career.


A law professor explores the hidden inequities of bylaw application on the ground in the City of Toronto in this study, based on participant-observation.
Course Schedule

Monday, June 12, Morning Session

9:00am – 10:00am:  Introduction to the Course

10:30am – noon:

Martin Horak  Canadian Local Government in Comparative Perspective

Monday, June 12, Afternoon Session

1:00pm – 2:30pm:  Growth and Economic Development

Jason Brander  Rural Industrial Parks: An Effective Development Tool?
Barbara Koopmans  Implementing the Growth Plan: Overcoming NIMBY
Yueyue Zhang  Retaining International Graduates in London

3:00pm – 4:00pm:  Housing and Homelessness

Dan Byskal  Affordable Housing Waitlists and Public-Private Partnership
Barbara Hall  Enumerating the Homeless Population in a Rural Community

Tuesday, June 13, Morning Session

9:00am – 10:30am:  Zoning and Planning

Doug MacRae  Neighbourhood Design and Travel Choices in London
Trisha McKibbin  Heritage Policies in the Town of St. Mary’s
Alexandra Codispodi  Secondary Suite Policy Implementation in Ontario

11:00am – 12:00pm:  Governance Reform

Jennifer Crowe  BC’s Regional District model in Newfoundland and Labrador
Gwen Lowrie-Dennis  Indigenous – Local Government Relationships
Tuesday, June 13, Afternoon Session

1:00pm – 2:30pm:

Martin Horak   Globalization and Cities: Causes and Consequences

3:00pm – 4:00pm:  Elections and Representation I

Amy Humphries   Electronic Voting and Municipal Election Costs
Ethan Robert    Ranked Ballot Elections in London and Guelph

Wednesday, June 14, Morning Session

9:00am – 10:00am:  Elections and Representation II

Alysha Faria    At-Large Elections in Ontario Municipalities
Sarah Corman   Ward Boundary Reviews and Post-Secondary Students

10:30am – noon:  Guest Speaker

Jennifer Smout (Solicitor, City of London)

Reforming the OMB through Bill 139:
Are We Building Better Communities?

Recommended reading (read initial explanatory note only):

http://www.ontla.on.ca/web/bills/bills_detail.do?locale=en&Intranet=&BillID=4936

Wednesday, June 14, Afternoon Session

1:00pm – 2:30pm:  Provincial Policies and Local Conflicts

Patrick D’Almada  Aggregate Extraction Conflicts in Rural Communities
Shannon Geraghty  Rural School Closures
Josh Brick      Socioeconomic Impacts of Joint and Several Liability

3:00pm – 4:00pm:  Issues in Policing

Stephanie MacKenzie-Smith  Police Carding Policies in Toronto
Michael Pearce     Reducing Policing Costs in Chatham-Kent
**Thursday, June 15, Morning Session**

9:00am – 10:00am: *Local Government Management: Finances and Purchasing*

Mary-Ellen Ducharme  Employee Responses to Internal Audit Recommendations  
Liang Zhao  Pension Purchasing in Chinese Local Government

10:30am – 12:00pm: *Revenues and Pricing*

Brenda Garrett  Needs-Based Allocation of Infrastructure Money  
Catalina Blumenberg  Marijuana and Municipalities: Diversifying Municipal Revenue  
Robert Sharon  Drinking Water and Affordability in Southwestern Ontario

**Thursday, June 15, Afternoon Session**

1:00pm – 4:00pm: *Guest Workshop*

John Hannam  (City Clerk, City of Thunder Bay)  
Municipal-Aboriginal Relationships as a Matter of Public Policy

Recommended reading:

1. [http://www.ubcm.ca/assets/Library/Policy~Topics/First~Nations~Relations/Relationship~Building~and~Dispute~Resolution~Resources/Partnerships%20in%20Practice%202002.pdf](http://www.ubcm.ca/assets/Library/Policy~Topics/First~Nations~Relations/Relationship~Building~and~Dispute~Resolution~Resources/Partnerships%20in%20Practice%202002.pdf)

2. [http://www.winnipeg.ca/interhom/pdfs/highlights/firststepsmunicipalaboriginalpaths.pdf](http://www.winnipeg.ca/interhom/pdfs/highlights/firststepsmunicipalaboriginalpaths.pdf)

**Friday, June 16, Morning Session**

9:00am – 10:30am: *Guest Speaker*

Ashleigh Weeden  (Communications Manager, South Western Integrated Fibre Technology)  
Digital Engagement in Local Government

10:45am – 11:15am:

David Taylor  Change Management and Electronic Document Systems
Friday, June 16, Afternoon Session

12:30pm – 2:00pm:  Public Engagement

Paul Sandor  Public Engagement in Regional Health Planning
Francis Hinnah  Self-Governance and Participation in Refugee Settlements
Melanie Figueiredo  Does Citizen Initiative Increase Program Success?

2:00pm – 2:30pm:

Martin Horak  Issues in MPA Research Reports: Review and Discussion

**approx. 2:30pm end time**