In this course we consider a selection of issues and challenges in contemporary public administration and governance in real-world local government settings. In considering case examples we will apply theoretical perspectives, concepts and research evidence from several disciplines and stakeholder perspectives. Classes include lectures, discussions, individual commentaries on assigned readings and team presentations by students. Your work-related experiences and observations and informed perspectives are valuable resources for discussions, and sharing yours will help to create a rich learning environment.

It is essential that you come prepared for each class by completing the assigned readings and preparing assigned exercises or cases in advance. Attendance at all class sessions is expected.

Carol Agocs is available for consultation by email, in person after class, and by telephone (leave a message and I will return your call). My mobile phone number is provided in case you need to reach me shortly before a class meeting. Otherwise please phone me at my office.

Course Requirements

Contributions to learning during classes: 15%

All classes will include seminar discussions. Your mark will reflect evidence of your careful preparation for class by reading and engaging critically with the assigned readings, and the quality of your contributions to the learning experience in each class. You are expected to participate in discussions by contributing reflections on the readings, informed perspectives on matters under discussion and examples and applications, expressed thoughtfully and respectfully.

Commentary on the reading assigned for a class: 10%

Each student should sign up on OWL to present a commentary (maximum 10 minutes) on the one of the assigned readings for a class in which student team presentations are not scheduled. You should present your “take” on the reading, not a summary of it: we’ll assume that everyone
has done the reading. What was the main argument of the reading? What did you learn from it? How would you apply selected concepts? What critique would you offer? Ten minutes is a short time: you must focus on three or four points at most. You should email or give a copy of your speaking notes to Carol Agocs at the end of the class.

**Team presentation: 35%**

Presentations are scheduled for the last three classes. You should sign up for one of the topics and dates listed on this course outline by emailing your first and second choices to Carol Agocs by January 24. Assignment to teams will be in order of receipt of emails. There will be three or four people on a team. If the roster for your first choice is filled your second choice will be used if possible to assign you to a team.

Each team should prepare a 30 minute presentation on their topic. A discussion and comments by Carol will follow each presentation.

Preparation of your presentation will require each team’s members to work together to plan and carry out the necessary research, analysis and presentation. Team members are free to allocate responsibilities for preparation and presentation among themselves, but the team should present a coherent perspective on the topic, not a series of separate presentations. Readings listed on the course outline for your topic and available on OWL will get you started. Credible sources of information including expert commentary, academic research, government documents, journalistic coverage and perhaps information interviews should inform your presentation. Your team presentation should provide an overview of the issue and its significance and your team’s analysis and conclusion. If team members have differing points of view these should be explained.

You should plan on meeting after class as necessary to plan your presentation. The cafeteria at City Hall can be used as a meeting place if the Committee Room is not available.

Each presentation will receive a team mark and each individual member will receive this mark. Criteria to be used in marking will be discussed in class. The team should submit their slide deck in the Assignment tab in OWL at least one day prior to your presentation. A week after the presentation the team should submit a one-page report from the team as a whole that briefly summarizes the contribution of each team member to the assignment and comments on the project as a learning experience.

**Essay: 5% for proposal (due March 7) and 35% for essay (due April 11)**

Your essay, 10 to 12 pages long, should selectively apply concepts from Mintzberg’s *Simply Managing* or Siegel’s *Leaders in the Shadows*, or both readings, to an analysis of a local government administrative problem, situation or administrator you have observed, are familiar with, or have studied. You could write about the way a person who works in local government approaches their work, or a case example in which staff faced an issue they had to manage. Or you could examine relationships among administrators, or between staff and council or citizens. You could focus on staff in middle or senior management, a CAO, or a staff member or group in an entry level or unionized position. In your essay you should apply selected concepts from Mintzberg and/or Siegel that help you to understand and explain the behaviour you have chosen
to talk about. You may also make use of concepts from other readings or class material but this is not required.

This assignment will be most successful if you start with a question about the case or the person or people you are interested in. Your essay should focus on the question, and be clear, concise and analytical, and should demonstrate your effort to understand and explain the person(s) or situation you have observed by using concepts from the readings as lenses to assist in your analysis. Criteria for marking will be discussed in class.

If you have spent some time thinking about this assignment and you are not sure what to write about or how to approach it, please speak with Carol Agocs after class or make an appointment for a phone conversation.

You are asked to submit a brief proposal, no more than a page, through OWL on the Assignments tab, summarizing the topic you have chosen for your essay and the concepts you will use for your analysis by March 7. You will receive feedback intended to help you to develop an excellent essay.

The essay is due by April 11 and should be submitted under the course Assignments tab on OWL. Earlier submissions are welcome but no extensions are possible. Essays submitted after midnight on April 11 will have a penalty of 5% per day deducted from the mark awarded for this assignment. For information on the university’s policy on accommodation for medical illness see the Student Services web page.

### Required Texts and Other Readings

**Required:**

David Siegel, *Leaders in the Shadows: The Leadership Qualities of Municipal Chief Administrative Officers*, University of Toronto Press, 2015: available from Western University Bookstore


**Recommended:**


In addition, this course outline lists assigned articles and other readings available on OWL.

Readings are to be completed prior to the class for which they are assigned.
Use of electronic devices in class is permitted for course-related activities and note-taking, but not for texting, social media or other purposes extraneous to class content, because this creates distractions that will interfere with your learning experience and that of others.

Academic integrity is assumed and taken seriously. Clarification of what constitutes a Scholastic Offense under university policy is available at https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf

Student Accessibility Services, working with academic programs, provides confidential support for graduate students to ensure accessibility by arranging appropriate accommodations for disability. For more information see http://sdc.uwo.ca/ssd/

Schedule of Classes and Readings

January 10 (week 1)

Orientation to the course
Local democracy: possibilities and challenges
Public administration and management: similarities and differences

Reading

Mintzberg, Simply Managing, ch 1


January 17 (week 2)

Three Models of Public Administration: Theory and Applications in Local Government

Reading (OWL)


January 24  (week 3)

The Different Worlds of Elected Officials, Staff, Citizens and Stakeholders: How Can They Work Together?

Reading

Siegel, introduction and chapter 1

Peter Constantinou, “Political Acuity and Staff-Council Relations,” Canadian Journal of Local Government, November 2017 (OWL)

For discussion: “Calgary Council eyes privatizing services” (OWL)

January 31  (class 4)

Citizen Engagement: Public Administration With Communities

Reading: required


“IAP2 Public Participation Core Values” (OWL)

Reading: recommended


John Clayton Thomas, “Citizen, Customer, Partner: Thinking about Local Governance with and for the Public,” Alliance for Innovation, Connected Communities, pp. 57-61.

February 7  (class 5)

Structure and Culture of City Hall: Moving Toward Post-bureaucracy?

Reading  (continued on page 6

Mintzberg, Simply Managing, chapter 2

Siegel, chapter 4 and conclusion

For discussion: “Nanaimo Council Rebuilds” (OWL)

**February 14 (class 6)**

**Toward Equity and Inclusiveness in Municipal Services and Employment**

**Reading**


**February 21   No Class**

**February 28 (class 7)**

**Motivated and Empowered Staff**

**Reading:** required

Siegel, chapter 2 and 3

Mintzberg, chapter 3


**Recommended**

March 7 (class 8)

Public Administration in Small Communities

Guest speaker: Rob Adams, MPA, CAO, Municipality of Grey Highlands

Reading: required

Siegel, chapters 5 and 6

Joe O’Connor, “Small Towns that Refuse to Die”, Financial Post, January 2, 2019 (OWL)

Case for discussion: Ron Shaw and Matthew Crozier, “Bringing Public Dialog to You: The Business Case for Online Public Engagement,” Bang the Table, no date.

March 14 (class 9)

Addressing Wicked Problems: The Test of Citizen-focused Governance

Reading

Mintzberg, chapter 4, 5 and 6


Recommended

March 21 (class 10)

Student Presentations:

1. Participatory budgeting: Can it be a meaningful vehicle for citizen engagement in local decision-making?

Reading


2. London’s ranked ballot: How did staff deal with the challenge of change? Was the result worth the effort?

Reading

Kyle Edwards, “Was London’s Pioneering Ranked-ballot Election a Success?” MacLeans.ca, Nov. 19, 2018 (OWL)


March 28 (class 11)

Student Presentations

1. Sidewalk Labs Toronto: Citizen engagement or exploitation? Who will benefit?

Reading


Rosemary Frei, “Plan to Re-imagine Toronto’s Waterfront: How Much Does the Public Know About It?” rabble.ca, Dec. 6, 2018 (OWL)

Reading


April 4 (class 12)

1. Student Presentation

Inclusive citizen engagement: How can local governments successfully involve Indigenous residents in governance?

Reading:


Class Exercise: Toronto’s Neighbourhood Action Teams Case

Required Reading

Carol Agocs, “Toronto’s Neighbourhood Action Teams Case”, 2011 (OWL): prepare to work on the discussion questions at the end of the case in class