

Western University
Department of Political Science
Issues in Local Government
Public Administration 9917L
Summer 2022

June 13-17, 9am-4pm daily
Social Science Centre 4255
Writing retreat rooms: SSC 4103 and 4105

Instructor: Joe Lyons
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Course Objectives: This is the capstone course in the MPA program. The objectives are two-fold. First, the course allows students to get constructive critical feedback on their MPA research projects in progress. Second, 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.

Course Organization: The course will consist of a combination of student presentations, guest speakers, and class discussions. Each student will also be able to take advantage of a mini ‘writing retreat’ for one designated research report presentation session when they do not have presentation, discussant, or audience member responsibilities.

Readings: There is minimal reading in this course. Selected readings have been assigned to introduce topics covered by student presentations, guest speakers, and the instructor. All 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: In acknowledgement of everyone’s exhaustion from the ongoing pandemic and moving back and forth between online and in-person learning, course requirements have been scaled back. While the two main objectives of the course remain, the emphasis this year will be heavily on helping students towards the completion of their research reports. In light of these considerations, the course will be graded on a pass/fail basis. Marks will still be allocated for class participation and research presentations, but final grades will be submitted and appear on transcripts as either PAS (pass) or FAI (fail).

1. *Class Participation.* Two items make up the class participation grade:

a. **Attendance and Participation.** You must attend all class and presentation and/or writing retreat sessions and participate during discussions. Students are expected to ask questions and provide feedback on their peers’ presentations and to engage with the instructor and guest speakers.

All students must attend the full class session each day. Only those presenting on their research report or assigned as discussants are required to attend the research report presentation

component (details below). If you are unable to attend a class or small group meeting, you should advise the instructor in advance.

b. **Presentation Discussant.** Each student will be assigned as a discussant to a peer's presentation. In your role as discussant, you are expected to ask **two** thoughtful and helpful questions about the presenter's research project. Discussant assignments (names in brackets) are included in the presentation schedule below.

2. *Presentation on Research Project.* Students will prepare a short presentation – no more than 12 minutes – on their final research project. This presentation is an opportunity for you to receive constructive feedback on your research project from the instructor and your peers. It also gives you practice presenting research in a way that is interesting and engaging, which is a skill itself. The group benefits from learning about important and emerging issues in local government.

The content of your presentation will vary depending on how advanced your project is and when you plan to complete. In general, I expect you to: (a) state your research question(s); (b) briefly outline your research design; (c) present a couple of highlights of what you have done so far and what you still need to do; and (d) 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. The goal is to get as many helpful comments and suggestions as possible. Others may have faced similar challenges, so the group is a good sounding board.

PowerPoint facilities will be available, but PowerPoint is not required (it's your choice).

Evaluation:

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|--------------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Class Participation: | 50% |
| Attendance and Participation (40%) | |
| Presentation Discussant (10%) | |
| 2. Presentation on Research Project: | 50% |

Program and University Policies

Enrollment Restrictions:

Enrollment in this course is restricted to graduate students in the Local Government Program, as well as any student that has obtained special permission to enroll in this course from the course instructor as well as the Graduate Chair (or equivalent) from the student's home program.

Statement on Academic Offences:

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following website: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf

University Services

Accessible Education Western (AEW):

Western is committed to achieving barrier-free accessibility for all its members, including graduate students. As part of this commitment, Western provides a variety of services devoted to

promoting, advocating, and accommodating persons with disabilities in their respective graduate program.

Graduate students with disabilities (for example, chronic illnesses, mental health conditions, mobility impairments) are strongly encouraged to register with Accessible Education Western (AEW), a confidential service designed to support graduate and undergraduate students through their academic program. With the appropriate documentation, the student will work with both AEW and their graduate programs (normally their Graduate Chair and/or Course instructor) to ensure that appropriate academic accommodations to program requirements are arranged. These accommodations include individual counselling, alternative formatted literature, accessible campus transportation, learning strategy instruction, writing exams and assistive technology instruction.

Health/Wellness Services:

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Course Schedule and Required Readings

Monday, June 13, Morning Session

9-10 **Introduction and Organization**

10:30-noon **Public Service in the Digital Age**

Readings: Mergel, Ines, Noella Edelman, and Nathalie Haug. 2019. "Defining digital transformation: Results from expert interviews." *Government Information Quarterly* 36, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2019.06.002>.

Clarke, Amanda. 2020. "Digital government units: What are they and what do they mean for digital era public management renewal?" *International Public Management Journal* 23, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10967494.2019.1686447>

Case Study: "Hacking bureaucracy: Reimagining California's food stamp program in the digital age."

Monday, June 13, Afternoon Session

1-3pm **Research Report Presentations: Internal Organizational Dynamics**

Ashley Bilodeau Analyzing municipal CAO recruitment processes (Mike Henry)

- Reid Doyle Hot topics: A case study of e-learning and professional development in a municipal fire service (Sylvia Fraser)
- Wei Jiang Workforce diversity management in Ontario Police Services: The role of senior leadership (Stefan Zhelev)
- Melanie King Returning to the municipal government office after a pandemic: A case study in municipal change management (Emalee Patrick)

Writing retreat: Sharon Deebrah, Jeff Loney, Elizabeth Reimer

3:15-3:30 **First Day Wrap-up**

Tuesday, June 14, Morning Session

9-10 **Deconstructing Excellent Research Reports**

Reading: Review either Michael Longeway’s or Renato Pullia’s research report – available on OWL

10-12:30 **Research Report Presentations: Municipal Elections Issues**

Abdul Katawazy Online voting in Ontario municipal elections (Reid Doyle)

Max Rubin Finding the gap: Is there truly a voter turnout gap between municipal and federal elections when you go to the local level? (Jessica Ruddell)

Ruth-Elen Tisdale The role and effectiveness of election campaign finance compliance audit committees (Elizabeth Reimer)

Writing Retreat: Ashley Bilodeau, Karen Govan, Mike Henry, Sooriya Jayandan

Tuesday, June 14, Afternoon Session

1:30-3:30 **Guest Speaker: Michael Genova**, Chief, Communications and Economic Development, City of Vaughan

Reading: TBD

Wednesday, June 15, Morning Session

9-10 **Program Debrief**

10:30-12:30 **Guest Speakers: Alizabeth George-Antone**, Indigenous Community Liaison Advisor, Anti-Racism & Anti-Oppression Division, City of

London and **James Jenkins**, Owner/Principal Consultant Ajijaak Solutions

Reading: Evergreen and Future Cities Canada. 2022. *Civic-Indigenous placekeeping and partnership building toolkit*, <https://futurecitiescanada.ca/portal/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2022/02/fcc-civic-indigenous-toolkit-final-2022.pdf> (especially Context and Timeline; pick and choose from Teachings, Tools, and Approaches pp. 33-120 and Case Studies pp. 136-157).

Wednesday, June 15, Afternoon Session

1:30-3:30pm **Research Report Presentations: Issues in Economic Development**

Raphael Costa Crisis-induced policy change in economic development (Karen Govan)

Sharon Deebrah Business improvement areas and downtown vacancies (Adam Ager)

Stefan Zhelev Do large single-tier municipal purchasing bylaws in Ontario comply with the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) framework on standing offers or multi-list pre-qualifications? (Abdul Katawazy)

Jeff Loney Tax increment financing: The impact of incentives on investment attraction in Ontario's small and medium-sized municipalities (Ashley Bilodeau)

Writing Retreat: Wei Jiang, Melanie King, Brad Weber, Jessica Ruddell

Thursday, June 16, Morning Session

9:30-noon Research Report Presentations: Regulations, Strategies, Standards, and Public Value

Sylvia Fraser Do City of Toronto Divisions align with the City's Corporate Strategic Plan? (Sharon Deebrah)

Jessica Ruddell Do Canadian municipal vehicle and equipment training programs have an impact on the number of preventable collisions for municipal fleet assets? (Melanie King)

Brad Weber Coming down the pipe: a review of London's sewer maintenance standards (Alex Denonville)

Kevin De Leebeeck Measuring public value through local e-government (Wei Jiang)

William Bond Long-term residential rental licensing in Ontario (Sooriya Jayandan)

Writing Retreat: Adam Ager, Max Rubin, Ruth-Elen Tisdale, Reid Doyle

Thursday, June 16, Afternoon Session

1-2 Guest Speaker: Paul Schmidt, Western's Writing Support Centre

2:30-4 **Issues in Council-Staff Relations**

Karen Govan An in-depth look at the roles and responsibilities of council and staff in the Municipal Act in Ontario (Max Rubin)

Alex Denonville Onboarding and its impacts: A longitudinal study of the onboarding process and its influence on new councillors (Ruth-Elen Tisdale)

Sooriya Jayandan The administration of electronic meetings in Wellington County and Waterloo Region (Bradley Weber)

Writing Retreat: Bill Bond, Raph Costa, Kevin De Leebeeck, Emalee Patrick

Friday, June 17, Morning Session

9-11 **Research Report Presentations: Issues in Intergovernmental Relations**

Adam Ager Have Ontario's land use planning appeal system reforms made a difference? (Jeff Loney)

Mike Henry Municipal efforts to effect provincial policy change (Kevin De Leebeeck)

Emalee Patrick Municipal-Indigenous partnership: A case study examining the City of London's commitment to Indigenous relationship building (Raph Costa)

Elizabeth Reimer The 2019 Ontario Regional Government Review: Resultant impacts and efficiencies in lieu of direct provincial interference (Bill Bond)

Writing Retreat: Alex Denonville, Sylvia Fraser, Stefan Zhelev, Abdul Katawazy

11-11:30 **Wrap-up and Goodbyes!**