**Assignment Due Dates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly summaries</td>
<td>Any four weeks of your choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book review presentation</td>
<td>April 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WebCT discussion</td>
<td>June 5 by 7 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book review report</td>
<td>May 03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 1</td>
<td>May 03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 2</td>
<td>May 31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Course Information**

**Catalog description**
“The MPA graduate core seminar examines the major concepts and issues in public administration, the history and development of the modern public service and the bureaucracy. The students will do an investigation of the role of the public sector in American society, law, economy, and current trends in the public sector. Key course areas are the national political institutions and processes, and professional standards and ethics are studied.”

**Course overview**
This survey seminar examines a selection of issues, ideas, and problems impacting contemporary public administration. Topics range from knowledge creation, the politics of history, PA’s role in civil society, and motivation, leadership, and decision making.

**Goals**
By the end of the course students should:
1. Identify important issues impacting contemporary PA and understand why they are important
2. Identify the role of PA in civil society
3. Identify the characteristics of synthetic thinking
4. Demonstrate synthetic thinking in their discussions and writing

**MPA program goals**
The course meets the following goals of the MPA program (through the listed assignments):
1b: Students will be able to produce focused, coherent, and grammatically correct written communications applicable to government and nonprofit management. (Essays, book report)
2c: Students will be able to explain the key elements of public administration theory, organizational theory, and organizational behavior. (Essays, class discussion)
3a: Students will be able to apply theories to practical policy and administrative situations. (Essays, class discussion)
3d: Students will be able to describe and apply a range of ethical perspectives to ethical dilemmas inherent in Public Administration. (Class
discussion, book report)
3f: Students will be able to organize and defend an argument. (Class discussion, presentation, WebCT discussion)

Reading Materials

Reader The course uses a reader containing articles. The reader is available for temporary checkout at the circulation desk of the library.

Book for review Each student will select a book from the provided list for the review presentation and report. Many of the listed books are in the CSUB library or at the Beale library. CSUB’s library can get these books for you through interlibrary loan (if you give them enough advance notice).

Assignments

Attendance & participation Since this is a seminar, the course depends heavily upon class discussions. You are expected to attend every class session having completed the assigned readings. Every session will involve students in discussion through questions on the readings. Respect for the opinions of others should be demonstrated in these discussions.

Weekly reviews These are one page (single spaced, 10 or 12 point font) reviews of a week’s assigned readings. The review will identify the common themes in the readings and comment on how the readings throw light on the themes. You must also provide one or two discussion questions at the end of the reviews (I may use these questions during class discussions). You can select any four weeks to submit these reviews (you don’t have to signup in advance). Submit a copy of the assignment (no E-mails) at the start of the class session. Do not submit late or if you are not attending a class session. You do not have to include citations and references.

Book report This assignment consists of a presentation and a written report on a book you choose from the assigned list. By the second class session you will have to tell me which book you will review and select a date for your presentation. The list of books is online at www.csub.edu/~ccommuri/671bookslist.htm

Presentation: The 10 minute presentation should consist of a brief discussion of the premise of the book followed by your analysis and critique of its key arguments. You must present one or two discussion questions to the class at the end.

Written report: A written review of the book is due by 7PM of Monday, June 5. In this 4 page report (double spaced, 12 point font) you will summarize the key arguments in the book and critique it. You will also relate the ideas in the book to the themes we discuss in the class and in the other readings. Please submit a hard copy (no E-mail). Please follow the APA style manual.

Essays These essays provide an opportunity for you to synthesize the literature and arrive at an original position on some of the questions we explore during the term. I will assign a list of questions from which you will select. Each essay should be about 5 pages (double spaced, 12 point font, not counting ‘works cited’). Please submit a hard copy at the start of class (no E-mail). Please follow the APA style manual. The first essay is due on May 03 and the second essay is due on May 31.
WebCT discussion: This is due during the 4th week; further instructions will be given in class.

Late submissions: Two points will be deducted from your total score for every day that an assignment is late.

**Evaluation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points for assignments</th>
<th>Weekly reviews (4 x 10) = 40</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Book report (presentation) = 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Book report (written) = 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Review essays (2 x 25) = 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WedCT discussion &amp; report = 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attendance = 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participation = 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum possible points</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Letter grade cutoffs**

- A: 144; A-: 136; B+: 128; B: 120; B-: 112; C+: 104; C: 96; F: below 96

**Schedule**

**Week 1**

3/29

Introduction; overview of the course; discussion of expectations; epistemology

**Week 2**

4/5

Knowledge creation in PA

Readings


**Week 3**

4/12

History

Readings

Week 4  
4/19  
Social capital  
No class meeting; **WebCT discussion and report.**

Readings  

Week 5  
4/26  
Third party government  
Readings  

Week 6  
5/3  
Organizational behavior  
**Essay 1 due**

Readings  
Week 7
5/10
Decision making

Readings

Week 8
5/17
Leadership

Readings

Week 9
5/24
Ethics

Readings
Week 10  Review and presentations.  
5/31  Essay 2 due  

Wed. 6/7  Book report due  
(Drop off in my office by 7 PM).

Other Policies

Academic honesty & classroom conduct
All CSUB students are expected to maintain high standards of academic integrity. Please refer to the university catalog for the official policy in this regard. Severe penalties apply for cheating, plagiarism, submitting someone else’s work as one’s own, and for other instances of academic dishonesty. Similarly, all students are expected to demonstrate professionalism and respect for others so that academic discourse and debate can occur freely. Students should display courtesy and consideration towards each other in all their communications. Disruptive behavior will destroy a positive learning environment and thus will result in disciplinary sanctions.

Incompletes
Students are expected to finish this course once they are past the ‘drop and add’ date. An ‘incomplete’ may be given at my discretion if there is a documented emergency.

Students with disabilities
In accordance with university policy special accommodations will be made for students with disabilities. Students needing accommodation will need to notify me by the second week of the term. CSUB’s Office of Services for Students with Disabilities has stringent deadlines for handling examination materials. Students should contact that office at the earliest possible date.

Cell phones
Please turn off cell phones during the class session.

Changes to the syllabus
I may need to change items in the syllabus under some circumstances. I will post an addendum in such cases on my web site: www.csub.edu/~ccommuri.

(3/28/2006)