

**YORK UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION**

AP/PPAS 4390 3.00 PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION OF ONTARIO

FALL 2020

LOCATION: Please note that this is a remote/online course. The entire course, including the submission of assignments, participation/discussion and test-taking, will take place on Zoom and the course's Moodle

TIME: TUESDAY 7 -10 PM

CLASSES: 3 hours per week
Tuesday: 7 – 10 pm
Classroom: Virtual via Zoom

INSTRUCTOR: Derek Lett, BA - Spec. Hons (York), MPA (Queen's)
Virtual Office Hours: Tuesday 5:00 – 7:00 pm or after class, by appointment
Email Address: lettde@yorku.ca

Technical requirements for taking the course:

Several platforms will be used in this course (e.g., Moodle, Zoom, etc.) through which students will interact with the course materials, the course director, as well as with one another. Please review this syllabus to determine how the class meets (in whole or in part), and how office hours and presentations will be conducted.

Students shall note the following:

- Zoom is hosted on servers in the U.S. This includes recordings done through Zoom.
- If you have privacy concerns about your data, provide only your first name or a nickname when you join a session.
- The system is configured in a way that all participants are automatically notified when a session is being recorded. In other words, a session cannot be recorded without you knowing about it.

Please review the [technology requirements and FAQs for Moodle](#).

To fully participate in the course and to appear on camera for seminar discussion and exams, students will need a stable, higher-speed internet connection, a computer with webcam and microphone, and/or a smart device with these features.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This seminar explores the institutional structures that underpin public administration in Ontario and examines how these structures shape policymaking and public management in an era when states, including sub-national states, are required to practice governance in partnership with multiple actors.

The seminar will begin with a review and analysis of the governance structures of Canada's most important sub-national jurisdiction, Ontario, comparing the bureaucratic construct contemplated in the *Public Service of Ontario Act, 2006* with the theoretical typology of an impartial, professional bureaucracy put forward by German sociologist, Max Weber. We will consider the Westminster model of government and the role of such bodies as the provincial legislature, independent legislative officers, line ministries and arms-length agencies, boards and commissions. The structure of Ontario's local municipal governments will also be examined.

We will discuss the government policy-shaping and decision-making processes, the role and influence of stakeholders external to government and the policy instruments and tools used to support informed decision-making.

As an experiential component, the course will conclude with a simulated cabinet meeting in which student teams will prepare a detailed cabinet submission in a policy area to be assigned and present their initiative that will be discussed in the seminar.

Prerequisites: AP/PPAS/POLS 3190 6.00 or prior to 2009 AK/PPAS/POLS 3410 6.00 or GL/POLS 2500 6.00 or permission of the instructor. Course credit exclusions: None.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES OF THIS COURSE:

1. After completing this course, students will become better informed about the Ontario government and will have the core knowledge and understanding to assume a career in the public service of Ontario, the broader public sector or in not-for-profit organizations.
2. Each student should develop an in-depth understanding of the main provincial and local institutions in Ontario, including the provincial legislature, cabinet, line ministries, agencies and local municipal government.

3. Each student should gain an in-depth understanding of the decision-making processes employed by Ontario's public service and the broader public sector, including program review, renewal and transformation, budgeting and estimates, and cabinet submissions.
4. Students should learn critical career-related skills necessary to make presentations and prepare briefing materials for the Premier, Ministers and senior officials either in a capacity as public servants or as representatives of outside agencies or organizations.
5. Through teamwork, each student should be provided the opportunity to develop and practice skills necessary to undertake a project that requires a division of labour and collaboration with others.
6. This course should give students the opportunity to improve their basic social science research, critical thinking, analytical and communication skills, especially their oral and written presentation skills.

READINGS

No textbooks are required for this course. However, chapters 11 and 14 in **Provinces: Canadian Provincial Politics, 3rd Edition**, edited by Christopher Dunn, University of Toronto Press, 2016 is recommended and can be accessed at the library. Specific readings are listed in the week-by-week outline.

Relevant Periodicals

Canadian Public Administration

Canadian Public Policy

Canadian Annual Review of Politics and Public Affairs (annual publication that includes a chapter on Ontario each year)

Relevant and Helpful Websites

Government of Ontario: <https://www.ontario.ca>

Ministry of Finance: <http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/>

Legislative Assembly of Ontario: <http://www.ontla.on.ca/web/home.do>

Queen's Park Briefing: <http://www.qbriefing.com>

The Globe and Mail newspaper: www.theglobeandmail.ca

The Toronto Star newspaper: <https://www.thestar.com/>

Institute On Governance: <http://iog.ca/>

Nesta (innovation foundation): <https://www.nesta.org.uk/>

Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives: <https://policyalternatives.ca/>

Policy Options magazine: <http://policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/>

Institute for Research on Public Policy: <http://irpp.org/>

COURSE MARKING SCHEME:

Class Assignments (5 x 2%)	10% (Individual)
• September 22, 2020	
• October 6, 2020	
• November 3, 2020	
• November 10, 2020	
• November 24, 2020	
Class Participation (includes attendance)	10% (Individual)
Mid-Term Test	10% (Individual)
Class Presentation	20% (Group)
Cabinet Submission	30% (Group)
Final Term Test	20% (Individual)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Moodle:

Please check Moodle regularly for updates to the material discussed in class, announcements, etc. You will be required to submit assignments via Moodle and will regularly receive information throughout the course.

Class Attendance:

Regularly attending class is of vital importance to the learning experience for this course. It is in your best interest to attend all classes, as students who come to class regularly generally perform better than those with poor attendance records. The detailed content of the seminar will serve as the basis for questions for regular in-class assignments and on the final examination. To ensure that all students will have access to lecture material, especially if they are unable to attend class (e.g., due to personal or family circumstances, unstable Internet connection, etc.), the lecture will be recorded and posted to Moodle within 24 hours of the class. When a media recording will occur in the learning space (e.g. seminar discussions and breakout rooms), ample notice will be provided to students in case of sensitivity regarding their images and/or voices being captured. All media recordings will be deleted within one week of the end of classes.

Class Participation:

All students will be expected to participate in discussion in class, including on the discussion of current issues. To earn top marks in this area, students must (1) offer value-added insight, (2) demonstrate preparedness by completing the readings for each seminar and (3) be actively engaged in class discussions/projects. A participation rubric

will be shared on Moodle and a mid-term participation mark will be provided for feedback.

Class Assignments:

Short in-class assignments related to the lecture and seminar content will be administered throughout the term to assess student learning and comprehension of the concepts and themes covered. Commencing in Week #2, 5 in-class assignments worth 2% each will be administered in the last 30 minutes of class. The assignment will consist of students writing a one-page reflection essay, approx. 250 words in 12 point font (Arial), that summarizes their understanding of the readings and theme discussed in that class. **Papers will be assessed on three criteria (1) quality of analysis (2) evidence that your analysis demonstrates that you have read and understood the course readings, and (3) clarity of your writing i.e. grammatically correct and well structured.** In the event of a missed class, the student must complete a summary of the readings and upload the completed assignment before the end of that day's class.

Late Penalties:

All assignments are expected to be handed in on-time (or early). **Late assignments will be subject to a penalty of 5% points for each day that they are late to a maximum of five days. After the fifth day, no late assignments will be accepted and ZERO will be given for that assignment. In the case of the cabinet submission, after December 8, 2020, no late submissions will be accepted and you will be given ZERO for that written assignment.**

Mid-Term Test: October 27, 2020

The mid-term test will be administered in the first hour of class in Week #7 (after the Fall Reading Week). The test is worth 10% of the total course grade and will gauge students' comprehension of the various aspects of the structure and role of the Ontario government – the theme covered in Weeks #1 through #6. This test will be completed prior to the class advancing to the next theme - policy making process and instruments. Additional detail and sample questions will be provided in advance.

Class Presentation (Group) – Beginning November 3, 2020

Beginning in Week #4, students will be assigned to a group (maximum of three members each representing a different ministry) and assigned a cross-ministry policy proposal on which they must collaborate to develop a cabinet submission and power point presentation deck. In-class presentations will begin in Week #8. Each presentation must contain the following components as it applies to the topic being discussed:

- **Decision sought** – why is this issue important and what type of approval are you seeking?
- **Context for Action** – Why now? What's the evidence? What are consequences of inaction?
- **Impact Analysis** – Financial, economic, regulatory.
- **Messaging**, including public relations with the media. What are the most effective and relevant media?
- **Stakeholder response**, including internal and external such as interest groups, social movements, other ministries, other levels of government and labour unions with an assessment of their power and influence to maintain or change policy direction.

Students must ensure that all of these subjects are covered in their presentation slides. Presentations should last a maximum of 15 minutes and slide decks should not be longer than 10 pages. Additional details will be provided in class.

Cabinet Submission – Due December 8, 2020

Each student team's presentation (described above) will take place in a simulated meeting of the Cabinet. The power point presentation deck must be supported by a detailed cabinet submission (called the Decision Document), both of which must be submitted to the instructor and will factor into the final grade. A template of the Decision Document will be provided to assist students with preparing their final paper.

Each submission should be at least 10-12 pages long, typed in 12-point font (Arial), double spaced i.e. at least 2500 – 3000 words in length. It should be uploaded to Moodle by the end of class (10 p.m.) on the due date.

Final Term Test – December 1, 2020

Cabinet Submission due – December 8, 2020

COURSE GUIDELINES

Code of Student Conduct and Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters

Students are expected to conduct themselves according to the York University Student Code of Conduct. It is available at <http://www.yorku.ca/oscr/studentconduct.html>.

In this course, we strive to maintain academic integrity to the highest extent possible. Please familiarize yourself with the meaning of academic integrity by completing SPARK's [Academic Integrity module](#) at the beginning of the course. Breaches of academic integrity range from cheating to plagiarism (i.e., the improper crediting of another's work, the representation of another's ideas as your own, etc.). All instances of academic dishonesty in this course will be reported to the appropriate university authorities, and can be punishable according to the [Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#).

COURSE OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

Week #1. Ontario Government structure and roles – September 15, 2020

Having a basic, common understanding of how the Ontario government is structured and the roles and responsibilities of the various bodies is essential to inform how citizens engage with government and how to influence government policy. Knowledge of the division of powers in Canada between federal, provincial and municipal (local) government is also necessary.

READINGS:

Required	Recommended
https://www.ontario.ca/page/history-government	J. Roy, "Beyond Westminster governance: Bridging politics and public service into the networked era", Canadian Public Administration , December 2008, Volume 51, Number 4, pp. 541-568. Dunn, Christopher, "Premiers and Cabinets" in Provinces: Canadian Provincial Politics, 3rd Edition , edited by Christopher Dunn. University of Toronto Press, 2016, Chapter 11, pp. 315-362.
Discussion Topic: <i>Does the convention of ministerial responsibility still hold? Is there a particular Westminster convention that is the most critical to our system of government?</i>	

Week #2. Officers of the Legislature – September 22, 2020

Guest speaker: Ontario's Integrity Commissioner, the Honourable J. David Wake.

Ontario has a number of governmental or parliamentary "watchdogs" who are independent, non-partisan officers appointed by the Legislature. Their role is to hold government/members of parliament accountable and to prevent or minimize the potential abuse of power or authority. In Ontario, these officers cover the areas of provincial finance and the environment (Provincial Auditor and Financial Accountability Officer), ethical conduct and lobbying (Integrity Commissioner), transparency

(Information and Privacy Commissioner), elections administration and monitoring (the Chief Electoral Officer), access to quality government services, including French language services and the protection of vulnerable children (Provincial Ombudsman). With Ontario's Integrity Commissioner as an example, we will examine how these Officers undertake their mandates and how their role respects the "sovereignty" of Parliament.

READINGS:

Required	Recommended
<p><i>Independent and Accountable: Modernizing the role of Agents of Parliament and Legislatures</i>, Public Policy Forum, April 2018. http://www.ppforum.ca</p> <p>Bergman, Gwyneth and Emmet Macfarlane, <i>The impact and role of Officers of Parliament: Canada's conflict of interest and ethics commissioner</i>. Canadian Public Administration, Vol. 61, No. 1 (March 2018), pp.5-25.</p> <p>Agents of Parliament: The emergence of a New Branch and Constitutional Consequences for Canada, by Jefferey G. Bell, Institute on Governance, 2006. http://iog.ca/publications/agents-of-parliament-the-emergence-of-a-new-branch-and-constitutional-consequences-for-canada/</p>	<p>S. Carl, "Toward a definition and taxonomy of public sector ombudsmen", Canadian Public Administration Journal, Volume 55, Number 2 (June 2012), 203-220.</p> <p>Thomas, Paul G. "The Past, Present and Future of Officers of Parliament" in Canadian Public Administration, Volume 46, No. 3 (Fall 2003), 287-314.</p>
<p>Discussion Topic: <i>How essential are officers of the legislature to our system of democratic government? Officers of the legislature hold the government and members accountable. Who should hold them accountable?</i></p> <p>ASSIGNMENT #1 DUE</p>	

Week #3. A professional public service – September 29, 2020

Based on the Westminster model of government that enshrines the politics-administration dichotomy, the requirement for an impartial, professional bureaucracy has been instituted. German sociologist, Max Weber, described the characteristics of

the modern bureaucracy in his 1922 work, *Economy and Society*. Eighty-four years later and a continent away, the *Public Service of Ontario Act, 2006* enshrines similar principles into law.

READINGS:

Required	Recommended:
<p>The Public Service of Ontario Act, 2006 https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/06p35</p> <p>Max Weber, <i>Economy and Society</i>, Chapter XI, pp. 956 – 1000 https://archive.org/stream/MaxWeberEconomyAndSociety/MaxWeberEconomyAndSociety_djvu.txt</p>	<p>Rasmussen, Ken “Converging Provincial Public Services” in <i>Provinces: Canadian Provincial Politics, 3rd Edition</i>, edited by Christopher Dunn, University of Toronto Press, 2016, Chapter 14 pp. 422-439.</p> <p>“The curious case of Boaty McBoatface..” https://mowatcentre.ca/the-curious-case-of-boaty-mcboatface/</p>
<p>Discussion Topic: <i>What is the evidence that Ontarians “trust” their government? What is the role of the public service in advancing the legitimacy of public institutions? In the real world, is the concept of a neutral public service a reality or fiction?</i></p>	

Week #4. **Policymaking: Decision processes in the OPS – October 6, 2020**

Students assigned to groups for group project and class presentations.

Policy ideas and government priorities are generated from various sources and then communicated through various means such as the political party platform, speech from the throne, mandate letters, budget, etc. Interest groups can play a significant role in shaping policy priorities.

READINGS:

Required	Recommended
<p>G. Flynn, “Rethinking policy capacity in Canada: The role of parties and election platforms in government policy-making”, <i>Canadian Public Administration</i>, Volume 54, Number 2 (June 2011), 235-253.</p> <p>Hallsworth, Michael and Jill Rutter, <i>Making Policy Better: Improving Whitehall’s core business</i>. Institute for Government, 2011.</p>	<p>Visit the government’s website and find, identify and review Minister mandate letters, Throne Speech and Premier statements to determine the current government priorities.</p> <p>Ontario’s 2018 Speech from the Throne https://www.ontario.ca/page/premier</p>

Required	Recommended
Schacter, Mark and Phillip Haid, <i>Cabinet Decision-Making in Canada: Lessons and Practices</i> . Institute On Governance , April 1999.	
Discussion Topic: <i>Should the public service be allowed to provide policy advice to political parties in the development of their election platforms?</i> ASSIGNMENT #2 DUE	

Week #5. Fall Reading Week – No Class – October 13, 2020

Week #6. Decision-making instruments – October 20, 2020

The key instruments used by the Ontario government to communicate information to decision makers will be examined – Briefing Note, House Book Note, Cabinet Submission.

READINGS:

Required	Recommended
Templates of decision support documents will be shared.	<i>Cabinet decision making in Canada: lessons and practices</i> . Mark Schacter with Phillip Haid, Ottawa: Institute on Governance, 1999. http://iog.ca/publications/cabinet-decision-making-in-canada-lessons-and-practices/
Discussion Topic: <i>In our system of Westminster government, is it truly cabinet decision making or Premier decision-making? Does the system allow the right balance to be struck between political and operational advice?</i>	

Week #7. Mid-Term Test (10%) – October 27, 2020

Innovations in policy analysis and development – October 27, 2020

Advancement in technology, the speed at which information is spread and consumed, demands for greater transparency in government are some of the many developments

that have influenced the need for new and innovative approaches to policy development. The application of behavioural insights (nudge theory), co-creation, crowd sourcing, design-thinking, prototyping and social enterprise approaches to policy development will be examined.

READINGS:

Required	Recommended
https://www.thestar.com/business/2013/04/05/nudge_here_nudge_there_can_bring_behaviour_change.html “Applying Behavioural Insights to Government Decision makers”, David Seigny, Institute on Governance http://iog.ca/publications/behavioural-economics-in-the-federal-public-sector/ Behavioural Insights articles (compiled).	Peter S. Goodman and Mari-Leena Kuosa, “Free Money For Jobless? Finland Opts to End Test” in New York Times , April 25, 2018, Business/Financial Section, p.6. Motsi, Gail, <i>Two Key Questions For Horizontal Policy Making and Implementation</i> . Institute On Governance , 2009.
Discussion Topic: <i>Can these innovative approaches to policymaking apply across the board or do certain ones work best for certain policy types or sectors? What about the policymakers themselves, how can they deal with their own biases?</i>	

Week #8. Stakeholder management – November 3, 2020

Guest speaker: Steve Skyers, Manager, Stakeholder Management, MGS

Class presentations begin. **Class Presentation #1:** Group #

READINGS:

Required Reading	Recommended
Evaluating Citizen Engagement in Policy Making by Gail Motsi, Institute on Governance, June 2009. http://iog.ca/publications/evaluating-citizen-engagement-in-policy-making/	P. Tsasis, “The politics of governance: Government-voluntary sector relationships”, Canadian Public Administration , Volume 51, Number 2, (June 2008), 265-290.
Discussion Topic: <i>Does it naturally follow that involving citizens/stakeholders in policy and program development results in better public policies/programs?</i> ASSIGNMENT #3 DUE	

Week #9. Management and Leadership in the OPS – November 10, 2020

Class Presentation #2: Group

While the question - are you a manager or a leader? – may sound like splitting hairs, there is a distinction with a difference. This seminar will examine how they are different along with how they relate to how people are hired, promoted and retained in the public service. The merit principle, employee engagement and the public sector value chain will all be explored.

READINGS:

Required	Recommended
Public Service Transformation – Summary of Results, Institute on Governance, August 27, 2014. http://iog.ca/publications/public-service-transformation-public-sector-human-resources-talent-management/	K. Kernaghan, “Getting engaged: Public –service merit and motivation revisited”, <i>Canadian Public Administration Journal</i> , March 2011, Volume 54, Number 1, pp. 1-21.
“Half of Ontario public service lack confidence in leadership, survey says”, QP Briefing, August 1, 2017 http://www.qpbriefing.com/2017/08/01/half-of-ontario-public-service-lack-confidence-in-leadership-survey-says/	Alexandra Hickey and S.E. Bennett, “Canadian public service employee satisfaction and its main drivers”, <i>Canadian Public Administration Journal</i> , March 2012, Volume 55, Number 1, pp. 5-23.
“Why People Really Quit Their Jobs”, Lori Goler, Janelle Gale, Brynn Harrington and Adam Grant, <i>Harvard Business Review</i> , January 23, 2018. https://hbr.org/2018/01/why-people-really-quit-their-jobs	
Discussion Topic: <i>Thinking about the public service of the future, what are the key skills and competencies public sector leaders need to be successful compared to what was needed in the past?</i>	
ASSIGNMENT #4 DUE	

Week #10. Ontario's Budget and Fiscal Cycle – November 17, 2020

Class Presentation #3: Group

The Ontario government's fiscal year runs from April 1st to March 31st. There are a number of processes and documents that must be tracked and reported on pertaining to the previous fiscal year, the current fiscal year and future fiscal years.

READINGS:

Required	Recommended
Ontario's fiscal cycle http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/	TBD
Discussion Topic: <i>Has the Province found the right fiscal balance between deficit elimination(past), expenditure growth in priority areas (present) and reduction of the debt burden (future)?</i>	

Week #11. The Fall Economic Statement- November 24, 2020

Class Presentation #4: Group

This class will be dedicated to reviewing and analyzing the Fall Economic Statement when the Minister of Finance delivers it in the Legislature around this time of year.

READINGS:

Required	Recommended
The Ontario Ministry of Finance website to review the Minister's speech and other materials in support of the government's Economic Statement http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/	Media reports and analysis such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Queen's Park Briefing: http://www.qbriefing.com• <i>The Globe and Mail</i> newspaper: www.theglobeandmail.ca• The Toronto Star newspaper: https://www.thestar.com/
ASSIGNMENT #5 DUE	

Week #12. Final Term Test – December 1, 2020

Week #13. Cabinet Submission due – December 8, 2020 via Moodle

End of Classes – No class on December 8, 2020