

Course Outline

Fall/Winter 2024-2025 Y

Mondays, starting at 19:00 (7:00 PM), beginning September 9

CLH 110 Curtis Lecture Halls

eClass: [AP/PPAS 3190 B - Public Administration \(Full Year 2024-2025\)](#)

This course is delivered in-person, with classes meeting on the Keele campus.

Instructor

Professor John Wilkins

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One-day response to e-mail queries

Phone/in-person meetings by appointment

Professor Wilkins is a teaching practitioner with the School of Public Policy and Administration. He served as an international diplomat based in London (United Kingdom) and a career senior public servant in Canada. He was awarded the Lieutenant-Governor’s Medal for Excellence in Public Administration.

Course Description

Examines the theory and practice of policy making and public administration as well as the machinery of government, with particular reference to Canada. It discusses who makes policy, how policy is developed and implemented, and how the system is controlled and evaluated. Course credit exclusion: GL/POLS 2500 6.00. - Course Timetable

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Course Learning Outcomes

This course examines the theory and practice of institutional governance, policy making, and management practices in Canadian Public Administration. It discusses the fundamentals of how the system works, how policy is developed and implemented, and how public servants manage for results. The course imparts insights into public institutions, policies, practices, and leaders engaged in government decision making and issues management.

Learning Objectives. Third and fourth-year students who typically take this course accrue higher-order learning exposures as they progress toward postgraduate studies or professional careers. Experiential education marries academic learning with real-world expectations. It fills knowledge gaps and responds to demand for critical thinking.

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

- Describe the governance, operation, and performance of public institutions;
- Apply comparative strategies for public policy analysis and development;
- Assess the appropriateness and efficacy of public management practices;
- Detect trends, challenges, and prospects for Canadian Public Administration; and
- Recognize the intersection between Public Administration theory and practice.

Course Organization. The course is organized in three parts, as scheduled in the Class-by-Class Syllabus (pages 8-9):

- I. *Institutions.* The first part explains the WHY and WHO of Public Administration. It frames the concepts, contexts, roles, and relationships of public institutions necessary to understand good governance fundamentals.
- II. *Policies.* The second part explains the WHAT of Public Administration. It outlines the planning, analysis, design, and implementation of public policies necessary to manage rational problem-solving and decision-making processes.
- III. *Practices.* The third part explains the WHERE, WHEN, and HOW TO of Public Administration. It explores the form, function, capacity, and potential of good management practices necessary to achieve public policy outcomes.

Teaching Approach. The Instructor serves as an expert resource by facilitating self-study, clarifying topical issues, sharing wider experiences, and guiding the learning process. The Instructor is committed to: (1) creating a stimulating platform for challenging ideas and assumptions; (2) being available for questions and advice; and (3) being prompt, prepared, and respectful of all points of view. This does not mean accepting uncritically every argument. Public Administration is about using evidence and logic for strategic thinking and tactical action.

Learning Format. The course is grounded in experiential education that enables students to “learn by doing”. Students discuss lectures, readings, cases, exercises, and assignments in plenary and/or breakout. Learning is facilitated by readings, postings, recordings, and workshops. Student preparations outside class support action learning in-class. All assignment materials can be accessed anytime, anywhere via the course eClass site.

Classes are scheduled according to the Class-By-Class Syllabus (pages 8-9) and are delivered in-person as outlined below. Classes last up to three hours, including time for student exchanges and coaching.

TIME	COMPONENT	LEARNING ACTIVITY
Before Class	Preliminaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor preparation of lecture, briefing, or debriefing • Instructor posting of agenda, announcements, and materials • Student reading and preparation
19:00	Opening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class gathering, welcome, and story • Meeting objective and agenda • Announcements
19:15	Thematic Topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture, readings, and current events • Case study, exercise, or learning activity • Plenary/breakout discussion and Q&A
20:15	Action Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignment orientation, briefing, or debriefing • Plenary/breakout discussion and Q&A • Next class and closing
After Class	Follow-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor assignment preparations and grading • Student individual study and exchanges • Instructor response to requests for coaching and advice

Deliverables at a Glance

Students are expected to complete assignments according to schedule and quality requirements. The impact of each assignment on your final course grade is indicated in the table below. For details, please refer to Written Assignments, Projects, and Exams (pages 4-6).

Assignment	Quantity	% Weight	Total %	Responsibility	Due Date
Essay #1: Institutions	1	20	20	Individual	November 4
Essay #2: Policies	1	20	20	Individual	January 27
Essay #3: Practices	1	20	20	Individual	March 17
Case: Memorandum	1	40	40	Individual	April 4
			100%		

Course Material

Required reading for this course is:

Dunn, Christopher. Editor. 2018. *The Handbook of Canadian Public Administration*. Third Edition. Oxford University Press Canada. 561 Pages. ISBN 9780199026166, ISBN 9780199026173 (PDF).

Dunn (2018) is an acclaimed Canadian textbook on the theory and practice of Public Administration: “This edited collection identifies current issues, interprets their relevance, and blankets the Canadian scene more so than counterparts. [It] is a refreshed compendium of emerging themes and topical issues authored by leading scholars in the field. It paints an abstract portrait of twenty-first-century national political-administrative realities and aspirations upon the vast canvass of the decentralized and evolving landscape of Canadian federalism.” - John Wilkins

Chapter readings from Dunn (2018) are listed in the Class-by-Class Syllabus (pages 8-9). The text can be purchased through the [York University Bookstore](#). The Day1Digital E-Book is accessible online via eClass.

Supplementary readings are available on the York University (YU) eClass course webpage [AP/PPAS 3190 B - Public Administration \(Full Year 2024-2025\)](#). Please arrange for access, and check the site between classes. All remaining course readings and materials are posted on eClass.

Suggested readings may be flagged by the Instructor from time to time. Students may also request the Instructor to identify readings on specific subject matter of special interest.

Class Preparation and Participation

The in-person course format encourages student interdependence in learning.

Preparation. Students are expected to do advance readings and be prepared to engage in class. You are assumed to bring perspectives, knowledge, and experience that are of value to exploring course topics. While course materials are posted on eClass, you may wish to keep notes to reinforce your learning. On average, you should expect to spend 3-6 hours per class for reading and assignments.

Participation. Students are expected to multi-task across diverse streams of thought (theory) and activity (practice). The course works best when students attend classes in their entirety, volunteer questions, and keep pace with the schedule of assignments. Everyone is expected to contribute and communicate respectfully in a secure workspace, consistent with the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#), [Secretariat Policies](#), and General Academic Policies (pages 7-8). Students are welcome to network across the class and to form self-managed study groups or discussion forums.

Technology. [AP/PPAS 3190 B - Public Administration \(Full Year 2024-2025\)](#) is the eClass platform that enables students to interact with the course material, Instructor, and one another. [Zoom at YorkU](#) videoconferencing enables remote delivery and recording as necessary. Students are required to access a stable, higher-speed Internet connection, plus a computer or smart device with webcam and microphone.

Useful links for student computing information, resources, and help include:

[Student Guide to eClass](#)
[Zoom@YorkU Best Practices](#)
[Zoom@YorkU User Reference Guide](#)
[Computing for Students Website](#)
[Student Guide to eLearning at York University.](#)

Written Assignments, Projects, and Exams

The four assignments identified under Deliverables at a Glance (pages 2-3) are described in detail below. All support materials needed to complete these assignments are posted on eClass.

The costs and consequences of presenting late advice or inferior work are especially high in Public Administration. Increased expenditures and lost revenues go directly to fiscal deficits. They reduce spending power, discount public value, and undermine confidence in government. The multiplier effects on public policy outcomes impact people and change lives.

Policies and Penalties. Experiential learning calls for students to embrace high standards of quality, cost-effectiveness, and timeliness in their work. Course assignments simulate realistic public service working conditions and performance expectations to level the playing field for equitable student evaluation. Policies and penalties on late papers and page counts are intended to reinforce related guidance and learning outcomes.

The following implications will be administered across all assignments:

- Assignments must be received by the Instructor on or before the due date specified;
- Extensions must be pre-authorized before the due date for valid reasons (e.g., illness);
- Deferred assignments are only accepted when supported by proper documentation (e.g., medical);
- Late or missing assignments otherwise are not graded and/or receive a mark of zero (e.g., 0/20);
- Student rework of graded assignments may be allowed to facilitate learning without course credit;
- Page count limits observe stated format parameters and are inclusive of all content in the assignment, excepting the Bibliography;
- Excess page counts above the maximum length specified are penalized by not reading and grading papers beyond the page limit (e.g., 0 > 1 page = 0 marks available after the first page); and
- The Instructor's computer is the authoritative source for calculating lateness and page counts.

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) is not permitted to be used by students in this course. Submitting any work created through the use of generative AI tools will be considered a violation of YU's [Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#). If you do not know whether an online resource or tool can be used in this course, please contact the Instructor for guidance. For more information, please review [AI Technology & Academic Integrity: Information for Students](#).

ESSAYS #1-3: INSTITUTIONS / POLICIES / PRACTICES

Parameters: 1 page all-inclusive maximum length, excepting Bibliography; Word (or equivalent) document, plus optional PDF version; letter-size, portrait page; single-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch (2.54 cm) margins; paragraph/bullet format

Due Dates: November 4, January 27, March 17

Value: 20% x 3 = 60%

Page Count Penalty: 0 > 1 page

The Essays are the foundational component of the course. The purpose is to test student learning about the theory and practice of Public Administration. You will conduct desk-based research and draft responses to three overarching questions that are representative of the Institutions, Policies, and Practices parts of the course, respectively. You will draw upon related textbook readings, eClass postings, and your own research, observations, and insights to prepare responses. The intent is to advance student grasp of the complexities and issues of public institutions, policy analyses, and good management practices.

Preparation. Students working individually are asked to respond to three Essay Questions posted on eClass according to the schedule below. The Instructor will orient students to the task in workshop in Classes 2, 9, and 17, respectively. Additional discussion and coaching are available on request.

Essay #	Part	Orientation	Due	Debrief
1	Institutions	Class 2: September 16	Class 8: November 4	Class 9: November 11
2	Policies	Class 9: November 11	Class 16: January 27	Class 17: February 3
3	Practices	Class 17: February 3	Class 22: March 17	Class 23: March 24

Deliverable. Students are asked to write and format each essay in a single page, plus Bibliography. You should quality check your final work against assignment parameters and requirements. Please e-mail your response as an attachment to the Instructor by the due date above. The Instructor will acknowledge receipt, return graded feedback, and debrief the results in workshop in Classes 9, 17, and 23, respectively.

Evaluation. Essays will be assessed using five criteria, each weighted equally out of 20 marks:

1. Innovative (4) – researches and fills knowledge gaps, reframes issues using creative perspectives, embraces new approaches to Public Administration;
2. Relevant (4) – links clearly to topical themes and current issues, builds upon challenges in advancing leading thought, promotes elevated baselines of good practice;
3. Scholarly (4) – observes rigour in critical analysis (theory, method), follows rational evidence-based process, paves the way for action research;
4. Interdisciplinary (4) – tackles complex cross-cutting issues head-on, integrates good governance principles, adopts a big-picture whole-of-government view; and
5. Presentation (4) – observes page count limit, conforms to format parameters, follows writing/grammar/citation conventions.

CASE: MEMORANDUM

Parameters: 2 pages all-inclusive maximum length, excepting Bibliography; Word (or equivalent) document, plus optional PDF version; letter-size, portrait page; single-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch (2.54 cm) margins; memo/essay format

Due Date: April 4

Value: 40%

Page Count Penalty: 0 > 2 pages

The Case is the integrating component of the course. The purpose is to consolidate learning, advance critical thinking, and test new competencies. In the role of advisor, students will conduct desk-based research and draft a Memorandum on the central issue of the case. The product is intended to inform senior management decision making on the form and function of good governance. Visualizing the target audience for the Memorandum helps motivate and focus research and advice.

Case. The case study is posted on eClass under Class 17. It is grounded in a Canadian (federal, provincial, municipal, Indigenous) or foreign (country, international) jurisdiction. The task is to review and research the case, with a view to presenting rational arguments, empirical evidence, and practical advice. The Instructor will orient students to the Case Study/Question, Memo/Essay Format, and Conceptual Framework in workshop in Class 17. There will be follow-up briefing and coaching in workshop in Class 23 to reinforce preparations and interrogate the assignment.

Assessment. Students are asked to identify the case problems and opportunities. The task is to map the issues, identify the central issue, and plot strategies to improve governance. The Instructor will review the Case Question relative to the updated case context and good governance principles covered in Class 17. Coaching to help interpret the local context, assess case issues, and formulate creative strategies is available on request.

Deliverable. Students are asked to write a Memorandum to a target audience in response to the Case Question. The task is to assemble key information, arguments, and advice in paragraphs with reference to the Essay Format. Students should quality check their final work against assignment parameters and requirements. Please e-mail the Memorandum as an attachment to the Instructor by the due date. The Instructor will acknowledge receipt and return graded feedback before the end of the Winter term.

Evaluation. Memoranda will be assessed using five criteria:

1. Presentation of sound, clear, and coherent argumentation;
2. Demonstrated understanding of the issues under consideration;
3. Depth, breadth, and quality of analysis;
4. Originality of approach, arguments, observations, and insights; and
5. Professional presentation – length, format, writing, grammar, in-text citations.

Section headings, information organization, bullets, and visuals are discretionary in the Essay Format. Weightings are allocated notionally within the Memorandum according to a proforma outline:

SECTION	PAGES	MARKS
Memo Header	0.1	1
[Beginning]	0.4	9
[Middle]	1	20
[End]	0.5	9
Bibliography	∞	1
Total	2	40

Course Grades

Course grades conform to the 9-point system used in YU undergraduate programs.

Percentage Mark	Letter Grade	Grade Point	Description
90 – 100%	A+	9	Exceptional
80 – 89%	A	8	Excellent
75 – 79%	B+	7	Very Good
70 – 74%	B	6	Good
65 – 69%	C+	5	Competent
60 – 64%	C	4	Fairly Competent
55 – 59%	D+	3	Passing
50 – 54%	D	2	Marginally Passing
40 – 49%	E	1	Marginally Failing
0 – 39%	F	0	Failing

General Academic Policies

Academic Integrity. Honesty is fundamental to the integrity of university education and degree programs. It applies in every course offered. Cheating and plagiarism are serious academic offences that can result in severe sanctions. Quoting material without citing its source or using others' arguments without acknowledging authorship is dishonest and subject to penalties that can affect your grade and university standing. Rules regarding academic honesty apply to all academic materials submitted for credit in this course. Students are deemed to have read and have full knowledge of all such regulations and enforcement mechanisms. Please consult YU's [Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#). The University may verify the origin and creativity of all work submitted for academic credit, and all appropriate steps may be taken where necessary. It is suggested that you save draft assignments and rough notes in case intellectual property problems arise. For more resources, students should visit YU's [Academic Integrity](#) website and refer specifically to [SPARK](#).

Accommodation of Religious Observances. YU is committed to respecting the religious beliefs and practices of all members of the community and to accommodating observances of special significance to adherents. Should any due dates specified in the syllabus for an in-class presentation, assignment, or examination pose a conflict, please notify the Instructor in writing within the first three weeks of classes. More information is available at [Academic Accommodation for Students' Religious Observances](#).

Accommodation of Students with Disabilities. The YU Senate has adopted policy on [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Students who require accommodation in a course need to be registered with [Student Accessibility Services](#). A Letter of Accommodation should be provided to the Instructor as soon as possible after start of the course.

Attendance. Students are expected to attend all classes. Instructors are under no obligation to re-teach material that has already been taught during a regularly scheduled class. Students seeking adjustments to scheduled class activities and evaluations by way of medical, religious, compassionate, work-related, military service, or other *bona fide* reasons must give appropriate notice to the Instructor and/or responsible YU officials if reasonable accommodations are sought. Students failing to obtain signed deferral from the Instructor for a *bona fide* reason according to law and YU policy may receive a failing grade for given grade components, and consequently in the course. Please refer to the appropriate regulations, deadlines, processes, and forms at [Secretariat Policies](#).

Health and Safety. The YU community shares responsibility for keeping others safe on campuses. Students must comply with all YU health and safety protocols. Please refer to current information about COVID-19 measures relative to vaccination mandate, masking protocol, and daily health screening at [Better Together](#). The Senate Executive Committee's [Principles to Guide 2021-2022 Course Planning](#) encourage the community to uphold compassion, kindness, empathy, and responsibility towards one another. Everyone has a duty to maintain professional and respectful interactions.

Privacy. Even though this course meets in person, it may occasionally involve Hyflex sessions when guest speakers join parts of a class remotely via Zoom. Hyflex sessions are digitally transmitted and may be recorded to support teaching and learning in the classroom. YU may collect your image, voice, name, personal views and opinions, and course work under authority of *The York University Act, 1965* and for related educational purposes. Students who participate in Hyflex sessions are consenting to have their video or image transmitted and/or recorded. If you have concerns, please sit in the designated seating area which is outside of camera range. In addition, students who participate orally are consenting to have their voices, personal views, and opinions transmitted and/or recorded. If you do not consent, please use the text-based chat function to communicate during class. Students are not permitted to use any third-party software or application to record a transmitted Hyflex session. If you have any questions, please contact your Instructor or the Privacy Office at info.privacy@yorku.ca.

Research Ethics. Students are subject to the *Policy for the Ethics Review Process for Research Involving Human Participants*. According to [Human Participants - Research & Innovation](#), all research involving human participants for graduate and undergraduate courses, theses, independent projects, and major research papers (MRPs) that are non-funded and minimal risk must be reviewed by the relevant unit-level Delegated Ethics Review Committee. Research subject to review includes, but is not limited to, surveys, questionnaires, interviews, participant observation, and secondary data analysis.

For the purposes of research ethics review, “minimal risk” is defined under [Panel on Research Ethics](#) as research in which the probability and magnitude of possible harms implied by participation in the research is no greater than those encountered by participants in those aspects of their everyday life that relate to the research. Please note that research conducted by students that is more than minimal risk and/or involves Indigenous peoples or clinical trials must be reviewed by the Human Participants Review Committee (HPRC). For these types of research, students are required to complete the HPRC protocol form. Please contact the Office of Research Ethics at ore@yorku.ca for further information.

For more information on ethics review requirements for graduate and undergraduate course-related research and MRPs, please go to [Ethics-Review-Requirements-Course-Related-Research-8.15.17-1-1.pdf](#). Please consult your Instructor if you are in doubt as to whether these requirements apply to you.

Class-by-Class Syllabus

Topics, learning activities, readings, and other preparations for classes are summarized below. Notice of schedule changes and assignment requirements, as well as news of potential interest to students, will be posted and/or announced via eClass. Regular course updates will normally be posted weekly.

Class: Date / Topic	Learning Activities / Assignments	Reading
PART I – INSTITUTIONS		
Class 1: September 9 Introduction to Public Administration	Course Outline, teaching, and student expectations Recorded lecture and Niue Story	Dunn Introduction eClass
Class 2: September 16 Workshop I	Essay #1: Institutions orientation and coaching	eClass
Class 3: September 23 Canadian Federalism	Recorded lecture	Dunn 4, 6, 7 eClass
Class 4: September 30 The Public Service	Recorded lecture	Dunn 1 eClass
Class 5: October 7 Governance and Accountability	Recorded lecture and Ottawa Story	Dunn 24 eClass
October 12-18: Fall Reading Week – no classes, University open (except October 14: Thanksgiving Day – closed)		
Class 6: October 21 Institutional Governance	Recorded lecture	Dunn 11, 12 eClass
Class 7: October 28 Local Governance	‘Pan Am Games’ case preparation Recorded lecture	Dunn 9 eClass
Class 8: November 4 International Governance	Essay #1: Institutions due Recorded lecture	eClass
PART II – POLICIES		
Class 9: November 11 Workshop II	Essay #1: Institutions debriefing Essay #2: Policies orientation and coaching Interim course check-up	eClass
Class 10: November 18 Budgeting	Recorded lecture	Dunn 2, 3, 18 eClass
Class 11: November 25 Public Consultation	Recorded lecture	eClass

Class: Date / Topic	Learning Activities / Assignments	Reading
Class 12: December 2 Public Policy Making	Recorded lecture	Dunn 14 eClass
December 21 – January 5: Winter break – University closed		
Class 13: January 6 Public Sector Reform	Recorded lecture	eClass
Class 14: January 13 Citizen-Centred Service	Recorded lecture	eClass
Class 15: January 20 Alternative Service Delivery	'City of Winnipeg' case preparation Recorded lecture	eClass
Class 16: January 27 Public-Private Partnerships	Essay #2: Policies due 'Brampton Civic Hospital' case preparation Recorded lecture	Dunn 17 eClass
PART III – PRACTICES		
Class 17: February 3 Workshop III	Essay #2: Policies debriefing Essay #3: Practices orientation and coaching Case: Memorandum orientation and coaching	eClass
Class 18: February 10 Change Management	'Kenya's Rapid Results Approach' case preparation Recorded lecture	eClass
February 15-21: Winter Reading Week – no classes, University open (except February 17: Family Day – closed)		
Class 19: February 24 Performance Management	Recorded lecture	eClass
Class 20: March 3 Values and Ethics	Recorded lecture	Dunn 5, 20 eClass
Class 21: March 10 Political-Administrative Leadership	Recorded lecture and Sierra Leone Story	Dunn 10, 16, 23 eClass
Class 22: March 17 Public Service Renewal	Essay #3: Practices due 'Blueprint 2020' case preparation Recorded lecture	eClass
Class 23: March 24 Workshop IV	Essay #3: Practices debriefing Case: Memorandum briefing and coaching	eClass
Class 24: March 31 Future Trends and Challenges	Course review and evaluation Recorded lecture	Dunn 13, 21, 22, 25 eClass
April 4: Last date to submit Winter term work	Case: Memorandum due	
April 26: Winter term ends	Case: Memorandum feedback posted	