Theory and practice of modern public administration

Outline
The aim of this course is to provide students with an introduction to public administration. The course will introduce students to the evolution of theories of management, theories of decision-making in the public sector, intergovernmental relations, performance management, budgeting, strategic planning, managing human resources, the role of e-government as well as current trends of public sector reforms. Upon completing the course students will be familiar with theoretical foundations of public administration and the state of practice in the field.

Target audience
The course is aimed at all MSc students interested in public administration.

Conveyors
Andrei Yakovlev, PhD, Tim Jaekel, PhD; Jesse Campbell, PhD; Michael Rochlitz, PhD, Alexander Kalgin, PhD; Alexandra Shubenkova, PhD, Olga Minchenko.

Course programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Conveyor</th>
<th>Total hours</th>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Seminar</th>
<th>Self study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 The changing role of government in the economy</td>
<td>Andrei Yakovlev</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Organizational Theory and Management</td>
<td>Jesse Campbell</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Managing Human Resources</td>
<td>Jesse Campbell</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Politics and Public Administration</td>
<td>Michael Rochlitz</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Public Decision Making</td>
<td>Tim Jaekel</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>6 Intergovernmental Relations</td>
<td>Tim Jaekel</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Public Performance management</td>
<td>Tim Jaekel / Alexander Kalgin</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 Public Budgeting</td>
<td>Olga Minchenko</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 Strategic planning in the public sector</td>
<td>Alexandra Shubenkova</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 Technology and Public Administration</td>
<td>Alexandra Shubenkova</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Essay (3000)</td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
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The main textbook for the course is Holzer and Schwester (2011) Public administration: Introduction

Course structure

**Topic 1. The changing role of government in the economy**

Conveyor: Andrei Yakovlev


**Topic 2. Organization theory and management in the public sector**

Conveyor: Jesse Campbell

Objectives: Public administration scholarship has long overlapped with a number of related fields. In particular, theories of organization, that is, theories of how and why organizations come into existence the role of management within them, have been central to the study of public administration. This lecture familiarizes students with a range of ideas and theories relevant to the management of public organizations and also highlights how these ideas are used in some contemporary studies. Special attention is given to how the unique environment of public organizations helps define (or distort) their goals.


**Topic 3. Managing human resources**

Conveyor: Jesse Campbell

Objectives: The government’s human resources are the cornerstone of performance in the public sector, and therefore the question of how to acquire, develop, and retain the best employees are questions of crucial importance for public managers. This lecture focuses on how managerial and organizational factors influence the behavior of public employees and thereby shape organizational performance. Various aspects of public organizations, including leadership, job design, and incentives, are discussed. We will also discuss the question of whether the unique values and missions of public sector organizations demand an equally unique approach to human resource management.

Topic 4. Politics and public administration

Conveyor: Michael Rochlitz
Outline: Bureaucratic incentives and the success of state-led development policies in Russia and China / How to measure bureaucratic incentives / Regional administrations and economic growth / State predation / Roving vs stationary bandits / Informal networks

Topic 5. Theories of Decision Making in the Public Sector

Conveyor: Tim Jaekel
Objective: To inform students about different theoretical concepts on the questions “why do public managers act the way they act”. The lecture reflects theoretical concepts from administrative sciences, public economics, (social) psychology, and sociology. Key concepts include Risk taking under uncertainty, risk-aversion of public managers, and prospect theory.


Topic 6. Intergovernmental relations

Conveyor: Tim Jaekel
Objective: Local government accounts for 22% of total public expenditures on OECD-average. Hence local authorities play a pivotal role in delivering public services, from waste collection and leisure facilities to protecting vulnerable children from mistreatment. Inadequate service delivery risks local citizens’ well-being. The way central and local government share responsibility for public policies varies widely across countries, however. The objective of the session is to identify similarities and differences in local government systems systematically by focusing on de-jure institutional / constitutional arrangements and de-facto levels of political and fiscal autonomy of local bodies.

The relevance of local authorities for public service delivery can be read from its share in general government spending. Comparing the political clout of local authorities across countries is more challenging. To step beyond storytelling about local government requires a consistent set of theories and methods.

The relevance of local authorities for public service delivery
Required reading: [sellers, Lidström 2007](#); [OECD 2013](#).

Theories and methods of comparative local government analysis
Required reading: Loughlin 2011; Wolman 2008.

The size of local authorities, in terms of inhabitants, varies widely, both across and within countries. Municipalities that are too small are not able to deliver public services
This imposes risks to the public purse and the well-being of its citizens. Two paramount questions arise: Is there an optimal size for efficient local jurisdictions?


Topic 7. Performance Assessment and Benchmarking in the Public Sector:
Conveyor: Tim Jaekel
Objectives: Benchmarking is used to measure and compare the performance of a given local government against that of its peers, generally by using policy-related indicators. It is commonly held that there are two main benefits of doing so: the first being the prevention of under-performance, and the second being improvement of performance by sharing knowledge about innovative practices. The way performance is compared and benchmarked among local governments varies widely. The session examines the methodologies, procedures, and ranking criteria of various assessment and benchmarking approaches in different political and administrative contexts. It analyzes the empirical evidence on whether or not local government performance has improved over time. The course also examines the general question of why some local governments participate in voluntary benchmarking projects while others do not. The focus is on local government/ local public sector.

Readings: Kuhlmann/Jäkel 2013 on Varieties of Performance Benchmarking Exercises and their institutional foundations; Ammons/Kroenigk 2014 with a state of the art report.

Topic 8: Public budgeting
Conveyor: Olga Minchenko
Objective:
This topic will help students understand main terms of budgeting and answer some questions like «what is a public budget?», «what are the major components of it, what means balanced budgeting?» etc. Also this topic will inform students about different conceptions of public budgeting (line-item budgeting, results based budgeting). The session will discuss budgeting process in general and in different countries. In conclusion we will discuss a distinction between federal and budget processes and will introduce the concept of budget federalism.


Topic 9: Strategic planning in the public sector
Conveyor: Alexandra Shubenkova
Objective:
The session will draw a distinction between planned economy and contemporary strategic planning approach to the public money management. It will review the scale of existing strategic planning application on the federal, sub-federal and local level in different countries with the touch to the public finance. It will be expanded with the procedural circle of strategic practice which contains: forecasting, planning, implementation, evaluation, and managerial

**Topic 10: Technology and Public Administration**

**Conveyor: Alexandra Shubenkova**

**Objective:**
This session will acquaint with the current international agenda about using technologies in public administration and their applications worldwide. Technologies drive a large-scale process of increasing cyber forms of interactions within public system and between the system and citizens as consumers of public goods. Technologies redirect financial flows from material sphere to IT, thus reshaping the construction of public budget itself. The session will discuss key topics: big data for public administration, e-governance, human right to Internet access, cyber security and cyber threats.