Course description
This course was added to the MPA core curriculum in 2003 because of the faculty’s desire that graduates possess not only a substantive knowledge of the field but an understanding of the professional norms of conduct. This course helps students to become more effective leaders by equipping them with the professional and interpersonal skills expected in the public and nonprofit arenas. It emphasizes practical learning. Students are expected to be active participants in the learning process by reading the assigned material prior to class, completing assignments on time, and offering feedback where appropriate. While the specific content of the course continues to evolve with experience, the topics were selected based on input from MPA faculty, alumni, and other public managers. The topics include

1. administrative values: ethics, codes of conduct, professional norms, legal requirements for open meetings and open records, dealing with difficult people, and the manager’s relationship with the governing board;
2. communication skills: developing listening skills, nonverbal communications, writing memos and emails, and developing the art of presentations;
3. leading groups: managing meetings, preparing an agenda, Robert’s Rules of Order, by-laws, meeting minutes, and group decisions;
4. media relations: preparing for an interview, print versus electronic media, the public information office, media relations in times of crises;
5. managing your career: tips on developing a career plan, time management, what to do in the first year on the job, “in transition,” and your family and your career;
6. our wish for you: a session devoted to encouragement and commendation.

POLICY ON DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION
The Department of Public Administration, in cooperation with the Office of Disability Accommodation, complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Please present your written accommodation request during regular office hours.
**Texts**


You must read and review one of the following:


OR


You must read and review one of the following:


OR


Additional readings will be distributed via Black Board pdf document.

**Course Requirements**

Grades in this course will be awarded based on your written work and your active involvement. There are assigned readings and/or activities nearly every week, so there are plenty of opportunities to earn a solid grade and educate yourself.

**Participation: 50% or 500 points.**

Proper preparation and attendance will be rewarded with a good grade; lack of preparation or several absences will hurt your grade. More specifically, an excused absence will result in a 20 point deduction and an unexcused absence will result in a 30 point deduction. Excused absences are for medical or death issues or events required by the MPA program. Failure to be prepared for class or failure to participate in sufficient quality and quantity will result in point deductions
as well. In other words, just attending is not enough to receive all possible points. A holistic, qualitative assessment by the instructor determines the amount of those deductions. Coming to class prepared, being willing and able to participate, and then doing so is the expectation for the course.

**Written Assignments (Exercises and book review): 30% or 300 points.**

1. **Book reviews.** You will write two book reviews. Your clear and concise book review should run approximately 750 words each, and it should include an overview of the author’s purpose for writing the book, the main ideas or themes presented, the audience for the book and your critical, and conclude with an analytical review regarding what is presented. Did the author achieve his or her purpose? Please note that a book review is a thoughtful review that considers the overall contribution of the author, i.e. you must provide a critique. What new knowledge, career enhancement, benefit, or drawback is likely to accrue to readers of the book? Does the author do something new that has not been done by other authors? Please also address each question below. Each book review is worth 100 points each.

   a. For the Amabile OR Geisler book review, please interview a public manager about the key themes and suggestions of the book you read. Include in the review the interviewee’s reactions to viability, feasibility, and general worth of the ideas presented.

   b. For the Kettl OR Mickelwait text, include a short section of the review that comments on the implementation of healthcare.gov in light of the book’s thesis and recommendations.

2. You are asked to write one reflective paper due the last week of class. It is to be a 500-700 word reflection of your career choice and decision to pursue an MPA degree at UNT. The paper should address the following questions. On a scale of 1 to 10 (high), how well has the MPA program prepared you? What classes do you wish you had taken that were not available? Where do you see your career in 5 years? (Position, agency/organization, salary). How can we (UNT and Public Administration) better help students achieve their career goals? This is worth 100 points.

ALL WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE SUBMITTED VIA BLACKBOARD AND TURNITIN. FAILURE TO SO RESULTS IN THE AUTOMATIC DEDUCTION OF 10 PERCENT. NO LATE PAPERS ARE ACCEPTED.

**Oral Communication (20% or 200 points)**

1. You will be randomly assigned a topic for which you must offer a speech in class. Details discussed in class. This speech is worth 100 points.

2. You will be randomly assigned a topic for which you must offer a statement to the press
in an off-site simulation. Details discussed in class. This is worth 100 points.

**Basis for final grade**

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Written assignments</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral communication</td>
<td>20%</td>
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**Conduct**

I expect all students to conduct themselves with professional courtesy, which includes (but is not limited to) the following:

- **Respect for** fellow students, the field, the instructor and others in the community.

- **Promptness.** Please do not be tardy to appointments or meetings that are related to this course. If you must be late or absent for an appointment, please make a courtesy call to explain the situation.

- **Turn off** your cell phone if you are attending a meeting, hearing or taking part in an interview.

- Please do not read email messages, scan the web, play electronic games, etc. during class time. Failure to observe this caution will result in a considerable loss of your participation grade in this core course. By considerable, I mean up to one-half of the entire amount of points that you earn.

**Policies and Procedures**

**General expectations:** I expect students to attend all course sessions (please note heavily weighted participation score), complete all required readings prior to class time, participate in class discussions, and complete all assignments by the due dates.

**Attendance:** Attending class sessions is an important part of the learning process. Although you will not lose grade points specifically for nonattendance, you will certainly lose opportunities to earn credits for participation in the classroom. If your participation score proves to be minimal, you will not be able to earn enough points to receive a B grade in the course.

**Evaluation.** Please complete the course evaluation on SETE at the end of the semester.

**Withdrawals:** Students have the right to withdraw from courses. I urge you to maintain your commitment to this course, however, if you decide to withdraw, please see the instructor.
Behavioral Expectations: Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. In order to assure that all students have the opportunity to gain from time spent in class, unless otherwise approved by the instructor, students are prohibited from engaging in any other form of distraction. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result minimally, in a request to leave the class.

Academic Honesty: Academic honesty is expected. An act of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of zero on the assignment, a probable failing grade in the course and a recommendation of additional disciplinary action. In the event of suspected academic dishonesty, I may substitute a quiz, examination or assignment for the work in question.

These are my guidelines concerning what constitutes a violation of ethical standards for course work. Any of these violations will be considered academic dishonesty and treated as such. These guidelines are in addition to any University-wide guidelines concerning academic honesty or dishonesty that may be in effect.

1. Cheating. The giving or receiving of any unauthorized assistance on any academic work.

2. Plagiarism. Presenting the language, structure or ideas of another person or persons as one's own original work. Please note that plagiarism will not be tolerated! Failure to reference is plagiarism. Referencing the ideas of others over and over again without adequate analysis or discussion of the material also constitutes plagiarism. Massive amounts of quoting and referencing without adding to the discussion is plagiarism. You are expected to bring something to the table in your assignments. An analysis or review requires you to understand the work of others and evaluate their contributions, not simply to doggedly restate what they said.

PLEASE SEE ME IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT PLAGIARISM or what constitutes an appropriate analysis!

3. Falsification. Any untrue statement, either oral or written, concerning one's own academic work or the academic work of another student, or the unauthorized alteration of any academic record.

4. Original work. Unless specifically authorized by the instructor, all academic work undertaken in a course must be original, i.e., it must not have been submitted in a prior course, “borrowed” from the workplace or the Internet, or be submitted in a course being taken concurrently.

UNT POLICY ON CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

Notice of this policy shall be given in all public administration classes each semester, and written copies shall be available in the public administration office.
Definitions

The UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline defines cheating and plagiarism “as the use of unauthorized books, notes, or otherwise securing help in a test; copying other’s tests, assignments, reports, or term papers; representing the work of another as one’s own; collaborating without authority with another student during an examination or in preparing academic work; or otherwise practicing scholastic dishonesty.

Penalties

Normally, the minimum penalty for cheating or plagiarism is a grade of “F” in the course. Determination of cheating or plagiarism shall be made by the instructor in the course, or by the departmental faculty in the case of departmental exams.

Cases of cheating or plagiarism on assignments and exercises, graduate departmental exams, papers, theses, or dissertations shall automatically be referred to the departmental Curriculum and Degree Programs Committee. Cases of cheating or plagiarism in ordinary course work may, at the discretion of the instructor, be referred to the Curriculum and Degree Programs Committee in the case of either graduate or undergraduate students. This committee, acting as an agent of the Department, shall impose further penalties, or recommend further penalties to the Dean of Students, if they determine that the case warrants it. In all cases, the Dean of Students shall be informed in writing of the case.

Appeals

Students may appeal and decision under this policy by following the procedure laid down in the UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline.

Note:

IF YOU INTEND TO GRADUATE THIS SEMESTER, DO NOT FORGET TO CHECK THE ACADEMIC CALENDAR AND FILE YOUR GRADUATION APPLICATION BY THE DUE DATE!

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL IS VERY STRICT ON THIS. IF YOU MISS THE FILING DUE DATE, YOU WILL NOT GRADUATE THIS SEMESTER.

Course calendar

Jan 26 WELCOME and introduction to the course

Feb 2 Administrative Values – Issues in Public Management and The Ethical Context (Session #1).

RR:
1. Ashworth, pp. 1-22; 82-88; 152-167.
5. “The Athenian Oath”

Feb 9  Administrative Values – The Organizational Context (Session #2)

Reading:
1. Ashworth, pp. 34-44; 63-81; 89-133; 145-151; 168-77

Feb 16  Communication: The Basics of Writing in a Professional Context (Session #3)

Reading:
1. Ashworth, pp. 134-44.

Feb 23  Communication: Keys to Effective Public Speaking (Session #4)

Reading:
1. Ashworth, pp. 45-62
2. “Hints for Public Speaking” Helen Schenk, UNT
3. Toastmasters International, “10 Tips for Successful Public Speaking” and “Speaking Tips From the Pros.”
9. Mackenzie, Chaps 9-11

Mar 2 Managing Your Career (Session #11)

5. Mackenzie, Chaps 15-19

Mar 9 Communications practicum (Session #5)

Practical application: Students will make brief presentations based on the following guidelines.

1. You will have an assigned topic.
2. Limit your presentation to no more than 8 minutes.
3. The presentation must include PowerPoint or Prezi slides (no more than 8).

March 16 SPRING BREAK

March 23 Media Relations – Print versus electronic media (Session #8)

RR:
1. Ashworth, pp. 23-33
2. Part II, “The Media and You, One-on-One”
3. “When a Reporter Calls”
6. “Media Relations.”
Media relations in times of crises (Session #9)
RR:  

March 30  
**Future of Government**

RR: Kettle OR Micklethwait book  
**Book Review**

April 6  
**Motivation**

RR: One of the optional books.  
**Book Review Due**

April 13  
**Managing your Career**

April 20  
**Managing your Career**

RR: Strengthfinders 2.0 entire book and the online survey

April 27  
**Professional Etiquette (Session #12)**

RR:  
1. “Dining Etiquette,” Ball State University Career Center  
2. “Dine Like a Diplomat”  

May 4  
**Final Thoughts**

A special gift from your MPA program  
**REFLECTIVE PAPER DUE**