Syllabus Public Administration and Organisations
USG5520, Period 1, 2018-2019

Introduction

The world has become increasingly complex over the past years, especially for those studying government and organisations. While most activities still get shaped in the context of (either public or private) organisations, how these organisations work is quite often more than ever a 'black box'. Next to that, governments increasingly need to rely on collaborations with private organisations and use private-styles of management to solve social problems and create public value. In a world that is ever more centred around knowledge, that has ever more fading borders, and where experts seemingly feel more accountable to their profession than to the organisation they work in, citizens have become more flexible, more knowledgeable and more demanding. This leads to a growing importance to understand how (both public and private) organisations work and how (public and organisational) policies are made.

The course Public administration and Organisation offers an introduction in the (for a large part overlapping) disciplines of Public Administration and Organisational science. Central concepts, important theoretical themes, and competing perspectives are introduced and the practical implications of theories are explored.

Goals

After completing this course, the student:

- Has knowledge of the most important theories in the field of organisational sciences;
- has knowledge of different theoretical perspectives on public administration and policymaking;
- has developed an insight into the complexity of relationships between social developments, organisations and public policy;
- has developed skills in analysing and evaluating practical situations from a theoretical public administration and organisational science perspective.

Teachers

Mallory Compton: M.E.Compton@uu.nl, office 0.11
Marij Swinkels: E.M.Swinkels@uu.nl, office -1.13 (Course coordinator)

Literature

Two sources of literature are used for this course:

- A reader with selected text on public administration and policy making.
- Bolman, L.G. & Deal, T.E. (2013). *Reframing Organizations. Artistry, Choice, and Leadership: Fifth Edition*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Times

All classes for this course are between 7 September 2018 and 9 November 2018. All meetings will be in the UUSG/USBO building (Bijlhouwerstraat 6) in room 2.04 and they will take place weekly on:

- Wednesday between 13.15 and 15.00
- Friday between 13.15 and 15.00

There will also be two individual meetings about the paper that will take place elsewhere in the same building (see the schedule below). You can find more information about the schedule on www.mytimetable.uu.nl.

Course rationale

The course consists roughly out of three parts. In the first part, the course will pay attention to public institutions in the Netherlands and how they compare with public institutions in other countries. We will create a common point of reference for the rest of the course by exploring national, regional, local and international institutions and their workings. In the second part, the course revolves around an introduction to the study of public administration and public policy making. Some of the core themes of these topics are introduced and explored. In the last part of the course we explore the field of organisational sciences. Organisations (both public and private) are looked at through four different lenses (frames).

During most meetings we will start by discussing the literature on the basis of reading questions as a way of introducing the topic of the seminar. The discussion is followed by a short lecture, and the last part of the meeting has some other form (either discussion, working on assignments, looking at cases, etc.). It is vital that students do the reading and coursework before class, so that literature can be (critically) discussed during the meetings.

Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Reading	Lecturer
36	07/09	Introduction and Dutch Institutions 1		Both
37	12/09	Dutch Institutions 2	Michels	Marij
	14/09	European and international institutions	Gallagher et al.	Marij
38	19/09	Regional and local institutions	De Vries	Mallory
	21/09	Public administration	Raadschelders	Mallory
39	26/09	Politicians and administrators	Howlett et al. & Stone	Mallory
	28/09	Public policy making	Aberbach et al.	Mallory
40	03/10	Accountability	Bovens	Marij
	05/10	New Public Management	Hood	Mallory
41	10/10	Introducing organisations	Rainey & B&D* part 1	Marij
	12/10	Writing an advisory paper		Marij
42	17/10	Structural Frame	B&D part 2	Mallory
	17/10	Individual discussion of paper proposals part 1		Marij
	19/10	Individual discussion of paper proposals part 2		Mallory
	19/10	HR Frame	B&D part 3	Marij
43	24/10	Political Frame	B&D part 4	Marij
	26/10	Symbolic Frame	B&D part 5	Mallory
44	31/10	Integration lecture	All the course literature	Mallory
	02/11	FINAL		
45	07/11	Individual discussion of draft papers (between 09:00 and 17:00)		Both
	09/11	Deadline paper		

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* B&D = Bolman & Deal.

Assessment
Achievement in this course is assessed in three ways, together amounting to a grade between 1 and 10. The **Final** (a written exam) counts for 30% of the final grade and contains questions about how the different elements of the course relate to each other. The final is scheduled for **2 November between 13.30 and 15.30 in room 0.24**. Next to the written exam, students will write an advisory paper (see below) for another 40% of the final grade and the last 30% is made up by coursework that students hand in before each meeting.

Passing grades are those 5.5 and above, grades between 5.0 and 5.5 can be compensated by higher grades for other elements of the same course. Lower grades can be re-examined (when the average grade for the entire course is 4.0 or above), as can grades between 5.0 and 5.5 when the average grade for the course is below 5.5. The education and examination regulations for the Bachelor of the Utrecht University School of Governance apply to this course.

Attendance
Because interacting about the literature is a vital part of this course, there is an 80% attendance requirement. Students not satisfying this requirement will need to repair their deficiency by completing additional assignments. Furthermore, please note that the course credit equivalents to 15-20 hours of work per week.

Coursework
During the course, questions about the literature are available on the e-assessment environment Remindo (login with solis-id on https://uu.remindotoets.nl). Before each meeting (with the exception of the introduction meeting, the meeting about writing an advisory paper and the integration meeting), students will have to complete their answers to these questions before 8.00 (a.m.) on the day of the meeting. The process of making the questions will be explained during the first meeting. The answers to these questions will be graded by the lecturers. The final grade will be the average of these separate scores. This process will help you get prepared for the exam and, in our experience, makes our meetings more focussed and interesting.

Paper
For the paper, students will need to show in what way theories of both organisations and public administration apply to a specific organisation with a public task (which they can choose themselves). For doing this, they take the role of academic consultants.

- The first step is selecting a specific organisation with a public task that has some kind of problem. This problem has to be an organisation problem (a problem with organising what the organisation is supposed to do) and cannot be purely a policy problem (although public policy is likely to be a factor in the problem in some way). Students are encouraged to choose an organisation that operates in their home country.
- The second step is to analyse this problem and try to understand it from the perspective of the course literature. Reporting on this analysis is an integral part of the final paper since 'framing' the problem is an essential element of every advisory report.
- From this analysis, students formulate very practical advice for solving that specific problem in that specific organisation. This advice has to give the organisation enough of a handle to implement its use in the relatively short term. So the entire report should be written as though it was directed towards the board of directors (or an equivalent body) of that organisation (and they need to be satisfied and need to know what to do now, since they will usually have paid heftily for such an advisory report).

The focus point of the grading of this paper is the way in which the student has succeeded in translating the course literature to a practical application. We will also grade on the extent to which you have been

able to use the format of an advisory report, the clarity of the argument and the extent to which the argument is convincing and the quality of the text itself.

A proposal containing: 1) the organisation; 2) the problem of this organisation; and 3) a first idea of which parts of the course literature you intent to use to solve the problem (all in all about half to one page) has to be handed in after the class on October 12 after which students will get feedback on the plan and they will get a go/no go decision on October 17 or 19 (a schedule for this will be made during one of the meetings).

We will use the meeting before the discussion of the drafts to discuss what it means to write an advisory paper and what it means to advise organisations with a public task, to further prepare you for writing your final paper.

On 7 November, we will discuss a draft version of your paper. E-mail your draft before 5 November 10.00. Again, the schedule will be made during one of the classes.

Basics about the paper:
- Max. 3000 words (excl. references)
- Referencing according to APA-style rules
- The final version has to be handed in on 9 November 2018 before 17.00 on paper in the pigeon hole at the Front Office of the UUSG building of the teacher you have discussed your proposal and draft with **and** through Ephorus (you will find a link on BlackBoard, use assignment code 2018-USG5520).

Language
This course is taught in English, all communication concerning this course is in English. The paper, coursework and answers to the exam questions have to be written in understandable English. Naturally, we cannot consider things in grading that we don't understand. Next to that, the quality of the written English is (be it to a much lesser degree than is content) one of the elements we will grade on in the paper, although not in the coursework or exam. The use of a dictionary (other language to English and/or English to other language) is allowed during the exam (although the dictionary you use can naturally not have any form of addition in it that was not printed as part of the original dictionary, and we will check this).

Please use only English whenever you are in the classroom (also before and after classes) and when you leave the room during breaks. It does not have to be perfect English, only very few of us will be native speakers and, at times, we will need to help each other out, but nothing is more excluding than talking in a language that we do not all know.

Electronic learning environment
This course uses BlackBoard to share documents about the course content. When you are properly enrolled in this class, you will have access (from 1 September) to the learning environment for this course by using your solis-id and password at http://www.uu.nl/blackboard.

Approaching teachers and asking questions
There are large differences in academic culture between academic institutions and certainly between countries. That means that it is quite natural that you do not know how things work (from what is expected of you in an exam, to how you can approach teachers with questions or problems, and everything in between). We have tried to answer some of these questions in this syllabus, and we will continue to discuss elements that we know to differ in many of the meetings. Nevertheless, feel absolutely free to ask any question during meetings, the breaks in meetings, after meetings, when you meet us in the hallways or by e-mail. This is nothing strange and we are used to students asking a lot of questions.

Part of the academic culture at the Utrecht University School of Governance is that we emphasize student involvement during meetings. We highly value questions about what we discuss, but we will also ask you a lot of questions and we will give room for debate. We are convinced that you will learn more if you use these opportunities.