

Public Administration at the Edge: Emerging Critical Theories

Summer 2013, First Session

Location: Sem II A 3109

Meeting Dates/Times: Tuesdays June 25th, July 16th 6:00pm-10:00pm

Saturdays June 29th, July 20th 9:00am-4:00pm

Sundays June 30th, July 21st 9:00am-4:00pm

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Course Description:

Our work together in this class will involve exploration, deep critique, and broad analysis of new and emerging theories on the edge of the study and practice of public administration. These theories are considered on the edge because they are not typically found in textbooks, the mainstream media, or generally discussed by policy makers. Often, theories on the edge are considered fringe ideas not readily accepted by existing dominant paradigms. However, in our shared “new normal” of social, economic, and political instability, perhaps these fringe theories are precisely the ideas those of us living and working at the epicenter of public life should be reviewing. Critical theories challenge hegemonic paradigms and seek to make the invisible visible through mental emancipation. If public policies represent the struggle over ideas, then we can have no greater lesson to learn than what the emerging ideas are in public administration today. We will focus on current material from journals, conferences, webcasts, and films. In this course students will engage in extensive group discourse, public speaking, and written analyses to enhance critical thinking skills through effective communication.

Learning Objectives:

- 1) Understand the philosophical foundations of critical theory.
- 2) Define various theories, ideologies, and paradigms related to praxis in public administration.
- 3) Develop the skills of active listening, analytical thinking, scholarly dialog, effective communication, and professional writing.

Required Texts:

Bach, R. (1977). *Illusions: The Adventures of a Reluctant Messiah*. Arrow Books Ltd. ISBN: 978-0099427865

Box, R. (2004). *Critical Social Theory in Public Administration*. M.E. Sharpe. ISBN: 978-8120326927

Bronner, S. (2011). *Critical Theory: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press. ISBN: 978-0199730070

Required Articles: (to be posted on moodle)

Auerbach, A., Gale, W., & Harris, B. (Fall 2010). Activist Fiscal Policy. *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Vol. 24, No. 4, pp. 141-163

Gould, A. (Dec 2007). Katrina and Colonialism: The Sins of Our Forefathers Perpetuated? *Administrative Theory & Praxis*. Vol. 29, No. 4, pp. 513-533

Required Articles (con't.)

Hawkesworth, M. (Sept. 2010). From Constitutive Outside to the Politics of Extinction: Critical Race Theory, Feminist Theory, and Political Theory. *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 63, No. 3, pp. 686-696

Hummel, R. (Jun 2007). What Do Theorists Do? *Administrative Theory & Praxis*. Vol. 29, No. 2, pp. 292-296

Kaufman-Osborn (Sept. 2010). Political Theory as Profession and as Subfield? *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 63, No. 3, pp. 655-673

Nabatchi, T., Goerdel, H., Peffer, S. (2011). Public Administration in Dark Times: Some Questions for the Future of the Field. *Journal of Public Administration Research & Theory*. Vol. 21, pp. i29-i43

O'Leary, R. (2011). Minnowbrook: Tradition, Idea, Spirit, Event, Challenge. *Journal of Public Administration Research & Theory*. Vol. 21, pp. i1-i6

Van Slyke, D. (2006). Agents or Stewards: Using Theory to Understand the Government-Nonprofit Social Service Contracting Relationship, *Journal of Public Administration Research & Theory*, Vol. 17, pp. 157-187

Summer 2013 Schedule (faculty reserve the right to alter the schedule)

Date	Topic	Deliverable
June 25 Tuesday	Introductions, Course Overview, Foundations of Critical	<u>Reading:</u> Bronner, <i>Critical Theory</i> (ALL) <u>Assignment:</u> Think Piece Essay #1
June 29 Saturday	Defining Types of Critical Theories	<u>Reading:</u> Box, <i>Critical Social Theory in Public Administration</i> <u>Assignment:</u> Think Piece Essay #2
June 30 Sunday	Defining Research Approaches to PA with a Critical Theory Lens (form conference paper teams)	<u>Reading:</u> Auerbach, Hummel, Gould, Van Slyke
July 3	No Class	<u>Assignment:</u> Abstract
July 11	No Class	<u>Assignment:</u> Conference Paper Draft #1
July 16 Tuesday	Theory Building for the Next Edge in PA	<u>Reading:</u> Kaufman-Osborn, Hawkesworth, O'Leary, Nabatchi <u>Assignment:</u> Conference Paper Draft #2
July 20 Saturday	Praxis & Leadership	<u>Reading:</u> Bach, <i>Illusions</i>
July 21 Sunday	Demonstration	<u>Assignments:</u> Final Conference Paper & Presentation

Assignment #1, #2: Think Piece Essays

#1 Due: June 25. Focus on Bronner reading.

#2 Due: June 29. Focus on Box reading.

Post to moodle by 9:00am. Pages: 5 minimum.

Stretch yourself beyond your current comfort zone of analysis. The objective of these papers is to critically analyze 3 theories from each text. Compare and contrast the main ideas, arguments/assertions, and the assumptions within each theory.

Assignment #3: Abstract

Due: July 3. Post to moodle by 9:00am. Words: 250.

In groups of 2 or 3 students, write an abstract as though you were submitting it for consideration to present at conference about Critical Theory in Public Administration. This conference will take place in Kona Hawaii and offers a space for an interdisciplinary exchange of ideas. It aims to provide opportunities for those who frequently find themselves at the margins of their discipline to engage with other scholars who share theoretical approaches and interests. Write an abstract of no more than 250 words to describe the substance of the paper you will write in relation to the conference theme: "Public Administration's Utopia?" Imagining a better world that does not exist yet may or may not touch all human societies and cultures. For some, utopianism came to be viewed as dangerous. They became associated not with dreams of a better world, but with the oppressive aspects of modernity and government efforts to make those dreams real. In the wake of the collapse of progressive projects and the rise of what "market utopianism," there has been a resurgence of interest and debate regarding utopian thought and the practical construction of "real utopias." These efforts reconsider the role of utopian thought in human life in light of this history and seek workable alternatives to contemporary political, social, and economic governance. Based upon your understandings of two critical theories discussed in our readings, respond to the following questions: What are the constraints of utopia? What are the boundaries of public administration in relation to utopia? The two critical theories you select may either support or oppose each other in response to this question. (adapted from: <http://patheory.org/> and <http://londonconferenceincriticalthought.wordpress.com/2013/02/11/call-for-papers-2013/>)

Assignment # 4: Conference Paper

Draft 1 Due: July 11

Draft 2 Due: July 16

Final Paper Due: July 21

Post to moodle by 9:00am. Pages: 10 minimum -15 maximum

Within the teams you formed to write the abstract, meet the parameters you set forth in that abstract and write a paper to fully explain your response to the conference theme and questions. Fellow students will be assigned to read your team's paper and serve as moderator/discussant during your team's presentation.

Assignment #5: Conference Paper Panel Discussion

Due: July 21

20 minutes with 10 minute Q & A following each presentation. Teams present together seated at a table in the front of the room. No visual aids will be used. Fellow students will be assigned to each presentation and serve as the moderator/discussant.

Evaluation: Written self-evaluations and a seminar faculty evaluation are required for credit at the end of each quarter along with faculty evaluations of students. Student evaluations of their seminar faculty are due during evaluation conferences. (Students may elect to submit faculty evaluations to faculty directly or to Program Secretaries.)

Credit: Students will receive 4 credits at the completion of the class if all course requirements have been satisfactorily completed to meet course objectives. No partial credit will be awarded. Incompletes will not be offered. Credit denial decisions will be made by the faculty. Plagiarism (i.e., using other peoples' work as your own), failing to complete one or more assignments, completing one or more assignments late (without having made arrangements *before* the due date), or multiple absences may constitute denial of total credit. Unexcused absences or lack of academic work may result in no credit at the discretion of the faculty. Students will be evaluated based upon their progress towards the learning goals assessed from preparedness, participation, and assignment performance.

Participation & Attendance: Students are required to attend each class meeting. Participation includes speaking in class, listening to others, taking notes, completing class interactive exercises, and listening to and dialoging with the guest speakers. If an absence is unavoidable, faculty must be notified prior to a class absence. After one absence, make-up work may be assigned at faculty discretion, case-by-case. Makeup work must be completed by the end of the quarter in question to ensure receipt of course credit.

Format: Papers should be typed, double spaced, 12 point font, and follow APA format. All written work will be of high quality, grammatically correct, clear, and without spelling errors. Please feel free to request writing assistance from faculty.

Late assignments: Turning in assignments late is unacceptable. However, if there is a need to turn in an assignment late, the student must contact faculty no later than the original assignment due date to discuss options. Parameters are left to the discretion of the faculty on a situation-by-situation basis. Late assignments must be completed by the end of the quarter the assignment was originally due to ensure receipt of course credit.

Accommodations: will be provided for any student who desires them through a working relationship with Access Services, the Writing Center and the Quantitative and Symbolic Reasoning Center. To request academic accommodations due to a disability; please contact the office of Access Services for Students with Disabilities (867-6348 or 6364). If the student is already working with the office of Access Services the faculty should have received a letter clearly indicating the student has a disability that requires academic accommodations. If any student has a health condition or disability that may require accommodations in order to effectively participate in this class, please do the following: Contact faculty after class and/or Contact Access Services in Library 1407-D, 867-6348. Information about a disability or health condition will be regarded as confidential. Please refer to TESC's Students With Disabilities Policy. <http://www.evergreen.edu/policies/g-studentada.htm>

Learning Styles: We all have different ways of acquiring new knowledge. Therefore, faculty will actively work towards providing information in multiple formats: tactile, auditory, visual, experiential, etc. However, style applications are limited to means appropriate for the classroom environment. (Activities such as surfing the internet, reading unrelated materials, playing with a PDA, IPOD, laptop, or cell phone are not appropriate.) Consult your seminar faculty to discuss learning style options or personal challenges.

Multiculturalism & Diversity: Faculty and students will actively work towards contextually weaving multiculturalism and diversity throughout our learning as related to readings, lectures, discussions and assignments. In a learning community, students and faculty share the responsibility for the teaching and learning environment. We are all encouraged to add to the

existing format and content by incorporating relevant professional experiences in dialogue and by presenting current events regarding leadership and politics. Multiculturalism and diversity is to be understood as: aiming to promote constructive community discourse about issues of culture, power and life-style differences including but not limited to race, ethnicity, color, nationality, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, class, sexual orientation, age, religion, (dis)ability, and veteran status.

Expectations of students and faculty: to promote a cooperative, supportive atmosphere within the community; give everyone opportunity for self-reflection and expression; use high standards in reading the text and preparing our papers, lectures, and comments in seminar; handle all disputes in a spirit of goodwill. Discuss any problems involving others in the learning community directly with the individuals involved (so long as the concerned party feels safe doing so).

We will abide by the social contract: WAC 174-121-010 College philosophy.

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=174-121-010>

We will abide by the student conduct code (including academic integrity and plagiarism):

Chapter 174-123 WAC, Student Conduct Code & Grievance/Appeals Process

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=174-123>

We will abide by the non-discrimination policies and procedures at TESC:

<http://www.evergreen.edu/mpa/studenthandbook/nondiscrimination.htm>

Guest Policy: Guests are welcome to visit our learning community during class time with discretionary approval from faculty in advance of the requested visit. It is the host student's responsibility to contact the faculty with details about the requested guest visit and await approval. Guests must abide by all guidelines as aforementioned in this syllabus.