PSPA 632

Local Government Administration

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Course Description

> *Administration of local government services in urban and metropolitan areas. Analysis of particular problems faced by local governments in the performance of line and staff functions.*
>
> — NIU Graduate Catalog

This course is one of the two required local government specialization courses. This course, local government administration, focuses on the job of the manager in a local government. As such, the course covers topics such as managing staff, dealing with elected officials, and the public.

Textbooks

Required

This course requires two textbooks.

- Kimberly L. Nelson and Carl W. Stenberg. 2017. *Managing Local Government: An Essential Guide for Municipal and County Managers.* Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.
- Ann O'M Bowman and Richard C. Kearney. 2015. *State and Local Government: The Essentials.* 6th ed. Stamford, CT: Cengage.

Additional required readings, as detailed below, will be available either online through the library or on Blackboard.

Recommended

Please keep in mind that it is almost always cheaper to purchase books published by ICMA Press directly from ICMA (and even cheaper if you are a member).

📗 David N. Ammons and Dale J. Roenigk. 2022. *Tools for Decision Making: A Practical Guide for Local Government.* 3rd ed. New York: Routledge.

One of the following:

📗 Kimberly L. Nelson and Carl W. Stenberg. 2022. *Managing Local Government Services: The Challenge of Change.* Washington, D.C.: ICMA Press.

📗 Charles K. Coe. 2009. *Handbook of Urban Services : A Basic Guide for Local Governments.* Armonk, N.Y: M.E. Sharpe.

Assignments

Course Assignments	Points	Due Date
Individual Papers 1 & 2	20 (10 each)	End of Modules 2 & 4
Innovations Challenge	15	Module 3-5
"Dealing with Citizen Complaints" Exercise	15	Module 7
Team Project		
Part 1-Topic	NA	End of Module 1
Part 2-Identification Memo	5	End of Module 3
Part 3-Research Paper	20	End of Module 7
Part 4-Presentation	15	Module 8
Discussion Forum	35 (5 points per module; 3 points for original post, one point for each of two responses)	Modules 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7
TOTAL POINTS	**125**	

Individual Papers

Paper 1–Due to be submitted via Blackboard by end of Module 2 on Sunday at 11:59 PM. THIS PAPER WOULD BE APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR STUDENT PORTFOLIO.

Research the agency where you work to find answers to each item listed below. Do not copy text or graphics from a website or other online platform; use your own words for each answer. In a 300-600 word typewritten paper, respond to the following (one-half point per full response to each):

   A) The name of the agency and its principle address. If you work at a location other than the principle address, please indicate that location.
   B) The names and titles of each of the agency's governing board officials.
   C) The names and titles of the agency's chief administrative officer, and each department head who is a direct report to the chief administrative officer.
   D) The total number of full-time and part-time employees in the agency.
   E) The agency's current total expenditure budget amount for the year, in all funds, and indicate whether fiscal-year (with FY end date) or calendar year.
   F) The name and title of the chief Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) officer.
   G) The URL of the agency's primary website, and the name and title of the staff person who is most directly responsible for website management.
   H) The title of the agency's primary Facebook, Twitter, You Tube, and Instagram social media platforms (list as many as applicable).
   I) From the agency's website, name the section or page where you found the following: the next regular governing board meeting agenda, a feedback or "contact us" form, the current budget, and most recent ACFR.
   J) Identify three professional organizations the agency is a member of (i.e. Illinois Municipal League American Public Works Association, Northwest Municipal Conference), and who is the designated representative to each.

Paper 2–Due to be submitted via Blackboard by end of Module 4 on Sunday at 11:59 PM. THIS PAPER WOULD BE APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR STUDENT PORTFOLIO.

In a typewritten paper of 600-900 words, interview your immediate supervisor at the agency where you are either a full-time employee or intern. The paper must include answers and discussion on each of the following topics (one point per full response to each):

   A) Ask the supervisor to discuss their education, previous positions within this agency, and their prior relevant employment.
   B) Ask the supervisor to describe their work typical day, and interactions with their supervisor or to whom they report.
   C) Ask them to describe their relationships with other departments, and other public agencies (schools, park district, library, etc.).

D) Ask the supervisor to conduct a mini-SWOT analysis of the agency, or the department or organization where you both work, identifying up to three issues for each SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) element, and the reason for each response.

E) Ask where they see themselves, and this agency, in ten years.

F) You may ask additional questions, or engage in more topics, as you wish.

Innovations Challenge

Working within your assigned teams, identify, develop and present an innovation for use in a municipal or other local government agency. The goal is to provide a better level of public service for the benefit of the greater community. The idea must be solution-driven, innovative, transferable, and results-orientated. During Module 3, all teams will present their innovation to the class to introduce the innovation and elaborate on the purpose and criteria standards. Presentations, which are between five and ten minutes in length, should include a Power Point presentation of three to five slides to assist in identifying and communicating the innovation. All group members are to share in the presentation equally so all students are included in the process. An information sheet with more details will be distributed.

Team Project: Policy Analysis

Your assigned team will be the team you will work in for the planning, research, writing, and presentation of the team project. The project is to identify and develop a persuasive position on a matter of public policy directly related to local government administration. To this point, avoid matters that deal directly with state and Federal government, or nonprofit management. Research and develop your project based on local government, typically municipal, township, county, or a single-purpose, administration. The objective is to present an affirmative argument in favor of a position relevant to local government, as though you were a work group assigned to make a presentation to the elected officials of the unit of government. The assignment is as follows:

Part 1: Topic (To be submitted via Blackboard no later than end of Module 1 Sun. 11:59 PM). One team member should submit using the assignment link in Module 1 no later than end of Module 1 on Sunday at 11:59 PM identifying your team number, the names of the group members, and up to a one paragraph description of your identified public policy topic for the team project. In the event more than one team selects the same topic, the team submitting the topic first shall be allowed to keep their topic and the other team(s) will select a different topic.

Part 2: Identification Memo (Due to be submitted via Blackboard no later than end of Module 3 Sun. 11:59 PM). In a typewritten, maximum 300 words, paper write a team collaborative memorandum to the governing board stating the public policy topic, its relevance to current issues facing the agency, and a statement of the possible areas you as a work team intend to research and present to the board. The memo should end by identifying the members of the team and their areas of responsibility for the project.

Part 3: Research Paper (Due to be submitted via Blackboard no later than end of Module 7 Sun. 11:59 PM). In a typewritten paper of between 3000-3600 total words (exceeding the word

limit will result in deduction of points), excluding a cover page and reference list page(s), present the team's collaborative policy research, to include:

A) A statement that defines the issue, its importance, the central controversies and options for solutions to resolve the issue. This section should be 600-900 words.

B) A review of relevant research that provides evidence to support the team's arguments, including problem or issue definitions, elements of the issue, and the alternatives to be considered, both pro and con. This section will include references to literature the team will find as a part of its research, so be sure to use appropriate citations. If the team uses a personal interview as a part of the research, be sure to obtain permission from the interviewee prior to the interview, disclose the purpose of the interview, record the answers, and cite the interview as appropriate. This section should be from 1500 to 2100 words.

C) The concluding section of the paper will serve as the team's preferred option for resolving or addressing the issue. Restate the policy issue, its relevance and importance to the agency, and the reasons for your recommendation based on the research within the paper. This section should be from 600 to 900 words.

Part 4: Presentation (Due to be submitted via Blackboard no later than end of Module 8 Sun. 11:59 PM). Each team will record a presentation for the class, who will serve as the agency board (via the discussion board), in a 15-minute presentation (exceeding the time limit will result in deduction of points) to summarize the public policy of your research topic, the case analysis and your recommendations. The presentation will include between 5-8 Power Point slides (excluding introduction and citation slides) which summarize the points offered in the presentation.

Blackboard Discussion Forum

We will be using the Blackboard discussion forum as our discussion platform for this course. The link to the discussion page can be found in each module and also in the left menu of the course page. Start by giving an introduction of yourself as your first discussion post.

In each module, a "prompt" will be posted in the discussion forum, based on the guest speaker panel videos you watched in that module. Your task is to respond to the prompt with your own original post, and to respond to two other students' original posts. Points in the discussion forum are awarded weekly based on responding to the prompt with your own original post with a minimum of 100 words (three points), and responding to two (2) other students' original posts with a minimum of 50 words (one point for each response; two points possible).

The total number of points for the discussion forum each module week is five (5) points. For the course, the total number of points possible is 35 (5 points per module for seven modules). Original posts, and two response posts, are due by 11:59PM Sunday at the end of the module week.

Guest Speaker Panel Videos

During a previous semester of PSPA 632, twenty local government professionals appeared as guest speakers, mostly in a panel discussion format, and tour guides. These speakers were invited to discuss their backgrounds, what lead them to their respective local government position, or former position, and what a typical day is like for them in terms of their interaction with stakeholders and agencies. Following the speakers' presentations, students in the class asked questions of the speakers. For this online class, you will watch these videos, and the question and answer period that followed. The guest speaker videos will be the basis for the discussion forum for the respective module. Be sure to watch all the videos listed, and the question and answer video for each module. There are no guest speaker panel videos in Modules 1 or 8. The modules, topics, and guest speakers are:

Module 2:	**Topic: Local Government Administrators & Council-Manager Relations.** **James Barr**, Township Administrator, Hanover Township; **Thomas Cuculich**, County Administrator, DuPage County; **Larry Hartwig**, former Addison Mayor & Past-President, DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference; **Bob Mellor**, Village Manager, Carol Stream.
Module 3:	**Topic: Local Government Professional Organizations.** **Rod Craig**, Hanover Park Village President & Vice President, Illinois Municipal League; **Bill Hannah**, Vice President, Illinois Chapter-Government Finance Officers Association; **Bill Hayden**, Addison Director of Police & Past-President, DuPage Chiefs of Police; **Lucille Zucchero**, Addison Village Clerk & Legislative Chair, Municipal Clerks of DuPage.
Module 4:	**Topic: Budgeting & Service Delivery** "Shape of Addison Town Meeting 2019"
Module 5:	**Topic: Local Government Administrators & State Legislator Relations.** **Dennis Reboletti**, Addison Township Supervisor & former State Representative. **Topic: Local Government Elected Officials.** **Rick Gieser**, Village Trustee, Village of Carol Stream; **Martin McManomon**, Wayne Township Highway Commissioner; **Shelia Rutledge**, DuPage County Board Member.
Module 6:	**Topic: Community Relations, Public Information and Citizen Engagement in Local Government.** **Don Bolger**, Public Information Officer, DuPage County Health Department; **Danielle Brink**, Community Relations Director, DuPage High School District 88; **Diane Junokas**, Public Relations Coordinator, Addison School District 4; **John Nebl**, Public Information Officer, DuPage County Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Management; **Angelo Sorce**, Special Events Coordinator, Village of Addison.
Module 7:	**Topic: Local Government Department Operations and Public Safety Communications (tours).** **Addison Public Works Department.** Presenters: **Rich Veenstra**, Mayor, Village of Addison; **Rick Federighi**, Public Works Director, Village of Addison. **Addison Consolidated Dispatch Center (ACDC).** Presenter: **Afton Swistek**, Operations Manager, ACDC.

Learning Outcomes

In order to become effective public leaders, students must develop a solid foundation in technical, analytical, ethical, diversity, accountability, and leadership skills. In addition, students receive greater depth in a specialty area training of their choice: local government management, public management and leadership, fiscal administration, or nonprofit management.

This course (PSPA 632) is designed to address the following program competencies:

Competency	Team Project Research Paper	Team Project Presentation	Individual Papers	Discussion Board Participation
Effectively work with internal and external stakeholders	X	X	X	
Motivate peers and employees to enhance organizational capacity				X
Apply decision-making theories to frame and solve public service problems	X	X	X	
Effectively participate in the public policy process in a role appropriate to a professional public manager	X	X	X	
Conduct environmental scans and identify the windows of opportunity to influence decisions	X	X	X	X
Evaluate public service issues in terms of effectiveness, efficiency, equity, and economy	X	X		X
Incorporate professional codes of ethics in public service decision-making to enhance integrity of public services	X	X		X
Communicate effectively both orally (public speaking) and in writing (analytical and persuasive) for a public service organization and in the public policy process	X	X	X	X
Understand and listen critically to diverse perspectives to address public service issues	X	X	X	X
Identify strategies for improving democratic accountability in governance, including improved transparency and civic participation	X	X	X	X
Develop or adapt policies, programs, goods, or services to accommodate changing social demographics for the population they serve	X	X		X

Course Policies

Communications

Course announcements will be made via email so it is imperative that you check your e-mail daily. "I didn't get the email" is never a valid excuse. The most effect method of communicating with me is using email; however, you are also encouraged to schedule a meeting at my office or a phone call.

Late Assignments

All course assignments are due at 11:59pm unless otherwise noted. Course policy is that late work will not be accepted. That said, you should always turn in your work, even if late. Generally, you will receive at least partial credit for late work, depending on the assignment. This is better than receiving a 'o' on the assignment. All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the assigned due date, unless otherwise specified. For students who contact the instructor before the assignment deadline regarding extenuating circumstances constituting an emergency, the instructor will consider those circumstances and evaluate whether an accommodation can and should be made based on equity, fairness, and compassion. However, an accommodation should not be considered a matter of right in such circumstances.

Lauren's Promise

I will listen and believe you if someone is threatening you. Lauren McCluskey, a 21-year-old honors student athlete, was murdered on October 22, 2018 by a man she briefly dated on the University of Utah campus. We must all take action to ensure that this never happens again.

If you are in immediate danger, call 911.

If you are experiencing sexual assault, domestic violence, or stalking, please report it to me and I will connect you to resources or call NIU's Counseling and Consultation Services (815-753-1206).

Any form of sexual harassment or violence will not be excused or tolerated at Northern. NIU has instituted procedures to respond to violations of these laws and standards, programs aimed at the prevention of such conduct, and intervention on behalf of the victims. NIU Police officers will treat victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, and stalking with respect and dignity. Advocates on campus and in the community can help with victims' physical and emotional health, reporting options, and academic concerns.

Accessibility

If you need an accommodation for this class, please contact the Disability Resource Center as soon as possible. The DRC coordinates accommodations for students with disabilities. It is located in the Campus Life Building, Suite 180, and can be reached at 815-753-1303 or drc@niu.edu.

Also, please contact me privately as soon as possible so we can discuss your accommodations. Please note that you will not be required to disclose your disability, only your accommodations.

The sooner you let me know your needs, the sooner I can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

Name and Pronoun Statement

Class rosters and University data systems are provided to faculty with the student's legal name and legal gender marker. As an NIU student, you are able to change how your preferred/proper name shows up on class rosters. This option is helpful for various student populations, including but not limited to: students who abbreviate their first name; students who use their middle name; international students; and transgender students. As a faculty member, I am committed to using your proper name and pronouns. We will take time during our first class together to do introductions, at which point you can share with all members of our learning community what name and pronouns you use, as you are comfortable. Additionally, if these change at any point during the semester, please let me know and we can develop a plan to share this information with others in a way that is safe for you.

Should you want to update your preferred/proper name, you can do so by looking at the following guidelines and frequently asked questions:

- https://www.niu.edu/regrec/preferred_proper_name/index.shtml

- https://www.niu.edu/regrec/preferred_proper_name/preferrednamefaq.shtml

Academic Integrity

The following statement is from the NIU 2017-18 Graduate Catalog:

"Good academic work must be based on honesty. The attempt of any student to present as his or her own work that which he or she has not produced is regarded by the faculty and administration as a serious offense. Students are considered to have cheated, for example, if they copy the work of another or use unauthorized notes or other aids during an examination or turn in as their own a paper or an assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else. Students are guilty of plagiarism, intentional or not, if they copy material from books, magazines, or other sources without identifying and acknowledging those sources or if they paraphrase ideas from such sources without acknowledging them. Students guilty of, or assisting others in, either cheating or plagiarism on an assignment, quiz, or examination may receive a grade of F for the course involved and may be suspended or dismissed from the university.

The university has adopted additional policies and procedures for dealing with research misconduct among its students, faculty, and staff. The guidelines, entitled Research Integrity at Northern Illinois University, are available in department offices, in the office of the dean of the Graduate School, and online at www.niu.edu/provost/policies/appm/I2.shtml, and pertain to the intentional commission of any of the following acts: falsification of data, improper assignment of authorship, claiming another person's work as one's own, unprofessional manipulation of experiments or of research procedures, misappropriation of research funds.

If a graduate student fails to maintain the standards of academic or professional integrity expected in his or her discipline or program, the student's admission to the program may be terminated on recommendation of the student's major department. A statement on students' rights to the products of research is available in department offices, in the office of the dean of the Graduate School, and online at www.niu.edu/provost/policies/appm/I11.shtml."

Ethics: In case it is not yet crystal clear, there is zero tolerance for plagiarism in this course, this program and this university. Anyone who violates the ethical imperative to cite the work of others that is used in writing course papers is subject to an F for the course and possible dismissal from the university. If in doubt, cite the source, whether a quotation or a paraphrasing of someone else's work. I am happy to provide advice on how to cite works in specific situations. Use the Turabian style manual for all paper citations.

The English Department's statement on Plagiarism is direct and to the point: www.engl.niu.edu/composition/guidelines/plag.shtml. I recommend you take the online tutorial available from the NIU website to be sure you understand the rules and principles writingtutorial.niu.edu/writingtutorial/style/plagiarism01.html.

Course Outline

Module 01, 03/20: Local Government: Structure and Leadership

Required

📖 Nelson and Stenberg, Chapters 1-3[1]

📖 Bowman and Kearney, Chapters 1 & 11[2]

📄 Walker and Andrews, "Local Government Management and Performance: A Review of Evidence"[3]

Videos & Blackboard Discussions

1. Write an introductory post about yourself in the Blackboard discussion forum (minimum 100 words), and respond to two other students' original posts (minimum 50 words each).

Assignments

1. Collaborate on your Team Project Topic.
2. Submit topic through Module 1 assignment link by 11:59PM.

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1. Nelson and Stenberg 2017.
2. Bowman and Kearney 2015.
3. Richard M. Walker and Rhys Andrews. 2015. "Local Government Management and Performance: A Review of Evidence." *Journal of Public Administration Research & Theory* 25 (1): 101–133.

Module 02, 03/27: Council/Board and Staff Relations and the Roles of Mayors and Managers

Required
📗 Nelson and Stenberg, Chapter 6[4]
📄 Upshaw, "Eight Strategies for Effective Council-Manager Relations"
🔗 Anderegg, "Council-Manager Relations: Communicating & Sharing Ideas."

Videos & Blackboard Discussions
1. Watch 5 videos posted in the Module on Council/Board & Staff Relations.
2. Respond to the prompt in the Blackboard discussion forum (minimum 100 words), and respond to two other students' original posts (minimum 50 words each).

Assignments
1. Complete Individual Paper #1, to be submitted by 11:59PM.

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4. Nelson and Stenberg 2017.

Module 03, 04/03: Local Government Professional Organizations

Required

📘 Nelson and Stenberg, Chapters 5 and 7[5]

📘 Bowman and Kearney, Chapter 10[6]

📄 Carr, "What Have We Learned about the Performance of Council-Manager Government? A Review and Synthesis of the Research"[7]

Videos & Blackboard Discussions

1. Watch 5 videos posted in the Module on Local Government Professional Organizations.
2. Respond to the prompt in the Blackboard discussion forum (minimum 100 words), and respond to two other students' original posts (minimum 50 words each).

Assignments

1. Complete the Team Project Identification Memo.
2. Submit memo through Module 3 assignment link by 11:59PM.

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5. 2017.

6. Bowman and Kearney 2015.

7. Jered B. Carr. 2015. "What Have We Learned about the Performance of Council-Manager Government? A Review and Synthesis of the Research." *Public Administration Review* 75 (5): 673–689.

Module 04, 04/10: Budgeting & Service Delivery

Required

📘 Nelson and Stenberg, Chapters 9 and 10[8]
📘 Bowman and Kearney, Chapter 8[9]
📄 Stein, "Arranging City Services"[10]

Videos & Blackboard Discussions

1. Watch the "Shape of Addison Town Hall Meeting" video, posted in the Module.
2. Respond to the prompt in the Blackboard discussion forum (minimum 100 words), and respond to two other students original posts (minimum 50 words each).

Assignments

1. Complete Individual Paper #2, to be submitted by 11:59PM.

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8. Nelson and Stenberg 2017.
9. Bowman and Kearney 2015.
10. Robert M. Stein. 1993. "Arranging City Services." *Journal of Public Administration Research & Theory* 3 (1): 66–92.

Module 05, 04/17: The Electoral Process in Local Government

Required

📘 Bowman and Kearney, Chapter 4[11]

📄 Hajnal and Lewis, "Municipal Institutions and Voter Turnout in Local Elections"[12]

📄 Lappie and Marschall, "Place and participation in local elections"[13]

Videos & Blackboard Discussions

1. Watch 5 videos posted in the Module on Local Government Elected Officials and Local Government Administrators & State Legislator Relations.

2. Respond to ONE of the prompts in the Blackboard discussion forum (minimum 100 words), and respond to two other students' original posts (minimum 50 words each).

Assignments

- None

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11. 2015.

12. Zoltan L. Hajnal and Paul G. Lewis. 2003. "Municipal Institutions and Voter Turnout in Local Elections." *Urban Affairs Review* 38 (5): 645–668.

13. John Lappie and Melissa Marschall. 2018. "Place and participation in local elections." *Political Geography* 64:33–42.

Module 06, 04/24: Community Relations, Public Information and Citizen Engagement

Required

📘 Nelson and Stenberg, Chapter 8[14]

Videos & Blackboard Discussions

1. Watch 6 videos posted in the Module on Community Relations, Public Information and Citizen Engagement.
2. Respond to the prompt in the Blackboard discussion forum (minimum 100 words), and respond to two other students' original posts (minimum 50 words each).

Assignments

- None

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14. Nelson and Stenberg 2017.

Week 07, 05/01: Local Government Department Operations & Public Safety Communications

Required

- None

Videos & Blackboard Discussions

1. Watch 2 videos posted in the Module on tours of the Addison Public Works Department and Addison Consolidated Dispatch Center.
2. Respond to ONE of the prompts in the Blackboard discussion forum (minimum 100 words), and respond to two other students' original posts (minimum 50 words each).

Assignments

- Complete Team Project Research Paper.
- Submit paper through Module 7 assignment link by 11:59PM.

Module 08, 05/08: Responding to Citizen Complaints

Required

- None.

Assignments

- Complete Team Project Research Presentation.
- Submit paper through Module 8 assignment link by 11:59PM.