Public Service Internship  
Syllabus  

PAD 3941/5946  
Spring 2012  

Class Meetings:  
Friday 5:30-815pm Bellamy Room 0030  

Professors:  
Dr. Jayce Farmer (PAD 5946)  
(850) 644-3525  
(850) 559-5940 (cell)  
jf02g@fsu.edu  

Susan Spice (PAD 3941)  
(850) 644-3525  
(850) 933-3990 (cell)  
sls02d@my.fsu.edu  

FSU Office:  
653 Bellamy  

Office Hours:  
TBA  

Class meetings are scheduled at the beginning and end of the term and when announced by the instructors. **Per University policy, all students are required to attend the first day of class for all courses in which they are registered. Students who do not attend the first class meeting of a course for which they are registered will be dropped from the course. It is the student’s responsibility to verify course drops and check that fees are adjusted.**  

When class meetings are not held, students are to file a weekly status report via email. This report should give a brief overview of activities at the internship.  

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course is based on participant observation of the administration of public policy in governmental and public organizations. As such, faculty supervision, on-campus seminars, and discussion papers are part and parcel of this undertaking. Graduate students are expected to complete 400 or more contact hours (40 hours per week for 10 weeks), undergraduate students are expected to complete 200 or more contact hours (20 hours per week for 10 weeks). All students must register for 3 credit hours. The course is graded pass/fail. Assistance will be provided for students needing to locate internship opportunities.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

- Develop administrative diagnostic skills, assuring that students are able to effect organizational analysis and present a planned strategy for improvement.
- Foster leadership skills through systematic observations of persons in leadership positions within the organization, and learn which behaviors to emulate and avoid in order to tap into the full collective resources of an organization.
- Sharpen diagnostic, writing, and oral presentation skills through the development and presentation of a report that comprehensively analyzes the intern’s organization and presents a plan for its improvement.
- Comply with the “Statement of Objectives” contract.
- Learn ways to more effectively cope with the stresses of administrative life.
- Develop job search skills for subsequent professional employment and a strategy for lifelong professional development.
- Begin a strategy to professionally network and establish a professional identity.

**“STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES” CONTRACT:** Each student is to work collaboratively with his or her supervisor, as well as with the instructor, to develop an acceptable set of learning and performance objectives using the prescribed form for this purpose. This form, when signed by the intern and supervisor, is similar to a contract identifying what the intern is to accomplish and what the supervisor promises to assist the intern in accomplishing. The internship is not fully approved by the Askew School until the instructor has received and approved the statement of objectives form.

**COURSE EVALUATION:** The internship is graded on an S/U basis. The instructor alone is responsible for determining whether the intern has successfully completed an internship. The instructor’s determination will be based upon the following:

- The supervisor’s evaluation. At the end of the internship the intern’s work supervisor is to complete a written evaluation form, provided by the Askew School. In this, the supervisor evaluates how well the intern has accomplished the learning and performance objectives identified in the “Statement of Objectives” form.
- **Attendance and participation** in class is mandatory. If the intern is unable to attend the class sessions s/he is to submit appropriate additional written work as directed by the instructor.
- All students will make an oral presentation of their administrative diagnostics paper.

**WRITTEN PRODUCTS TO BE SUBMITTED INCLUDE**
• Statement of Objectives
• Resume
• Copies or representative samples of written products produced by the intern for his or her organization.
• A brief evaluation of the quality of the experience provided by the organization to the intern; this is to help us to evaluate the quality of the experiences provided to interns and to improve future intern placements (one page will be sufficient).

THE ADMINISTRATIVE DIAGNOSTICS PAPER (Due April 20, 2012)

• The primary purpose of the seminar sessions and paper is to enhance your ability to apply theory in practice through the development of the intern’s diagnostic skills.
  1. A public administration intern should become adept at applying knowledge gained in the classroom to diagnose the conditions, purpose, and functioning of public organizations.
  2. The central focus of the Askew School internship is to develop diagnostic skills in an actual work setting.
  3. Administrative diagnostic skills enable a professional administrator to analyze an organization, including the behavior of the people in it, to understand the organization better, its setting, and its needs.
  4. The administrative intern must develop the ability to make well-reasoned suggestions for improving an organization.
  5. During the internship course’s seminar sessions we will discuss the observations you are making about various aspects of the organization and its setting and share ideas about improving the organization and the effectiveness of your learning situation in the organization.

• Use the following outline to prepare The Administrative Diagnostics Paper:

1. Title Page

2. Executive Summary (An outline of not more than two pages; use topic headings and very brief paragraphs.)

3. Analysis of Organization’s:
   • Mission and Key Stakeholders
   • Environment and Emergent Threats and Opportunities
   • Leadership Style and Operant Theories of Organization and Motivation
   • Workforce Talents, Skills, Interpersonal Communications, and Motivation
   • Use of Technology
   • Overall Strategic Strengths and Weaknesses

Recommendations to Improve the Organization
• Change in enabling legislation, mission clarification
Some questions to guide your diagnostic assessment of the organization Mission and Key Stakeholders

Every public organization has a purpose, a reason for being. Unfortunately, it is often taken for granted and it fails to be a source of motivation. When the members of the organization have a shared sense of mission and purpose, they are likely to be better able to coordinate their actions, thereby making a fuller contribution to the effectiveness of the organization. Unlike private businesses that can define their own missions, public organizations cannot define their own missions. They cannot undertake actions that are not legally authorized. When public administrators want to change their organization’s missions and direction, they must often seek changes in the underlying framework of the laws that establish the public organization’s mission and scope of authority.

- What is the mission, the central purposes, of the organization?
- Does the authorizing legislation that governs the organization provide a clear sense of direction and purpose for the organization and its employees?
- Are there problems, which suggest that the authorizing legislation need to change?
- Who are the key stakeholders of the organization and does agreement exist among them regarding the agency and its policies, or do stakeholders differ in their opinions regarding the agency and its operations?
- Do members of the organization have a clear understanding of the organization’s mission and does accomplishing that mission give them a sense of meaning and accomplishment in their own lives?

Environment and Emergent Threats and Opportunities

An organization’s environment encompasses everything from global technological change to local demographic and political change. This is especially true where population growth is substantial and electronic technologies are opening new ways to accomplish tasks. Failure to recognize these changes may cause an organization to fail to serve the public well; its public support might wane and resistance to it might increase. Failure to see changes in the environment, including the potential of new technologies, might cause an organization to miss opportunities.

- What are the most important changes, global to local, in the environment of the organization?
- Do these changes constitute threats, opportunities, or combinations thereof?
- Does the organization have ways to effectively learn about changes in its present and future environment?
- Does the organization link its learning about changes in its environment to the development of effective strategies for action? If not, what might be the consequences of this shortcoming?
Leadership Style and Operant Theories of Organization and Motivation

Every organization exhibits theories of leadership and motivation in action. The adept administrative diagnostician looks for indicators about what these theories are. Formal policies may suggest one thing, but daily behaviors may reveal something else entirely. It is, therefore, necessary to look closely at the daily interactions between supervisors and their subordinates. The interactions between a manager and a secretary, for example, can be very revealing about how that manager views his or her own role as a leader. The classic ‘Theory X’ manager, identified by Douglas McGregor, might assume that the secretary is lazy and irresponsible and that the role of the leader, therefore, is one of command and control. Conversely, the manager might view the secretary as a valued member of the team, as someone who is a mature and responsible adult, and as someone who possesses important knowledge and talents that need to be tapped for the organization to succeed well. Such a manager would likely believe that the role of the leader is to be a facilitator of teamwork, of problem solving, and of employee development.

- From your observations of the behaviors of persons in authority at different levels of the organization, ranging from top executives to first line supervisors, what are the dominant underlying theories of leadership that guide their daily actions?
- From your observations of interactions between superiors and subordinates, what theories of human motivation guide the managers of the organization in their daily actions?
- Are these operant theories of leadership and motivation conducive to achieving the potential of the organization or are the operant theories of leadership impediments to achieving that potential?
- Are the members of the organization highly motivated to accomplish the organization’s missions of service to the public?

Workforce Talents, Skills, and Interpersonal Communication

It is axiomatic, but true, that an organization is only as good as its members. Every organization must be able to recruit persons with requisite talents and skills and develop these more fully on the job. The members of the organization must also communicate well with one another. Shortcomings in interpersonal communications among the members of an organization are often a cause of poor performance. The importance of organizational communications was tragically illustrated in the Challenger disaster when concerns about a contractor’s engineers were not communicated to the officials who decided to launch the shuttle. In an era of privatization through outsourcing and contracting, the Challenger disaster also demonstrates that contractors and others must be well integrated into organizational communications. On a more routine basis, failures to communicate well prevent members from identifying problems and working effectively to improve the performance of the organization.

- Is sufficient attention given to training and developing the potential of the organization’s members?
- Do members of the organization communicate well with one another to identify and solve problems?
- Where much reliance is placed on grants and contracts to accomplish the organization’s mission, are members of the other staffs well integrated in communications to solve problems?
• What is the extent to which subordinates can openly communicate with their superiors, and influence the way things are done?
• Are superiors well aware of the problems faced by the people at the bottom of the hierarchy who actually deliver most of an organization’s services?
• Do members of the organization feel they are members of a well functioning team?
• Do members of the organization at all levels strive and cooperate continuously to improve the work processes of the organization?

Utilization of Technology

New electronic technology is likely to cause enormous changes in the workplace. With computing speed increasing rapidly, they will make tasks that once required much labor easier. Repetitive tasks, both physical and mental, are increasingly likely to be done using new technologies such as expert systems. This technology can greatly increase our productivity but it can also be destabilizing. Desk top computing, for example, has been common only since the mid-1980’s yet, within a few years of its adoption, it has made downsizing of middle management possible. Organizations should study new technology to take advantages of the opportunities it presents, and to anticipate the problems it might cause.

• Does the organization learn effectively about new technology and implement it appropriately?
• Are there opportunities presented by new technology of which the organization is failing to take advantage?
• Is information captured electronically only once, or do members of the organization spend time preparing reports from information that should already be readily available?
• Do members throughout the organization have quick electronic access to the information they need to do their jobs better?

Overall Strategic Strengths and Weaknesses

Organizations and their leaders act “strategically” when they habitually focus their attention upon those things that most need to be done in order for the organization to be effective now and in the future. The leaders of organizations that are managed strategically ensure that four overlapping circles of activities are done well and integrated well. These circles of activities include anticipation, direction, commitment, and control related activities.

Anticipation activities are those in which members of the organization seek information from and about their present environment in order to gain a better understanding of the future environment within which the organization might function. This step is vital to effective adaptation to changing times and to taking advantage of emergent opportunities that, otherwise, might be lost.

Direction setting activities are those in which the leaders of the organization work with other members to assure that the organization has a strong sense of its underlying purpose and of the general direction in which it is seeking to move. A shared sense of meaning and purpose – one that provides guidance and a sense of direction for the members of an organization – is often called “vision.”
Commitment oriented activities are those things an organization does to encourage the active participation of all its members in working together to achieve a vision of continuous improvements in quality service to the public. Activities that are designed to enhance the talents of the workforce and to improve communications toward achieving better public service are essential commitment oriented activities.

Control oriented activities are those that are oriented toward obtaining effective feedback about the organizations activities and making appropriate changes in response to such feedback. Control oriented activities are numerous and include financial and other management information systems, personnel evaluations, measures of outputs and outcomes, and so on.

- What are the overall strategic strengths and weaknesses of the organization?
- What is needed to best integrate the four overlapping circles of activities?

Course Assistance

We are here to help you with the course. Do not hesitate to call upon us if you have questions. It is our hope that you will have a pleasant internship experience and learn from and appreciate the dynamic environment encompassing the profession of public administration.

Attendance Policy

Excused absences include documented illnesses, deaths in the immediate family and other documented crises, call to active military or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. Accommodations for these excuses absences will be made and will do so in a way that does not penalize students who have valid excuses. Consideration will also be given to citizens whose dependent children experience serious illness.

Academic Honor Policy

The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University’s expectations for the integrity of students’ academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to “…be honest and truthful and … (to) strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University.” (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at http://dof.fsu.edu/honorpolicy.htm.)

Americans with Disabilities Act

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should:
1. register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and
2. bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type.
This should be done during the first week of class.