

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

PS 613 Spring 2008
UNC-Greensboro

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PURPOSE OF THE COURSE:

This course is designed to provide graduate students with an overview of local government administration by looking at the issues, skills, and problems faced by local government managers.

The course will review the profession of local government management, ethics, community leadership, essential management practices, implementation of policy, service delivery, external relations and effective local government management. The course will emphasize these issues largely in terms of small to medium-sized council-manager cities, but will also include readings on and comparisons to mayor forms, county governments, and larger communities.

The course assignments, fieldwork, and guest speakers are intended to directly involve students with current local government issues in North Carolina. The theme of the course will be how local government service and professional management can lead to a meaningful and rewarding career that involves balancing the challenges and competing interests of citizens, elected officials, special interests, staff and other governments with professional values and expertise.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:

Charldean Newell, ed., *The Effective Local Government Manager*, ICMA, 2004

Douglas J. Watson and Wendy I. Hassett, ed., *Local Government Management*, ASPA, 2003

RECOMMENDED SUPPLEMENTAL READINGS:

David M. Lawrence, ed., *County and Municipal Government in North Carolina*, Institute of Government, 2007.

Carl W. Stenberg and Susan Lipman Austin, *Managing Local Government Services: A Practical Guide*, ICMA Press 2007

Gordon P. Whitaker, *Local Government in North Carolina*, NCCCMA, 2003.

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Students are expected to attend and participate in each class. Class discussions will be based on the readings, supplemental materials and personal experience. Please let the instructor know in advance if an absence is unavoidable. Incompletes and late assignments will not be accepted without the instructor's prior knowledge and permission.

Final grades will be based on a group project (written report and oral presentation), written executive reports, class presentations, class participation and a possible final exam.

Team Fieldwork Project: The class will work on a field research project for a local government department, likely from the City of High Point, in teams of three to five individuals. The team will work with an agency liaison on the assignment, produce a written report, and make an oral presentation on the project. The same grade will be assigned to all team members. An evaluation from the liaison will form part of the grade, and additional points will be distributed based on the evaluations of other team members.

This project will encourage students to connect their academic learning about administration with an applied research assignment that requires them to interact with city administrators.

Individual Class Presentations and Executive Reports:

A one to two page written report will be due February 13, providing an executive summary of a session that you attended at the North Carolina City & County Managers Conference in Raleigh on January 30 - February 1. This paper should give a summary of the key points addressed in the session and an evaluation of the importance of this issue to local government managers. Each student should be prepared to present a brief oral synopsis of their chosen session in class.

A second report (up to 2 pages) will be prepared on an assigned class readings selected by the student. This paper will summarize the reading and state the relevance of the reading to local government management. This paper will be shared with all class members and again the student should be prepared to give a brief oral synopsis of the report in the assigned class and be prepared to lead a discussion on the reading.

A third report required during the semester, will be an analysis from an instructor approved public meeting of the interactions between various local government officials participating in the meeting. This intent of this assignment is to focus on the roles played by various local government officials as they interact in a public meeting. The written report should be no more than a two page executive summary.

These assignments encourage students to learn from each other, to integrate learning from various sources, and to improve one's oral presentation and professional writing skills.

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<u>Assignment:</u>	<u>Weight:</u>	<u>Deadline:</u>
Report on reading assignment/presentation	15%	As Assigned
Executive report from NCCCMA meeting	15%	February 13
Report on Local Public Meeting	15%	March 26
Group project (oral and written presentation)	30%	April 23
Group evaluation of each team member	5%	April 30
Evaluation of local government contact	5%	April 30
Class participation	15%	

CLASS SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS:

NOTE: Students are expected to have read the assigned material by the designated class.

Week 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE AND TOPIC JAN. 16

Discussion of Syllabus and field projects; overview of key questions
Code of Ethics, Values
Lawrence, "An Overview of Local Government" (art. 1, Lawrence)

Week 2: TYPES and FORMS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT (LEGAL) JAN. 23

The Profession of Local Government Manager, ICMA Chapter 1
Stillman, "The City Manager" (ch. 2, Watson & Hassett)
Svara, "Dichotomy and Duality" (ch. 4, Watson & Hassett)
Lawrence, "City and County Governing Boards" (art. 3, Lawrence)

Week 3: FIELDTRIP: NC CITY AND COUNTY MANAGERS ASSOC. JAN. 30 – FEB. 2

- Sheraton Imperial Hotel, Research Triangle Park

Week 4: ROLES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS FEB 6

**Possible Guest Speaker, City Manager,
Field Project Assignments**

Achieving Effective Community Leadership, ICMA Chapter 2
Bosworth, "The Manager is a Politician" (ch. 1, Watson & Hassett)
Banovetz, "City Managers: Will They Reject Policy Leadership?" (ch. 5, Watson & Hassett)

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Week 5: EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

FEB. 13

Guest Speaker: Mayor Becky Smothers, High Point

Written and Oral Reports on NCCCMA meeting

Enhancing the Governing Body's Effectiveness, ICMA Chapter 3

Wikstrom, "The Mayor as a Policy Leader in the Council-Manager Form of Government" (ch. 3, Watson & Hassett)

Svara, "The Shifting Boundary Between Elected Officials and City Managers in Large Council-Manager Cities" (ch. 7, Watson & Hassett)

Week 6: EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP

FEB. 20

Montjoy & Watson, "A Case for Reinterpreted Dichotomy of Politics and Administration as a Professional Standard in Council-Manager Government" (ch. 6, Watson & Hassett)

Fox & Schuhmann, "Gender and Local Government: A Comparison of Women and Men City Managers" (ch. 27, Watson & Hassett)

Week 7: STRATEGIC PLANNING

FEB. 27

Guest Speaker, Ed Kitchen, Retired Greensboro City Manager

Promoting the Community's Future, ICMA Chapter 4

White, "Improving the Goal-Setting Process in Local Gov't" (ch. 22 Watson & Hassett)

Streib, "Applying Strategic Decision Making in Local Government" (ch. 24, W & H)

Week 8: SUSTANIABLE COMMUNITIES (GROWTH MANAGEMENT)

MAR. 5

Svara, "Analyzing How Local Governments Establish Service Priorities" (ch. 11, Watson & Hassett)

Higgins, "Strategies for Management of Decline and Productivity Improvement in Local Government" (ch. 23, Watson & Hassett)

OFF: SPRING BREAK

MAR. 12

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Week 14: LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROJECTS

APR. 23

Team project presentations

Week 15: CONCLUSION: FUTURE ISSUES IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

APR. 30

Why chose local government administration as a career?

**Guest Speaker, Randy McCaslin, President of the NCCCMA, Asst. City Manager,
High Point, Former Town Manager of Kernersville**

Leading a Manager's Life, ICMA Chapter 8

Jurkiewicz & Massey, "What Municipal Employees want from their Jobs versus What they are Getting" (ch. 17, Watson & Hassett)

Berman & West, "Values Management in Local Gov't" (ch. 20, Watson & Hassett)

Teske & Schneider, "The Bureaucratic Entrepreneur" (ch. 28, Watson & Hassett)