

# GOVT 351 Bureaucracy

Spring 2016

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221-3024

*Course Meetings:* Students must attend the section for which they have registered.

- Section 01 (CRN 24373): Tuesday and Thursday, 9:30-10:50, Morton 39
- Section 02 (CRN 24374): Tuesday and Thursday, 11:00-12:20, Morton 39

*Office Hours:* Wednesdays 11:00-12:30, Thursdays 3:30-5:00, and by appointment

## 1. Course description

Welcome to GOVT 351. This class addresses an important, but often forgotten, reality of the American political system: laws and judicial decisions are not self-executing. Collectively, they rely on public bureaucracies and thousands of public administrators and others to implement them. John Adams recognized this back in 1785 when he wrote: “the laws are a dead letter until an administration begins to carry them into execution.”<sup>1</sup> To understand how that “execution” occurs, this class explores different theoretical perspectives and examples to help students understand the bureaucrats who manage and implement policy, the tools they use, and the organizational and political environments in which they work.

## 2. Readings

These books are required.

- James Q. Wilson. 1989 [or 1991]. *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It*. New York: Basic Books. ISBN 978046500785.
- Kenneth J. Meier and Laurence J. O’Toole, Jr. 2006. *Bureaucracy in a Democratic State: A Governance Perspective*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press. ISBN 9780801883576
- John D. Donahue and Mark H. Moore (eds.). 2012. *Ports in a Storm: Public Management in a Turbulent World*. Washington, DC: Brookings. ISBN 9780815722373.

Other required readings are on the course Blackboard site.

## 3. Class expectations

### 3.1 Grading

The course stresses three skill sets—discussing ideas, writing, and thinking on your feet in timed settings—that all students trained in the liberal arts should possess. Mastering these skills will help you enjoy success and make positive contributions in your future classes (at W&M and in graduate school), the workforce, and the communities where you eventually reside.

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<sup>1</sup> You can see the full context of the quote here: [http://www.constitution.org/jadams/ja1\\_55.htm](http://www.constitution.org/jadams/ja1_55.htm).

Weight	Item
25%	Class participation and attendance
5%	Response essay
25%	Midterm exam
20%	Research essay
25%	Final exam
Extra credit: 1%	Optional participation in the GOVT Omnibus Study

I will base final course grades on the following scale, with partial-percents typically rounded to the nearest full percent: A 93-100, A- 90-92, B+ 88-89, B 83-87, B- 80-82, C+ 78-79, C 73-77, C- 70-72, D+ 68-69, D 63-67, D- 60-62, F <60.

Finally, please keep a copy of all work you submit until I have processed final grades.

### ***3.2 Brief description of assignments***

More details on these assignments, including specific expectations for grading, will be posted on Blackboard and discussed in class.

**Class participation and attendance:** Attendance every day and active class participation are essential components of this class. On Blackboard, I have posted a grading rubric that outlines my specific expectations. In sum, everyone should arrive prepared to have thoughtful and energetic discussions about the class material. If generally you are shy in classes you should see me immediately so I can help you overcome that fear of speaking out. Here are four specific things you should do to prepare to participate in class each day.

- Read the discussion questions I will post on Blackboard for each topic.
- Do the readings while thinking about the discussion questions.
- Prepare some notes on the discussion questions, and bring them to class.
- Bringing the readings with you to class will be very useful.

**Response essay:** This assignment will ask you to write a brief response to a popular news article that you choose. The paper will provide you with an opportunity to hone the mechanics of your writing while receiving detailed feedback from me on how to improve.

**Research essay:** This assignment will ask you to write a paper that offers a reform that could improve the work of a specific government bureaucracy of your choosing. You will incorporate popular and scholarly sources into the paper, as well as a data visualization. As part of this assignment, I will show you how to present those visualizations and how to write persuasively and clearly about them.

**Exams:** Class exams will primarily contain short answer questions that call for a brief paragraph response. In fairness to everyone, students who arrive late for an exam may not work overtime. The only valid reasons for missing and rescheduling an exam are due to a documented illness, religious observance, a grave family emergency, a W&M-sponsored travel commitment that you have discussed with me before the exam, or, during final exams only (as W&M allows), you have several exams in a row. If you miss an exam for another reason you can take a makeup exam for which the maximum grade you can earn is a C (75%).

**Optional extra credit for participating in the GOVT Omnibus Study:** The Department of Government has launched a collaborative subject pool for survey and experimental research conducted by students and faculty. To help introduce you to the field of political science and earn extra credit for this course, you will have the opportunity to participate as a subject in a research project this semester. Doing so will help contribute to the efforts of your fellow W&M students and faculty members in Government. Completing the requirements to earn extra credit will involve taking a brief survey and participating in a session with student or faculty researchers during a 2-3 week window that will occur during the semester. It will involve about an hour of your time. An alternative assignment will be offered to students who do not want to participate in the Omnibus Project or who are not old enough to participate (you must be 18 years of age), but who still would like to seek extra credit. The maximum amount of extra credit available is 1 percentage point toward your final semester grade.

### ***3.3 Appropriate use of technology in class***

Please do not let your laptops or other electronic devices distract you, your fellow classmates, or me during our in-class work. Students who use electronic devices in class inappropriately suggest that they possess neither the intellectual focus nor the respect for others needed to do real professional work. Such behavior will undercut your attendance and participation grade in this class. Further, a mounting body of research has shown that students learn less when they rely on laptops and other electronic devices for note-taking in class. I would strongly encourage you to consider taking hand-written notes, as your grade will likely improve as a result.

### ***3.4 Academic misconduct***

I begin by assuming academic misconduct will not become an issue in this class. If it does, for any questions about policies regarding cheating, plagiarism, or other types of academic dishonesty please see the William & Mary Honor Council's web site and the discussion of the Honor Code in the Student Handbook. If I discover a student cheating I will initiate an Honor Council proceeding and, at a bare minimum, recommend that the student receive an F for the course.

### ***3.5 What you can expect from me***

So far I have described what I expect from you. But what can you expect from me? Several things. First, I will not ask you to do things that waste your time. I am convinced that students respond best when professors encourage them to think hard about interesting ideas and questions. I will work all semester to create that kind of environment. Second, I will give you lots of honest feedback in class discussions, office hours, email exchanges, and on your written work. Finally, I promise to treat you with respect. I anticipate that we will sometimes disagree about government and politics this semester. In fact, I hope we do because that will make the course more interesting. I will not penalize you if you do not embrace my political beliefs, nor will I reward you simply because we happen to agree on political matters.

## 4. Schedule

- We will adjust this schedule as needed.
- BB = Required reading is posted on Blackboard. Occasionally, I will post other readings, or simply email them to the class list. Those additional readings will be optional.

### 4.1. How to situate the bureaucracy in the American political system?

Th 1/21	Course introduction
T 1/26	The demands of democracy and the imperatives of bureaucracy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meier &amp; O'Toole. Ch. 1 Governance and the bureaucracy problem.</li> <li>• Wilson. Ch. 18. Rules.</li> </ul>
Th 1/28	Public bureaucracy and private bureaucracy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wilson. Ch. 17 Problems; Ch. 19 Markets.</li> </ul>
T 2/2	Bureaucracy and governance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BB. Laurence J. O'Toole and Kenneth J. Meier. 2011. <i>Public Management: Organizations, Governance, and Performance</i>. Ch. 1 Public management and performance: An evidence-based perspective (pp. 23-28).</li> <li>• Meier &amp; O'Toole. Appendix. A specific model of governance (pp. 155-157).</li> <li>• Donahue &amp; Moore, Ch. 2 Sea change: Rewriting the rules for port security.</li> </ul>
Th 2/4	Reform impulses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meier &amp; O'Toole. Ch. 1 Governance and the bureaucracy problem (re-read pp. 9-14).</li> <li>• BB. Paul Light. 1997. <i>The Tides of Reform: Making Government Work, 1945-1995</i>. Ch. 1 The tides of reform (pp. 15-43).</li> </ul>

### 4.2. What is the bureaucracy, exactly?

T 2/9	People <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wilson. Ch. 1 Armies, prisons, schools; Ch. 2 Organization matters.</li> </ul>
Th 2/11	People (cont.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Donahue &amp; Moore. Ch. 5. Pursuing public value: Frameworks for strategic analysis and action.</li> <li>• BB. James M. Cole, Deputy Attorney General. Memorandum for All United States Attorneys. Subject: Guidance Regarding Marijuana Enforcement. <a href="http://www.justice.gov/iso/opa/resources/3052013829132756857467.pdf">http://www.justice.gov/iso/opa/resources/3052013829132756857467.pdf</a>.</li> </ul>
T 2/16	Government organizations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wilson. Ch. 9 Compliance.</li> </ul>
Th 2/18	Government organizations in networks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meier &amp; O'Toole. Ch. 2 Democracy and political control of the bureaucracy; Ch. 3 Structural barriers to political control.</li> </ul>

**\*Friday, February 19. RESPONSE ESSAY DUE BY 5PM\***

T 2/23	Challenges to network management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wilson. Ch. 10 Turf; Ch. 12 Innovation.</li> <li>BB. Laurence J. O'Toole and Kenneth J. Meier. 2004. Desperately seeking Selznick: Cooptation and the dark side of public management in networks. <i>Public Administration Review</i> 64(6): 681-693.</li> </ul>
Th 2/25	Networks and the port security case <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Donahue &amp; Moore. Ch. 6 The tummler's task: A collaborative conception of port protection; Ch. 7 Toward a higher purpose: Captain Englebert navigates the choppy waters of network governance.</li> </ul>
T 3/1	Criteria for choosing among different bureaucratic forms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BB. Christopher K. Leman. 2002. Ch. 2 (excerpt) Direct government. In Lester M. Salamon, ed., <i>The Tools of Government</i> (pp. 48-49 and 61-64).</li> <li>Donahue &amp; Moore. Ch. 8 Improving port security: A twenty-first-century government approach.</li> </ul>
Th 3/3	<b>*MIDTERM EXAM IN CLASS*</b>

Tuesday, March 8 and Thursday, March 10 – No class due to spring break.

#### **4.3. What influences how bureaucrats think?**

T 3/15	Bounded rationality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BB. Herbert A. Simon. 1997. <i>Administrative Behavior (4th ed.)</i>. Commentary on Chapter V: The psychology of administrative decisions (pp. 118-129). A brief video of Simon discussing his core ideas is here: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ErnWbP_Wztk">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ErnWbP_Wztk</a>.</li> <li>Wilson. Ch. 6 Culture.</li> </ul>
Th 3/17	Circumstances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wilson. Ch. 2 Organizations (re-read pp. 25-27); Ch. 6 Culture (re-read pp. 109-110); Ch. 3 Circumstances.</li> </ul>
T 3/22	Values <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wilson. Ch. 4 Beliefs.</li> <li>Meier &amp; O'Toole. Ch. 4 Political control versus bureaucratic values.</li> </ul>

**\*Friday, March 23. RESEARCH ESSAY IDEA DESCRIPTION DUE BY 5PM\***

Th 3/24	Performance demands: K-12 education case <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meier &amp; O'Toole. Ch. 5 Inside the bureaucracy: Principals, agents, and bureaucratic strategy.</li> </ul>
T 3/29	Problem framing and risk assessment: Port security case <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Donahue &amp; Moore. Ch. 3 Unraveling a risk-management challenge.</li> </ul>

#### **4.4. How do other government institutions try to influence the bureaucracy?**

Th 3/31	Executive branch <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wilson. Ch. 14 Presidents.</li> </ul>
T 4/5	Legislative branch <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wilson. Ch. 13 Congress.</li> </ul>

Th 4/7	<p>Presidential and congressional tug-of-war: Immigration policy case</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Note: The U.S. Supreme Court will hear a case this spring regarding Obama's executive actions. Additional readings will be posted regarding the case itself.</li> <li>Max Ehrenfreund. 2014. Your complete guide to Obama's immigration executive action. Washingtonpost.com. November 20. <a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2014/11/19/your-complete-guide-to-obamas-immigration-order/">https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2014/11/19/your-complete-guide-to-obamas-immigration-order/</a>.</li> <li>U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security. Executive Actions on Immigration. <a href="http://www.uscis.gov/immigrationaction">http://www.uscis.gov/immigrationaction</a>.</li> </ul>
T 4/12	<p>Judicial branch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wilson. Ch. 15 Courts.</li> </ul>

#### 4.5 How do bureaucracies engage the public?

Th 4/14	<p>Organized interests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wilson. Ch. 5 Interests; Ch. 11 Strategies (pp. 202-205)</li> <li>Donahue &amp; Moore. Ch. 9 Calling publics into existence: The political arts of public management (pp. 180-197).</li> </ul>
T 4/19	<p>Rulemaking and attentive publics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BB. Jason Webb Yackee and Susan Webb Yackee. 2006. A bias towards business? Assessing interest group influence on the U.S. bureaucracy. <i>Journal of Politics</i> 68(1): 128-139.</li> </ul>
Th 4/21	<p>Participatory bureaucracy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Donahue &amp; Moore. Ch. 9 Calling publics into existence: The political arts of public management (pp. 197-210).</li> <li>BB. Susan M. Moffitt. 2014. <i>Making Policy Public</i>. Preface (pp. xi-xiv); Ch. 8 (excerpt) The impact of public advice (pp. 204-215).</li> </ul>

**\*Friday, April 22. RESEARCH ESSAY DUE\***

T 4/26	<p>Public engagement with bureaucracies and political learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BB. Joe Soss. 1999. Lessons of welfare: Policy design, political learning, and political action. <i>American Political Science Review</i> 93(2): 363-380.</li> </ul>
Th 4/28	<p>Some generalizations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wilson, Ch. 20 Bureaucracy and the public interest.</li> <li>Meier &amp; O'Toole, Ch. 6. Democracy, bureaucracy, and modern governance. Required: pp. 121-125 and 131-138. Optional: pp. 145-152. This optional section will be of interest to those of you who are considering pursuing further research in areas related to our work this semester.</li> </ul>

#### 4.6 Final exam schedule

You must take the exam with your regular section unless you clear a change with me first.

- GOVT 351-01 (9:30am section): Wednesday, May 4 at 9:00am.
- GOVT 351-02 (11:00am section): Wednesday, May 11 at 2:00pm.