NETWORKS AND PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

SYLLABUS

This is a graduate-level seminar designed to provide students with the theoretical knowledge and practical tools to assess and manage networks effectively. This course is designed to help students understand the ways in which public organizations utilize networks to solve complex problems that span organizational and sector boundaries. This seminar prepares students to effectively address the multifaceted challenges of network management through a variety of scholarly and practitioner publications, interactive and reflective exercises and case studies based on real-life network experiences. While this course is built upon the network management definitions and framework presented by Milward and Provan (2006), the seminar will also feature a full range of social science sources to illustrate the multidisciplinary nature of network scholarship and practice. While this seminar utilizes a variety of instructional techniques, the ultimate success of this course relies upon the full and ongoing participation of students, whose insights are critical to the illumination and application of course concepts.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of the course, students will:

1. Understand the context and theoretical foundation of networked governance,
2. Be able to accurately identify the major opportunities and obstacles associated with public network management as addressed by scholars and practitioners,
3. Be prepared to apply theoretical knowledge and practical tools to network management challenges.

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WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION:
Framing the Issue

To fully understand the centrality and utility of networked forms of governance, it is critical to establish a framework for thinking about the relevant concepts. The following readings provide a broad answer to the related questions: “what are networks,” and “why are they important?” Students should be prepared to discuss the readings by drawing comparisons and highlighting areas of contrast.

Required Readings:


Additional Suggested Readings:


WEEK 2: INTRODUCTION: Forces Driving Networked Governance

The foundations of networked public management are varied. This section provides students with an array of explanations for the emergence of networked governance.

Required Readings:


Suggested Class Activity:
Assign students to four groups, each one representing one of the four theoretical foundations of networked governance below. Students should prepare a brief presentation on how their particular theoretical approach most accurately explains the emergence of networked governance. Instructor can moderate discussion and debate following the four mini-presentations.

Population-ecology model

Resource dependence model

Institutional model
**Transaction-cost model**

**Network Challenge** (Outside of Class):
Students should identify the three most pressing problems facing the community, noting the relevant organizational stakeholders affected by this problem. Further, students should begin investigating previous efforts to address these problems. An important skill set in network management is oral and written communication. To help students build these critical skills, they will be asked to turn in a brief (one-page) typed memo on this topic and present a briefing to the class.

**WEEK 3:** **MANAGEMENT OF A NETWORK:**

**Management of Accountability**
*Involves determining who is responsible for which outcomes, rewarding and reinforcing compliance with network goals, monitoring and responding to network “free riders.”*

**Required Readings:**


**WEEK 4:** **MANAGING IN A NETWORK:**

**Management of Accountability**
*Involves monitoring your organization’s involvement in the network, ensuring that dedicated resources are actually used for network activities, ensuring that your organization gets credit for network contributions and resisting efforts to “free ride.”*

**Required Readings:**


In Class: Discuss management of accountability as it applies to the Stokes and Sanders reading. How are the accountability concepts manifested in the case? Which ones are missing? How could accountability be improved?

WEEK 5: MANAGEMENT OF A NETWORK:
Management of Legitimacy
Involves building and maintaining legitimacy of the network concept, network structures, and network involvement. Involves attracting positive publicity, resources, and new members.

Required Readings:


WEEK 6: MANAGING IN A NETWORK:
Management of Legitimacy
Involves demonstrating to others (members, stakeholders) the value of network participation and legitimizing the role of the organization among other network members.

Required Readings:


**CASE STUDY:** Integrating Housing and Social Services. Available via Electronic Hallway.

**In Class:** Discuss management of legitimacy as it applies to the case study. How are the legitimacy concepts manifested in the case? Which ones are missing? How could legitimacy be improved?

**WEEK 7:** **MANAGEMENT OF A NETWORK:**

**Management of Conflict**

Involves setting up mechanisms for conflict and dispute resolution, acting as a “good faith” broker, and making decisions that reflect network-level goals and not the specific interests of members.

This section invites students to investigate the theoretical roots of conflict management. By understanding the premise behind dispute resolution, students will have a better foundation for the practical conflict management tools presented in the next section.

**Systems Theory:**


**Attribution Theory:**


**Social Exchange Theory:**


**In Class:** Discuss how the conflict management theories can inform the Jenkins case. Does conflict management hold any promise for the communication difficulties in DHS?
WEEK 8:  **MIDTERM à NETWORKS CAPSTONE ASSIGNMENTS!**

**MANAGING IN A NETWORK:**

*Management of Conflict*

Involves working at the dyad level to avoid and resolve problems with individual network members and working inside your organization to act as a “linking pin” to balance organization versus network demands and needs.

**Required Readings:**

Glasl’s Nine-Stage Model of Conflict Escalation. *CADRE Consortium for Appropriate Dispute Resolution.*


**Suggested Reading:**


**In Class Self-Assessment Exercise:**

*How do you behave in conflict situations? How do those behaviors affect your relationships with others?* Assess yourself using the tool developed by Lulofs and Cahn (2000). *Discuss your findings with another student.* Does the tool help you identify areas of improvement? How can you improve those areas?

**Network Challenge:**


WEEK 9:  **MANAGEMENT OF A NETWORK:**

*Management of Design*

Involves determining which structural governance forms would be most appropriate for network success, implementing and managing the structure, and recognizing when structure should change based on network and participant
needed.

Required Readings:


WEEK 10: MANAGING IN A NETWORK:
Management of Design
Involves working effectively with other network participants and with network-level management, based on the governance structure in place. Also involves accepting some loss of control over network-level decisions.

Required Readings:


In-Class: Discuss the extent to which organizational design affects the ability to respond to emergencies in the public sector. Compare and contrast the Waugh and Moynihan articles on network management. Is there a better design for this purpose?

WEEK 11: MANAGEMENT OF A NETWORK:
Management of Commitment
Involves getting the “buy-in” of participants, working with participants to ensure
they understand how network success can contribute to the organization’s effectiveness, ensuring that network resources are distributed equitably to network participants based on network needs, and ensuring that participants are well informed about network activities.

**Required Readings:**


**Suggested Reading:**


**WEEK 12: MANAGING IN A NETWORK:**

**Management of Commitment**

Involves building commitment within the organization to network-level goals. Also involves institutionalizing network involvement so that support of network goals and participation goes beyond a single person in the organization.

**In Class:** Watch and discuss *Answering the Call* (Lou Angeli, DVD, Less than $10 from Barnesandnoble.com). Discuss the ways in which public and nonprofit managers obtain and sustain commitment. Using the volunteers at Ground Zero as an example, explore how managers can draw upon shared network resources to accomplish common goals.

**WEEK 13: SPECIAL TOPICS IN NETWORK MANAGEMENT:**

**Dark Networks and Ethical Concerns**

**Required Readings:**


Rasmussen, K., Malloy, D., & Agarwal, J. (2003). The Ethical Climate of


**In Class:** Watch and discuss Frontline and The Oregonian’s *The Meth Epidemic*. (Available online at: [http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/meth/](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/meth/)). Discuss how legal networks were employed to halt illegal drug trafficking networks. Which components of the Milward and Provan framework were most apparent in this case? Were any components missing?

**WEEK 14: SPECIAL TOPICS IN NETWORK MANAGEMENT: Adaptation and Innovation**

**Network Challenge:** For this class, read the following accounts from the popular press on network adaptation in action. Identify another example of such innovation and prepare a brief presentation for the class. In your written report, identify how the innovation addresses course themes and illustrates one of the components of the Milward and Provan network management framework.


**WEEK 15: SPECIAL TOPICS IN NETWORK MANAGEMENT: Performance and Leadership**

**Required Readings:**


**In Class Exercise:** Review the following collaboration surveys: Collaboration Factors Inventory (Institute of Public Policy, Truman School), Regional Networks of Civil Society Organizations in Latin America ([www.bsos.umd.edu/socy/REDES/surveyenglish.html](http://www.bsos.umd.edu/socy/REDES/surveyenglish.html)), Strengthening Communities Survey (Johnson County, Iowa), Innovation Champions Survey (innovationlabs.com). In what ways are the surveys alike? In what ways do they differ? Based on the Behn reading, what are these surveys trying to assess? Are there other assessment areas that are being neglected? If you suggest adding or deleting survey questions for that purpose, provide an explanation.

**Network Challenge:** Review O’Leary and Bingham’s edited “Letters from the Field: Case Studies of Exemplary Collaborative Managers,” *Public Administration Review*. 66(1); 141-160. Using these bios as guides, write your own brief biography (no longer than 2 typed pages) of an exemplary collaborative manager, based on your capstone research. Be prepared to share your mini-case with the class.

**WEEK 16: FINAL CLASS**

**In Class:** Capstone Presentations by Group, Course Summary, Evaluations

**Take-home Final Exam:** Network Analysis

Read the Electronic Hallway case entitled, “Creating a Youth Services Collaborative in Savannah.” Evaluate the network based on the Milward and Provan framework utilized in this course. Identify network strengths and weaknesses as well as problems that are not captured in the framework. Act as an outside consultant on network management – offer advice that is based on theoretical or practical tools you’ve collected in the class. Justify any course of action that you suggest and forecast potential effects of all recommendations that you make in your report.