Course Goals and Objectives

The goal of Managing Public Service Organizations (MPSO) is to enhance your management and leadership acumen in the public and non-profit sector. The course provides you with the tools you need to diagnose and solve organizational problems, to influence the actions of individuals, groups, and organizations, and to lead impactful public service organizations.

You’ve come to Wagner because you want to have a positive impact in the world. Your interest could be bike lanes or arts programs for poor kids or access to quality pre-natal care. It could be making sure public policies are based on the best possible evidence, or that nonprofits are financially solvent, or that staff are treated fairly and respectfully. Whatever your passion, you can only realize that impact by mastering organization processes. Organizations are the way work gets organized, coordinated, and accomplished. Knowing how organizations work – and how to work within them – are perhaps the most powerful tools you can have.

A key leadership task is to assemble the skills, talents, and resources of individuals and groups into those combinations that best solve the organizational problems at hand. You must manage people, information, and processes to accomplish organizational goals; you must make things happen, and often not under conditions or timeframes of your own choosing; and you must learn from the challenges you experience. The successful execution of these tasks requires managers and leaders to understand what skills and abilities they bring to and need from their teams and organizations, to formulate a mission and strategy, to make effective and ethical decisions, to influence and motivate diverse individuals, to optimize the structure of their organization, to measure and improve performance, and to drive organizational change.
MPSO prepares you to achieve these objectives by providing you with fundamental frameworks and tools developed from behavioral and social sciences and tested by leaders in organizations representing all sectors.

**Course Format**
Each class we will focus on a particular set of management and leadership skills. Our goal will be to distinguish between effective and ineffective strategies. We will accomplish this by discussing key concepts, analyzing related cases, engaging in role-play exercises, and completing team projects.

This course reflects a dual focus on practice and theory. The readings introduce key concepts and useful ways of thinking about common situations in complex organizations. Case studies, lectures, and class exercises provide opportunities to apply theories, concepts, and research findings to particular situations, sectors, and fields and to hone your skills in problem definition and problem solving. The written assignments, including the team project, require you to consolidate your insights and to practice your analytical skills.

The two discussion sections of the course will be led by two accomplished teaching colleagues and will focus specifically on supporting and overseeing the project teams. The teaching colleagues work directly with me as partners in this course. You are free to talk with them about any questions or concerns about the course content or assignments but are also free to talk with me at any time.

**Preparing for Class**
It is critical that you complete the readings for each class in advance. Take care to analyze and absorb cases to prepare for class discussion. Working with a colleague to prepare is helpful and recommended.

Many of the principles and issues involved in MPSO are relatively timeless and not limited only to organizations of a public service nature. Consequently, you should not rely on the copyright dates or specific organizational applications of either the readings or the cases in evaluating their usefulness. “Classic” readings and cases are included because they speak to important issues in useful, interesting, and time-tested ways.

The readings provide key ideas and theoretical insights into human behavior and its impact on productivity and performance. To be sure you have grasped the point of each reading, ask yourself:

- What is the author’s main argument?
- What are the key concepts and principles introduced? Why does this matter for an organization?
- What are the implications for the kinds of challenges I [will/currently] face as a leader, a manager, a policy analyst, an urban planner, or a financial analyst?
- How can I apply this to my organization, my job, and/or my career?

The cases provide concrete situations to which you should apply the concepts introduced in the assigned articles. They provide an opportunity for you to practice diagnosing the nature and causes of organizational performance and thinking through the potential consequences of decisions.
**Readings**

*Required*

1. The course packet, containing many required readings and all cases, is available for purchase at the Unique Copy Center, 252A Greene Street.
2. The remaining readings are available via links on the NYU Classes course website.

**NYU Classes**

You must have access to the NYU Classes site at [http://classes.nyu.edu/](http://classes.nyu.edu/)

- Many class related documents (assigned readings, optional readings, class assignments, etc.) and surveys/exercises will be posted here. If you have not activated your NYU net account or have forgotten your password, you can activate or change your password at [http://start.nyu.edu](http://start.nyu.edu). Your account must be activated to access NYU Classes.
- Some class announcements will also be distributed via e-mail. Thus, it is important that you actively use your NYU e-mail account, or have appropriate forwarding set up on NYU Home [https://home.nyu.edu](https://home.nyu.edu/)

**Assignments & Grading**

Your grade for the course will be based on the following elements. Non-graded assignments are important to either support you in the Team Project or to prepare for in-class exercises/discussions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Due Date / Submission Format</th>
<th>Graded?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Yes (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Project Charter</td>
<td>2-4 pages double spaced</td>
<td>9/24 - hard copy at the start of class and email to your TC</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Assignment</td>
<td>4-6 pages double spaced</td>
<td>Distributed 10/8 and due 10/22 – hard copy at the start of class AND electronic submission via NYU Classes</td>
<td>Yes (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implicit Association and Stereotyping Reflection</td>
<td>2 pages double spaced</td>
<td>10/25 – 5:00 PM, electronic submission via NYU Classes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Project Status Report Memo</td>
<td>2-4 pages double spaced</td>
<td>10/29 – hard copy at the start of class AND electronic submission via NYU Classes</td>
<td>Yes (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kidney Allocation</td>
<td>1 page questionnaire</td>
<td>11/18 – 5:00 PM via email to your TC</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fallsburg Budget Negotiation Prep Memo</td>
<td>1-2 pages double spaced</td>
<td>11/25 – 5:00 PM, via email to assigned teammates for this exercise and cc your TC</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Presentation</td>
<td>8 minute presentation + 4 minute Q&amp;A = 12 min total</td>
<td>12/3 or 12/10 depending on group, in class</td>
<td>Yes (together, the team paper and presentation total 30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Final Paper</td>
<td>10 page double spaced maximum</td>
<td>12/13 at 5:00 PM – hard copy in Prof. Campbell’s mailbox on the 3rd floor of Puck AND electronic submission via NYU Classes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>6-8 pages double spaced</td>
<td>Posted 12/3 and due 12/17 at 5pm – hard copy in Prof. Campbell’s mailbox AND electronic submission via NYU Classes</td>
<td>Yes (20%)</td>
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</table>

All written work will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- **Theory**: How well can you apply the conceptual material offered in readings and lectures?
- **Data**: How well do you utilize descriptive data to support your argument?
• **Analysis**: How well do you integrate theory and data to create a coherent and logical argument?

• **Organization**: How clear and well organized is your presentation?

• **Writing**: How well do you reflect professional quality in spelling, grammar, and writing style? (See section “Writing Resources” for writing assistance)

• **Formatting**: Written assignments, including the team paper, should be submitted in 12-point font, left justified, with 1-inch margins, numbered pages, and no longer than the page limit specified for the assignment.

One general guideline to consider is to favor depth over breadth. That is, papers and memos covering fewer topics tend to also display more thorough analysis than assignments trying to cover more topics.

**Class Participation & Attendance Policy**

All class sessions will involve active discussion based on readings and cases, with an emphasis on applying theory to practice. You should be prepared to share your ideas in class and listen to and interpret the issues presented by classmates. One of the challenges and interesting aspects of management in the public sector is that often there is more than one right answer, amidst a complex set of facts and unknowns, addressing multiple audiences with different agendas. Share freely, adopt an open-minded stance, entertain new ideas from classmates and consider how your recommendations might change in light of new insights.

Your class participation is **crucial** to understanding the complexity of decision-making and the success of the class session. Participation includes presence, promptness, preparation, and engagement. Students are expected to attend all classes (with no more than one excused absence during the semester). Please e-mail your professor and your TC before the class if you will be absent. Use of devices for purposes other than taking notes is not appropriate and can limit one’s learning.

Most participation will be voluntary; however, to ensure everyone has the opportunity to be involved, individuals will occasionally be called upon at my discretion. Keep in mind that contributions should focus on quality rather than quantity. Comments are encouraged that: are relevant to the current discussion; move the discussion forward; contribute new insights; offer different perspectives; and bring in related real world experiences of your own or in the news.

**Team Project**

The goals of the team project are (1) to practice using team concepts on a weekly basis, (2) to connect theory to practice by utilizing a conceptual framework to analyze an actual organization and (3) to develop your professional network with leaders of organizations that are engaged with topics that interest you.

You will be assigned to teams of three to five students. Each team will focus on one of the following areas covered by the course:

| Mission & Strategy | Employee Motivation & Incentives |
Your team will select an organization in New York City in which to study one of these topics. The organization you select can be in any sector that provides public service (government, nonprofit, or for-profit) and can be one you previously worked for, one you would like to work for, or simply one that interests you. Your team will make contact with the organization and approach and interview two senior managers to learn about the topic you have selected in the context of that organization. Each team has two final deliverables: 1) a presentation of recommendations and analysis, delivered in class as if to the board of the organization you select; and 2) a theoretically grounded and applied analytical paper that discusses the topic as applied to the organization in the following ways:

- **Literature Review**: What does the management/organizational literature say about the topic in conceptual/theoretical terms? A separate document on the literature review will be posted on NYU Classes.
- **Data/Evidence**: What do the senior managers say about how the topic you are studying affects the day-to-day work in the organization and the organization’s performance? What is the history behind why things work as they do? What is working well? What could be improved? What would they change? What constraints do they face?
- **Analysis**: Based on the theory/prior evidence, explain what has happened/is happening at the organization. Can you illuminate what the leaders have told you? Can you reconcile anything that the managers told you that seem inconsistent with theory/prior evidence?
- **Recommendations**: What would your team recommend, with respect to your topic, to increase organizational performance?

Your team will be working on this project throughout the semester and periodically will be asked to provide information about your progress. The project includes the following steps (although the tasks in **bold** are required in the order presented, the remainder is only a recommended order in which to proceed):

1. Discuss members' expectations regarding teamwork, team decision-making and leadership. Develop agreement regarding team roles, ground rules, and protocols in the form of a **team charter**.
2. As a team, find a government, nonprofit, or for-profit organization to serve as the case study for the team’s theme. Identify two senior managers who are willing and available to be interviewed.
3. Discuss the initial individual and team tasks to be done in preparation for completing the steps outlined below. Divide and coordinate tasks among team members. Sample project work plans will be posted on NYU Classes and we will review project management skills in section.
4. Develop interview questions and conduct interviews. Identify a theoretical framework, model, or set of concepts with which you can analyze your chosen topic at the organization you are studying. Submit a **team project status report memo**.
5. Prepare a **final paper** according to the criteria for all written assignments (above) and the following:
a. The paper should be no more than 10 pages double-spaced, excluding references and an optional appendix.
b. Your paper should include a list of references at the end. An appendix may follow with a figure or table.
c. Use the format for the readings in this syllabus as a guide for how to format the References’ section. To cite a work in the body of the text, list the author(s) and year of publication in parentheses as follows: (Phillips, 2004).

6. Prepare a final presentation of the recommendations and analysis from your project. Deliver the presentation as if you were hired as consultants to present to the board of directors of the organization you examined. While you should succinctly weave in the theoretical part of your analysis, the tone of the presentation should be professional rather than academic. The presentation should complement and draw on your paper, but it does not necessarily have to comprehensively address every single aspect of the paper. Focus on those elements that would be most compelling to the board.
a. The final paper is due after the presentation to give you a chance to incorporate feedback from your classmates and the teaching team into your written product where appropriate. That said, successful groups usually have made substantial progress on the paper before they deliver the presentation. We will review presentation skills and best practices during discussion section.
b. The presentation should be no more than 8 minutes long, with an additional 4 minutes allotted for questions and answers.
c. This is a formal presentation, so you should prepare visual aids to complement your verbal delivery.
d. All team members must speak at some point during the presentation. It is fine if 1 or 2 team members focus solely on the Q & A portion if you so choose.
e. Although you will present to the whole class, teams will be paired up several weeks before the presentations. When Team A is presenting, the members of their partner Team B will role-play the role of board members in the audience, and be responsible for asking thoughtful, detailed questions that respond to the presentation.

Project Timeline
While each team’s exact timeline may differ due to the responsiveness and availability of the organizations you choose, you should follow the general guidelines for the overall project flow printed below. We highly recommend that you develop a more detailed work plan / timeline for your team.

Sessions 1-5
- Form teams.
- Develop team charter to specify agreements on how to operate.
- Discuss the initial individual and team tasks to be done in preparation for completing the steps outlined below.
- Divide and coordinate tasks among team members using a work plan.
- Choose organization to serve as the case study and develop two senior leadership contacts.
- Begin researching conceptual frameworks that will frame your overall inquiry.
Sessions 6-8
- Select primary conceptual framework to inform your interview questions. Also select 2 to 3 other frameworks that you will use to compile the literature review for your paper.
- Complete interview guide.
- Interview senior leaders.

Sessions 9-14
- Complete your interviews.
- Submit your Team Project Status Memo.
- Collect any archival and other readily available information.
- Assign team roles for writing paper and presentation.
- Draft the paper/presentation and finalize.
- Conduct presentations
- Submit final paper.
- Submit peer evaluation.

Final Exam
The final exam is a take-home assignment (a memo) that will be distributed on 12/3 and due 12/17.

Writing Resources
The school provides a writing consultant (free) and a writing workshop (not free) for assistance with written work. More information is available at the URL below: http://www.nyu.edu/wagner/current/services/writing.php

Statement of Academic Integrity
As members of the NYU Wagner community, we are all expected to adhere to high standards of intellectual and academic integrity. You can view our Academic Code here: http://wagner.nyu.edu/students/policies

COURSE OUTLINE AND SESSION SCHEDULE
Assigned readings are in the Coursepack (CP) or on NYU Classes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 1: September 3rd</th>
<th>Developing A Public Service Mission</th>
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Objectives: Introduction to Class
- Reading, analyzing and discussing cases effectively
- Understand the logic behind mission

Readings


Section
- Review objectives for discussion section
- Complete project preference form
- Discuss conducting self-assessments

**Session 2: September 10th Mission Part 2/ Team Formation and Team Process**

Objectives
- Explore the concepts of division of labor and coordination in teamwork
- Introduction to your team members for the team project
- Continue mission discussion

Readings

Section
- Marshmallow exercise
- Review directions for group project and team charter assignment
- Group project working session

**Session 3: September 17th Strategic Analysis**

Objectives
- Learn the key features of an organizational strategy
- Learn how to perform a strategic analysis of an organization
Readings

Section
- Take questions on group project and team charter assignment
- Discuss group roles and responsibilities
- Provide guidance on choosing an organization to study and how to approach
- Group project working session

Session 4: September 24th Managing and Measuring Organizational Performance

Objectives
- Develop an understanding of the reasons for measuring performance
- Learn how performance measurement and management translates into effective resource allocation and achieves results

Readings

* Team Project Charter Due
Section
- Review team project brief and literature review guidelines
- Discuss 5 P’s of meetings
- Teams share ideas for organizations
- Group project working session

**Session 5: October 1st Designing Organizational Structure**

Objectives
- Understand how structure can solve coordination problems
- Discuss the impact of structure on other aspects of the organization

Readings

Section
- Provide feedback on team charter
- Take questions on literature review and provide guidance on preparing interview questions
- Teams share ideas for organizations
- Group project working session

**Session 6: October 8th Motivating Performance**

Objectives
- Understand how to motivate people
- Understand how to set goals and incentives to induce productive behavior

Readings

* Written Assignment Distributed

**Section**
- Discuss interview guidelines
- Conduct constructive feedback exercise
- Group project working session

**OCTOBER 15th: FALL BREAK – NO CLASSES**

**Session 7: October 22nd** *Communicating Effectively*

**Objectives**
- Provide strategies for communicating feedback up and down the hierarchy

**Readings**

* Written Assignment Due

**Section**
- Review team project status report and presentation guidelines

* Implicit Association and Stereotyping Reflection – Due October 25th

**Session 8: October 29th** *Managing Diversity*

**Objectives**
- Understand stereotyping and diversity-related issues
- Develop strategies to address issues of diversity in organizations
- Provide mid-semester feedback

**Readings**

**Section**
- Discuss presentation guidelines and group pairings
- Provide tips and tricks for group presentations
- Group project working session

*Team Project Status Report Due*

**Session 9: November 5th Organizational Culture**

**Objectives**
- Develop strategies for creating an effective culture
- Understand how culture provides an advantage for employee selection and retention

**Readings**

**Section**
- Professor Campbell meets with teams to discuss project status report memo
- Group project working session
- Teams sign up for final presentations (at the end of section)

**Session 10: November 12th Decision Making and Ethics**

**Objectives**
- Demonstrate the sources of systematic decision-making biases
- Understand the sources of and solutions for ethical dilemmas in organizations
Readings

Section
- Professor Campbell meets with teams to discuss project status report memo
- Groups work in pairs

* Kidney Allocation Due 11/18

Session 11: November 19th Values and Justice in the Allocation of Resources

Objectives
- Explore decision-making in resource-constrained environments
- Understand the role of values in ethical dilemmas in organizations

Readings

* Fallsburg Negotiation Prep Memo Due 11/25

Section
- Groups work in pairs

Session 12: November 26th Negotiation and Conflict Resolution

Objectives
- Comprehend the core principles of negotiation
- Assess your skills at negotiating
- Complete the Fallsburg budget negotiation

Readings

Section
- Negotiations exercise debrief
- Teams ask questions regarding final presentation and paper
- Group project working session

**Session 13: December 3rd  Power and Strategic Influence**

Objectives
- Learn how to identify important political players and their sources of power
- Develop strategies for influencing up and down the hierarchy

Readings

* Team Presentations
* Final Exam Posted on December 3rd

**Session 14: December 10th  Leading Change**

Objectives
- Understand sources of resistance to change
- Identify distinct phases over the course of an organizational change initiative
- Provide strategies for championing and leading change

Readings

* Team Presentations

* December 13th – Team Final Paper Due
* December 17th – Final Exam Due