

## **Innovation in Urban Policy Spring 2017**

Course Location and Time: Bobst LL151; 6:45 – 8:45

Office Hours: by appointment

Instructor: Neil Kleiman

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### **I. Overview**

Governments are undergoing a shift—some might say a revolution—in their approach to operations, service delivery and policy making. With the rise of new technologies and infinitely complex issues such as deep poverty, police accountability and climate change, as well as growing gaps in confidence in the ability of the public sector to address these challenges and changes, prevailing governance approaches no longer seem adequate. There is a move to more innovative approaches – that tap into *open platforms, cross agency collaborations, public/private partnerships, and human centered design* to extend reach and enhance public value creation.

With a focus on local government, this course will provide a comprehensive overview of how cities work and the many facets of a new government paradigm that is taking root in various forms throughout the U.S. and internationally. The curriculum is designed to function as a live-lab in which students learn new approaches and tools and directly engage in innovations as they're happening.

### **II. Learning Objectives**

- Understanding of competing perspectives on
  - A. Government operations and related civic organizations
  - B. Barriers to innovation
  - C. Frameworks to accelerate innovation
- Understanding of how innovation works (and fails) through numerous case examples in the U.S. (with a few international examples)
- Writing skills and published web-based portfolios in the area of urban innovation
- Students will become engaged in and provide service directly to public and community sector organizations and through that experience improve their understanding of citizenship and civic engagement; while also building professional skills that can be applied to future career pursuits with local government and nonprofit organizations

### **III. Pre-requisite**

There is no pre-requisite but it is strongly encouraged that you come to the course with a working knowledge of material traditionally covered in an introduction to policy course.

#### IV. Readings

Readings will be drawn from the following texts (you are NOT required to purchase anything as all readings will be posted on the class site or available online):

Bason, Christian. Leading Public Sector Innovation, Policy Press, 2010.

Osborne, David and Peter Plastrik. Banishing Bureaucracy, Perseus Books Group, 1997.

Goldsmith, Stephen and William D. Eggers. Governing by Network: The New Shape of the Public Sector, Brookings Institution Press, 2004.

Lipsky, Michael. Street Level Bureaucracy, Russell Sage, 1980.

Heifetz, Ronald A. Leadership Without Easy Answers. Harvard University Press, 1998.

Swanstrom, Todd and Dennis Judd. City Politics, Longman, 2012.

Barber, Michael. Instruction to Deliver: Fighting to Transform Britain's Public Services, Methuen, 2007.

Bloomberg Philanthropies, Transform Your City Through Innovation: The Innovation Delivery Model for Making it Happen, Bloomberg Philanthropies, 2014.

Eggers, William D. and Shalabh Singh, The Public Sector Innovator's Playbook. Harvard Ash Institute, 2009.

Friedman, Mark. Trying Hard is Not Good Enough. Parse publishing, 2009.

Mulgan, Geoff. The Art of Public Strategy: Mobilizing Power and Knowledge for the Common Good. Oxford University Press, 2009.

Kleiman, Neil. *Striking a (Local) Grand Bargain: How Cities and Anchor Institutions can Work Together to Drive Growth and Prosperity*. NYU Wagner and the Urban Institute. (September 2015).

Kleiman, Neil. *Innovation and the City*. NYU Wagner. (June 2013).

Cels, Sanderijn, Jorrit de Jong, et al. Agents of Change: Strategy and Tactics for Social Innovation, Brookings Institution Press, 2012.

Additionally, you should scan the following sites for ideas throughout the semester.

- Nextcity.org
- Citylab.com
- Citiscope.org
- NYTimes.com (especially articles by Emily Badger and Michael Kimmelman)
- Nesta.org.uk
- Cityinspired.com

- [Theguardian.com/cities](http://Theguardian.com/cities)
- [TheGovLab.org](http://TheGovLab.org)
- [Datasmart.ash.harvard.edu](http://Datasmart.ash.harvard.edu)
- [Governing.com/blogs/bfc](http://Governing.com/blogs/bfc)
- [Insidephilanthropy.com](http://Insidephilanthropy.com)

## V. Cases

A core component of the course will be assessing actual innovation cases. These will include ones that have been completed and ones happening in real-time.

Real-Time Innovation Analysis. We will form class teams to track one innovation case as it takes shape in real-time. This will be a case with a senior city officials. Each case will be a window for you to understand a different element and model of urban policy and innovation. These cases will be assessed as a team but you will write your own final paper individually at the end of the semester.

## VI. Working with City Clients, Course Expectations and Requirements

### Expectations

You are required to complete the assignments outlined in this section. It is your responsibility to ask questions in class or let me know directly well in advance of due dates if you are confused about any aspect of the assignment.

### City Study Sites: Your Assignment Foundation

This class is constructed as a ‘live lab’ and your assignments will be grounded in an urban innovation model that you are assigned to as part of a student team.

Each team will have an assigned point of contact (POC) to liaison with me and your chosen city. In terms of your team interaction with New Orleans city government and other civic organizations, you are responsible for the following:

- Gathering baseline information about the city’s project, its model and its innovation focus. I will provide initial background and you should be able to gather additional material through a good web search. You should aim to track most of this background down no later than the fourth class.
- Producing an innovation project for the client. (See below for more details).
- Arranging for two to three hour-long in-person conference or Skype meetings to delve deep into questions you have that relate to the team’s focus and the individual paper topics each of you will pursue. These meetings should be spaced out (e.g. one in February, March and April). The interactions with the city could inform your innovation project assignment but should primarily focus on the city’s general approach to innovation and your particular interests (ideally, your interests as they pertain to a final paper).

### ***Innovation Project Assignment***

You are to work in a team to complete a research assignment for your client. The assignment should not be particularly onerous and take no more than 80 total hours of work (collectively). I will work closely with the client to scope the project to ensure that it is manageable, useful for you and pertains to the course modules. You should then organize yourselves to evenly divide the work (both research and writing).

The goal is to draft a memo that busy government officials will find useful. That means keeping the wording brief and concrete; and employing visuals to illustrate key points. The final memo should not exceed four pages (although you could certainly include more lengthy appendices). The memo drafting should be coordinated by one lead writer.

There is a chance that specific elements of the assignment will not be crystal clear at the outset or during the research phase and I am fully available to provide guidance at any point. Remember, innovation is a new and sometimes messy venture and one of the objectives is making sense of the assignment as you engage with it.

The first part of the assignment—an annotated outline—is due on March 9<sup>th</sup> and should be brief (no more than one page with bullets). Below are the key areas I expect to see addressed in the annotated outline.

- Core work assignment
- Research plan including resources you plan to access (both desk research and calls you would like to make)
- Division of labor
- Areas you anticipate you may need help and/or specifics requests for assistance from me (e.g. of the assignment demands assessing best practices from Europe you may want to ask me for help identifying good contacts of reports from Europe).

**Due Date:** Annotated outline (mainly bullets) March 9<sup>th</sup> e-mailed to [nk1222@nyu.edu](mailto:nk1222@nyu.edu), with the subject heading “Innovation Assignment Outline.” The second and final version should be submitted April 20<sup>th</sup> in class and e-mailed to [nk1222@nyu.edu](mailto:nk1222@nyu.edu), with the subject heading “Final Innovation Memo.” You should plan to send this to the city by the beginning of May after receiving additional feedback from me.

### ***Final Paper assignment***

The final policy term paper should be 5-6 pages in length (Times New Roman 12 point size with 1” margins and two line spacing). This paper will be based on your case city. Unlike the innovation project assignment the paper is not a team assignment and is to be completed individually. Accompanying the paper will be a class presentation that should also be done individually. And, your presentation should be brief; about 5-8 minutes.

Your paper should focus on one, possibly two, big ideas/recommendations for your assigned client.

Below is a structure for your paper.

- 1) (Two pages) City Innovation Review and Your Assessment of Challenges. In this section you should very succinctly summarize what your city is aiming to accomplish and how the city is using an innovation model to obtain its goals. You should also assess challenges and barriers the city is up against. The barrier discussion from class should be informative for this section. But in addition to the challenges discussed in class you may want to point to other barriers that could impede success (e.g. the client may need a stronger city council to support innovation or a more active local university to provide supporting research analysis).
- 2) (Three to five pages) Innovation Proposal(s). Your recommendation(s) should build on your assessment in the first section. I would like you to imagine that you are part of a new innovation team or a consultant that has come in to develop one, possibly two, big ideas to truly stretch or strengthen the city's efforts in a way that local officials may not have thought of. So if the first part of the paper was an assessment of current barriers as they 'exist today,' this part of the assignment should focus on what the next phase of the project should aspire to, and how. Your recommendation may indeed overcome a barrier(s), but it should generally focus on how to make the innovation stronger, faster and/or more impactful.

Take Warsaw as an example. The city innovation aims to create a system of beacons that communicate with visually impaired individuals through smart phones in order to help navigate the city geographically and socially. What's a unique recommendation that could make this innovation stronger, faster and/or more impactful? You might suggest the city encourage all Warsaw residents, sighted and visually impaired alike, to use the app. This would generate an unprecedented data set on how Warsaw residents move through their city, allow a direct comparison of outcomes between sighted and visually impaired, and produce data that would have new and potentially game changing service implications for the project directly and city operations and policy more broadly. Think big and bold, but make sure to include the way you could stress test your new idea using tools and approaches we've touched upon this semester.

When reviewing the final paper I will be looking for critical analysis, good use of supporting evidence (this includes class reading material, quotes from city interviews, ideas from other students, suggestions from your professors and original research based on primary and secondary sources), creative idea generation, and readability (papers should be clear, well-written and include a few visual elements to underscore key points).

**Due Date: The final paper is due three days after you present your paper ideas in class and should be e-mailed with the subject heading "Innovation Final Paper" to [nk1222@nyu.edu](mailto:nk1222@nyu.edu).**

### ***Blog Posts***

Each week 3-4 people will take responsibility for preparing blog posts. These will be one page summaries of the reading that a) lays out the main argument, articulates the two to three central themes you took away from the reading(s), b) indicates what you found provocative and/or mundane, and/or includes c) what you found missing from the piece d) how you might take the ideas in the piece to the next level and improve upon them or make a connection to your assigned case model.

Blogs will be assigned and will be due the Wednesday before class at 5:00 PM and should be posted for other classmates to view. Everyone will prepare 2-3 blog papers over the course of the semester and if

you are writing a blog you should be prepared to provide a very brief (1-2 minute) class presentation about it.

### **Assignment Summary**

The percentage breakdown of class assignments is as follows: class participation (20%), blog posts (20%), city project memo (20%), final innovation case analysis (40%).

## **VII. Weekly Schedule**

### **WEEK ONE – OVERVIEW            January 24**

Introduce the difference between an innovation, meaning an idea or process that's new in the local context, and innovation potential, meaning the mindsets, skillsets, approaches, and capacities that enable new ideas to emerge and take hold time and time again. Our focus is mainly on the later – and the exciting new ways public sector leaders are creating that potential. These include networked, data-driven, citizen informed and effective governance approaches. We will cover:

- The state of innovation potential in cities today
- Where it's most mature
- Current models/drivers/causes that are accelerating and shaping this field
  - Resilience
  - Civic technology
  - Innovation labs
  - Collective impact—public/private partnership models
  - Performance improvement and stat programs
  - Human centered design approaches
  - Social entrepreneurship

Readings:            Bason, Intro. and Ch. 1  
Innovation and the City report: <http://wagner.nyu.edu/files/labs/Innovation-and-the-City.pdf>

### **WEEK TWO – URBAN POLITICS            January 31**

- History of urban government reform through the years; legacy of bureaucracies from the progressive era
- Inherent innovation barriers at the local level (cities are creatures of states; few areas are fully within administrative and budgetary control of municipal govts, etc.)

Readings:            Lipsky, Street-Level Bureaucracy. Ch 1  
Judd and Swanstrom (1994), City Politics. Pages: 1-8, 44-47, 91-99

Review the organization: Boston Urban Mechanics (see: <http://newurbanmechanics.org>) and one article of your choice from Next City, City Lab or an article by Emily Badger or Michael Kimmelman

### **WEEK THREE – BARRIERS TO INNOVATION      February 7**

There are moments when significant innovation traditionally occurs: at the onset of an administration or in the wake of crisis, for example. Why doesn't innovation happen more frequently and consistently?

There are a set of major barriers recognized in experience and the literature. These include:

- Protective, status-quo nature of bureaucracies
- The power of incumbents
- Actual or perceived inflexibility in rules or regulation
- Silos for funding and responsibility
- Priority of daily work and insufficient capacity
- Diffusion of goals and responsibilities
- Risk aversion
- No incentives (risk capital, recognition)
- Intolerance for failure
- No overarching innovation strategy

Through illustration and classroom discussion, we will explore the nature of these barriers, reflecting on whether they are more or less acute in the public sector versus a business environment. The goal is to deepen the students' appreciation for how mayors can overcome these barriers.

*Readings:*            Cels and de Jong, Ch. 1

                          Bason, P. 53-61

                          Mulgan, P.33-35

                          Head and Alford, Wicked Problems article

### **WEEK FOUR – EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP      February 14**

Innovation cannot proceed without support from the top; that's as true in the public sector as it is in the private sector. This week will focus on the ways in which mayors and other public sector chief executives create the conditions for innovation to flourish. The discussion will focus on the structures leaders put into place, the processes they adjusted, the cultural conditions they established, and the resources they galvanized and approved to make innovation routine. From this discussion, we will begin to assemble a constellation of things leaders can (and arguably should) do – and debate with the class the relative importance of each.

*Readings:*            Heiftz, Ch. 1-2





## WEEK SEVEN – GENERATING NEW PERSPECTIVES AND NEW IDEAS      March 21

Here we will explore the growing set of tools and approaches municipalities are using to generate better ideas. From co-creation efforts (Helsinki's plan to improve transitions between mental health settings to community care) to surfacing ideas from front line staff (the Denver Peak Academy innovation training school) to competitions (NYC's applied sciences initiative), bureaucrats are talking with new people in new ways to find ideas. How are these efforts structured and implemented? Are these efforts producing better ideas – and how do we know? Are we learning anything from the less successful engagement efforts? Below are the specific idea generation approaches we will explore including:

- Co-creation
- Surfacing ideas internally; from all employees
- Citizen involvement
- Competitions
- Learning from other regions

*Readings:*      Bloomberg Philanthropies, Playbook Ch. 2

Eggers & Singh, Ch. 2-6

*Innovation and the City* reports (skim) <http://wagner.nyu.edu/innovation-labs/current/mayoral>

Ideo Human-Centered Design tool-kit (skim)

## WEEK EIGHT – DATA & CITIES PART I      March 28

Data has captured the attention of municipal policymakers everywhere. In this module we will assess the many meanings of data (big data, data analytics, smart cities, citistat and open data).

Millard, Open Governance Systems: Doing More with More

Nemani blog post, Open Data, Civic Engagement, and Delivery: Did we go the wrong way?  
<https://medium.com/@abhinemani/open-data-civic-engagement-and-delivery-28b990f321ce#.8gtws9twl>

R. Behn, What All Mayors Would Like to Know About Baltimore's Citistat Performance Strategy  
<http://web.pdx.edu/~stipakb/download/PerfMeasures/CitiStatPerformanceStrategy.pdf>

Townsend, Digital Master Planning, (2015).  
[http://marroninstitute.nyu.edu/uploads/content/Working\\_Paper\\_25\\_Digital\\_Master\\_Planning.pdf](http://marroninstitute.nyu.edu/uploads/content/Working_Paper_25_Digital_Master_Planning.pdf)

Additionally, scan KCStat at <https://kcstat.kcmo.org> and view Boston CityScore: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cB0h0eeWsmk>

## **WEEK NINE – DATA & CITIES PART II April 4**

## **WEEK TEN – PARTNERSHIPS, NETWORKED GOVERNMENT April 11**

The capacity to develop, structure, and maintain partnerships over time with an increasingly diverse set of actors has become one of the defining features of a successful City Hall. Partnerships enable cities to get work done efficiently, as well as produce improved value for the public. This week will focus on 1) the value proposition of partnerships, 2) the increasingly diverse forms of partnerships that include foundations, universities and business associations and 3) an overview of the structures city halls are building to manage these relationships.

We will assess the role of the following public sector partners:

- Relevant agencies
- Business groups (e.g. chambers of commerce and introduce Civic Consulting Alliance model)
- Local universities
- State/federal government
- Local/national philanthropy

*Readings:* S. Goldsmith and D. Eggers, *Governing by Network*, Ch. 1-3  
N. Kleiman, *Striking a (Local) Grand Bargain*,  
<http://wagner.nyu.edu/files/labs/strikingbargain.pdf>  
J. Kania & M. Kramer, “Collective Impact,” in *Stanford Social Innovation Review* (Winter 2011)

## **WEEK ELEVEN – IMPLEMENTATION AND SUPPORTING INNOVATION INFRASTRUCTURE April 18**

Moving from policy formation and design to implementation – while also keeping all the other machinery of government humming along – is challenging. We will assess the needed tools and approaches including data tracking, performance management, and delivery routines to ensure progress in the face of significant bureaucratic resistance.

*Readings:* Bloomberg Philanthropies, Ch. 3 & 4

Osborne and Plastik, Ch. 8

Equipt to Innovate. Download PDF at: <https://www.livingcities.org/resources/316-equipt-to-innovate-field-guide>

**WEEK TWELVE – HARD-WIRING INNOVATION April 25**

In this session we will cover the following approaches needed to permanently sustain innovation initiatives and culture including:

- Communications
- Legislation
- Evaluation
- Transition planning

*Reading:*

Ellen Schall, Public Sector Succession: A Strategic Approach to Sustaining Innovation

Townsend blog posts including:

<https://medium.com/@anthonymobile/an-informatics-theory-of-municipal-reform-where-are-the-city-charters-for-the-age-of-big-data-970f2562907f#.oyaexrx46>

<https://medium.com/@anthonymobile/smart-city-maturity-charting-a-course-towards-municipal-charter-reform-part-2-e34f110cf417#.1zienj7ap>

<https://medium.com/@anthonymobile/whos-converging-on-city-charter-reform-9eed73f79470#.v5nvawqdx>

<https://medium.com/@anthonymobile/a-brief-history-of-city-charters-e50ce7b2c7d8#.1yz0c7e6k>

**WEEK THIRTEEN - PRESENTATIONS**

**MAY 2**