

# The Role of the Legislature in Public Administration

## Spring 2015

### **Course Description**

The study of public administration is often focused on executive branch roles and responsibilities without a great deal of consideration for the role of legislative bodies in policy and program development and design or oversight of executive branch implementation and operations. This course provides an opportunity for students to delve deeply into the role that legislative bodies play in our governance structure. During the semester, we will examine how laws are made, how programs are developed and how legislative bodies exercise their oversight responsibilities. While the focus of the class will be on the state legislature, we will also review federal and local government legislative bodies. Understanding how public policy is changed is key to understanding American democracy.

The Spring 2015 semester promises to be a particularly interesting time to study legislative bodies given the results of the 2014 election in New Mexico and nationally. In New Mexico, the Republicans captured control of the House of Representatives for the first time in 60 years. Nationally, Republicans gained a majority in the U.S. Senate and widened their margin in the House of Representatives. These changes offer the opportunity for significant changes in the direction of public policy at both levels. Whether or not there will be significant changes in the direction of state and national policy depends on many factors including the ability of state and federal legislators to work with the respective executive branches, to work with the other chambers and to work in a bi-partisan manner.

It is not possible to fully understand the role of legislative bodies without first understanding the constitutional and statutory basis for their existence. In the first part of the class we will read and discuss the Federalist Papers, the U. S. Constitution and the New Mexico Constitution. In addition to the constitutional and statutory framework, we will study legislative involvement in program development and oversight, the catalysts and tools for co-management and the inevitable tension between the executive and legislative bodies. Later in the class we will examine local government legislative bodies.

### **Assignments and Grading**

Grading in this course is based on performance in five areas, each of which is described below:

- |                               |     |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Class participation        | 10% |
| 2. State Legislature Projects | 30% |

# The Role of the Legislature in Public Administration

## Spring 2015

- |                             |     |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| 3. Local Government Project | 20% |
| 4. Essay 1                  | 20% |
| 5. Essay 2                  | 20% |

I do not give or accept extra credit assignments.

All work, including class discussion, is expected to be consistent with the nature of graduate professional study. This means original work, supported by the readings, is to be incisive and rigorous. Plagiarism will result in failure in the course, consistent with the University's and the School's academic honesty policies. See the UNM Student Code of Conduct.

If you must request an incomplete for the course, you will have until the start of the Fall semester 2015 to complete all requirements for the course.

### **Contact Information and Office Hours**

Email: jjimen03@unm.edu  
Cell Phone: (505) 263-4043.

I do not keep regular office hours but I am available by appointment. Feel free to call or email me if you would like to schedule a meeting.

## **GRADING**

### **Class Participation (10%)**

Your class participation grade will be based on the degree to which you engage in discussion of the topics we will be studying. In order to engage in discussion, you must attend class so please let me know in advance if you must miss a class.

### **State Legislature Projects (30%)**

Part 1: Campaign Finance Research	10 points	Due	February 10
Part 2: Interim Committee Action	10 points	Due	March 3
Part 3: Other State Legislatures	10 points	Due	March 31

### **Local Government Project (20%)**

To successfully complete this project you are required to make a presentation of five to ten minutes describing the governance structure of a city or county. The emphasis for this project must be the legislative body. A separate document will provide more details. The assignment is due April 28.

# The Role of the Legislature in Public Administration

## Spring 2015

### **Essays 1 and 2 (20% each)**

Essay questions will be posted on the UNM Learn site on January 27 and on March 17. Essay 1 is due by midnight February 3; essay 2 is due by midnight March 24. Your essays are to be emailed to me at jjimen03@unm.edu. You will lose a full grade for each day your essay is late.

**Reading Materials** –readings will be drawn from original source materials, academic literature and other sources, some of which are listed below. From time to time I will supplement readings based on local, state or federal legislative developments. Some of the readings will be posted on the UNM Learn site others are readily available from popular sources.

- January 13                    **Course overview, grading and requirements, sources**
- January 20                    **The 2015 Legislature; How a bill becomes law; committees**  
**Definitions assignment due.**
- January 27                    **Legislative Update; U.S. Constitution; NM Constitution; Federalist Papers**  
**Reading Assignment: U. S. Constitution** – Preamble, Article 1 and Article 2; ***Federalist Papers*** 1, 47 and 48; **NM Constitution** – Articles 3, 4 and 5; *Federalist 51: Is Liberty Guaranteed by Structures?*, Lynn, L.E., in *Public Administration Review*. – See UNM Learn Folder.
- February 3                    **Guest Speaker Leanne Leith**  
**Legislative Update**  
**Essay 1 due**  
**Reading Assignment: *Federalist Papers*** 52, 53, 55, 56, 57 concerning the House of Representatives.
- February 10                    **Legislative Update**  
**Reading Assignment: *Federalist Papers*** 62 and 63 concerning the Senate; *The Influence of Lobbying on State Legislatures: Evidence from Wisconsin.*, Grasse, N. and Heidbreder, B., in *Legislative Studies Quarterly*. – See UNM Learn Folder.  
**State Legislature Projects part 1 due**

# The Role of the Legislature in Public Administration

## Spring 2015

- February 17      **Legislative Update – Bill introduction deadline Feb.19**
- Reading Assignment:** Policy Diffusion: Seven Lessons for Scholars and Practitioners., Shapiro, C. and Volden, C., in Public Administration Review. – See UNM Learn Folder.
- February 24      **Legislative Update**
- Reading Assignment:** Public Approval of U.S. State Legislatures., Richardson, L., Konisky, D., and Milyo, J., in Legislative Studies Quarterly. See UNM Learn Folder.
- March 3            **Legislative Update**
- State Legislature projects part 2 presentations**
- March 10          **SPRING BREAK**
- March 17          **Legislative Update – Session ends March 21**
- March 24          **Guest Speaker State Senator - invited**
- Legislative Update**
- Essay 2 due**
- March 31          **Guest Speaker Representative Stephanie Maez**
- Legislative Update**
- State Legislature Projects part 3 presentations**
- April 7            **Legislative Update – Last day for the Governor to act on legislation is April 10.**
- Local Government Governance**
- Reading Assignment:** The Adoption and Abandonment of Council-Manager Government., Choi, C.G., Feiock, R.C., and Bae, J., in Public Administration Review. – See UNM Learn Folder.
- April 14          **Guest Speaker: Bill Jordan, NM Voices for Children**
- Legislature Project Summary Presentations**

# The Role of the Legislature in Public Administration

## Spring 2015

April 21	<b>Local Government Governance</b>
April 28	<b>Local Government Project Presentations</b>
May 5	<b>Finals Week – Class will not meet.</b>