

Public Policy 587: Public Management  
Innovation in Government  
Fall 2018  
Professor Janet A. Weiss  
October 24 – December 11, 2018

The course draws on advances in social science and public administration to introduce you to tools and approaches for understanding and leading innovation in the public sector. We will focus on how public executives carry out the mission of their agencies in ways that are creative, effective and efficient. Although the popular conception is that the private sector is innovative and the public sector is routine and bureaucratic, we will discuss why, when and how innovation occurs frequently in the public sector, and how you can contribute to that.

In a short 7 weeks, we will not be able to cover the entire innovation process, so we will be selective. Our primary interest will be in making innovation happen. Terrific ideas that are not translated into action cannot improve outcomes or serve the public interest.

Innovation in the public sector comes in many forms. Technology is one of those forms, but not the only kind. We will discuss a variety of ways to use innovation to improve the performance of government and get better outcomes for citizens. We will explore more effective ways to implement policy or deliver services, implementing higher quality services and higher impact programs, developing constructive partnerships to improve performance, mobilizing support to spread innovative ideas from one location to multiple sites.

We'll use examples, research, and cases from local, state, and federal government in the US and also from around the world.

**Learning Objectives:**

You will develop your own ways of thinking about innovation in government to provide you with a roadmap for success as an innovator. In this class, you will:

- Recognize opportunities for innovation in the public sector
- Understand the skills and behaviors needed by managers to lead innovative efforts in the public sector
- Explore a range of examples of public managers who launched innovations in varying contexts
- Understand the conditions that enable innovation to move forward
- Gain insight into the risks of innovation, and the ways to mitigate these risks
- Learn how to become more effective in leading innovation, even without a position of formal authority

**Course Requirements:**

- Conscientious preparation for each class
- Active and constructive participation in class discussions
- Two short written assignments based on a case of your choice
- Group oral presentation
- Take home final exam.

Grades will be based on class participation (25%), two short written assignments that ask you to apply the concepts in the course to your own experience or cases of your choice (30%), one team oral presentation (10%), and a take home final exam (35%).

For the team assignment, everyone in the team will receive the same grade, unless the team itself provides feedback that differential grades are appropriate.

I recognize that sometimes life interferes with your ability to submit your short written assignments on time. If you submit an assignment late, I offer you one day of grace before deducting points from your grade. If you submit a second assignment late, that assignment will receive a full grade deduction (for example, from a B+ to a C+).

Submitting the final exam late will also incur a grade penalty.

**Office Hours:** I welcome the opportunity to meet with students to discuss any question related to the course or to public management more generally. I have formal office hours on Tuesdays: 10:30-11:45 am in 5215 Weill Hall. I am also available after class from 5:30-6:00 on Mondays and Wednesdays.

**Academic Integrity:** You will learn more in this class if you give and receive assistance in completing your assignments. However, you must be sure to give credit for this assistance when it is due. As specified in the Ford School Academic Expectations (<http://fordschool.umich.edu/academics/expectations>), “Plagiarism involves representing the words, ideas, or work of others as one’s own in writing or presentations, and failing to give full and proper credit to the original source.” Plagiarism (like cheating) is a violation of academic integrity and *will result automatically in failure of this course.*

**Writing:** The Writing Center at the Ford School can help you to write better papers. No matter how skillful a writer you are, you will benefit from resources and tutorials from the Writing Center. Writing is a professional skill that will benefit you in any career that you pursue after leaving the University. I encourage you to make use of that help. See <https://fordschool.umich.edu/intranet/writing-center>

**Attendance:**

Regular attendance is a precondition for learning, and I expect all students to be present, prepared, and participating in all class sessions, from the beginning of class to the end. If you need to miss a class, please give me as much advance notice as possible, along with the reason for your absence. Missing class without an excused absence will make it impossible to receive full credit for class participation.

**Religious Holidays:**

The University of Michigan has a policy of respecting students’ religious commitments ([http://www.provost.umich.edu/calendar/religious\\_holidays\\_07-08.html](http://www.provost.umich.edu/calendar/religious_holidays_07-08.html)). I will accommodate conflicts arising out of religious observances, assuming that you bring the conflict to my attention in advance of the class that you will miss.

**Class Participation:**

Although students will write individual papers for this class, each student will learn from other students’ projects, from discussing projects as a group, and from feedback from peers. Your ability and willingness to participate in our group discussions will make a difference to your own learning,

and to the learning of the rest of us. The best class participation is based on having done the reading and assignments in advance, taking a curious, open, and respectful stance toward the contributions of others, being willing to ask questions that examine assumptions and arguments, asking for clarification when the discussion isn't clear, and offering your own ideas, suggestions, and experiences that illuminate the topic under discussion.

**Ford School Inclusivity Statement:**

Members of the Ford School community represent a rich variety of backgrounds and perspectives. As a school, we are committed to providing an atmosphere for learning that respects diversity. While working together to build this community we ask all members to:

- share their unique experiences, values and beliefs
- be open to the views of others
- honor the uniqueness of their colleagues
- appreciate the opportunity that we have to learn from each other in this community
- value one another's opinions and communicate in a respectful manner
- keep confidential discussions that the community has of a personal (or professional) nature
- use this opportunity together to discuss ways in which we can create an inclusive environment in Ford classes and across the UM community

It is my goal for our classroom experience to live up to this statement. If you believe that we are not achieving this goal, please see me right away so that we can address your concerns together.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** If you believe you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at the beginning of the course. Some aspects of courses may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make me aware of your needs, you and I can work with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office to help determine appropriate academic accommodations. Any information you provide will be treated as private and confidential.

**Student Mental Health and Well-Being Resources:** The University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students. We acknowledge that a variety of issues, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, and depression, directly impacts students' academic performance. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. For help, contact [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (CAPS) and/or [University Health Service](#) (UHS). For a listing of other mental health resources available on and off campus, visit: <http://umich.edu/~mhealth/>

Please review additional information and policies regarding academic expectations and resources at the Ford School of Public Policy at this link:

<http://fordschool.umich.edu/academics/expectations>

## Schedule

### October 24

What is innovation in government? How is government different from the private or nonprofit sectors? What are the principal barriers to innovation?

Reading:

OECD, *Fostering Innovation in the Public Sector*, Ch. 1 (pp 13-23) <http://www.oecd.org/innovation/innovative-government/fostering-innovation-in-the-public-sector-9789264270879-en.htm>

### October 29

The innovation ecosystem. Understanding the theory of change and the importance of embedding innovation into practice.

Reading:

Christian Bason, *Leading Public Sector Innovation*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Introduction, Chapters 1-2

Harvard Center for the Developing Child, *From Best Practices to Breakthrough Impacts*, pp 33-37 (On Canvas)

Tina Rosenberg, "Trying to Cut Crime in Public Housing By Making It More Livable," *New York Times*: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/10/opinion/new-york-crime-public-housing.html>

### Prepare for class today:

Identify and analyze one example *in your direct experience* of someone who tried to introduce an innovation into an existing organization. If you have personal experience of an example in government, please use that, but if you don't, you may use an example in another work setting or in a volunteer organization. What was the theory of change for this innovation? How well did it work? What happened and why? Come to class ready to discuss the conditions that led to its success or failure.

### October 31

Understanding the Conditions that Create Opportunities for Innovation.

What makes it possible for an innovation to arise and take hold, when the normal condition is the status quo?

Reading:

Jonathan Walters, *Understanding Innovation*, pages 11-24. (On Canvas)

John Donahue, "Fast Track on Product Recall," *Making Washington Work*, Brookings, 1999. (On Canvas)

### November 5

Strategies and Innovation: How to link innovation to strategy

Special Guest Today: Stephanie Wade, Bloomberg  
Philanthropies <http://nycinnovationsummit2017.com/speakers/stephanie-wade/>

Reading:

Robert Sutton and Huggy Rao, *Scaling Up Excellence*. Chapters 1-2

Malcolm Gladwell, "Tough Medicine" *New Yorker*, 12/14, 2015.  
<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/12/14/tough-medicine>

Christian Bason, *Leading Public Sector Innovation*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Chapter 4

## **November 7**

Connecting Innovation to Purpose and Mission

Reading:

A Task Force with Teeth (case study) (on Canvas)

Sutton and Rao, *Scaling Up Excellence*. Chapter 3

### **1st Written Assignment Due (3-4 pp):**

Choose a case of innovation in the public sector in your area of interest. Collect background information about the innovation and the organization in which the innovation was intended to be implemented.

- Describe the innovation and the organization in which it might be implemented.
- Describe the opportunity structure facing the manager who might be responsible for the innovation, and the conditions that make it more and less likely that the innovation can be adopted.
- Describe how the manager did or could connect the innovation to and the organization's strategy and mission.

## **November 12**

Engaging Employees in Innovation

Reading:

Christian Bason, *Leading Public Sector Innovation*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Chapter 7

Robert Behn, "Creating an Innovative Organization: Ten Hints for Involving Front-line Workers,"  
<http://GovLeaders.org/behn-innovation.htm>

Ira Goldstein, *The Federal Management Playbook*, Chapter 2 (on Canvas)

## **November 14**

Engaging Other Stakeholders in Innovation

Special Guest Today: Lauren Larson, State of Colorado  
<https://www.colorado.gov/governor/lauren-larson>

Reading:

Stacey Childress, Denis Doyle, David Thomas, *Leading for Equity, The Pursuit of Excellence in Montgomery County Public Schools*, Intro, Ch 1, 3. On Canvas

Mark Moore, *Creating Public Value*, Chapter 4. On Canvas

Tony D’Emidio, David Malfara and Kevin Neher, “Improving the customer experience to achieve government agency goals,” *McKinsey Public Sector Insights*. <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/public-sector/our-insights/improving-the-customer-experience-to-achieve-government-agency-goals> Also available on Canvas.

Allison Arieff, “Designs on the VA,” *New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/24/opinion/designs-on-the-va.html>

## **November 19**

Implementing Innovation: Managerial Strategies

Reading:

Julian Birkinshaw, “Telling a Good Innovation Story,” *McKinsey Quarterly*, July 2018. On Canvas

Joseph Durlack, *The Quality of Implementation*, ASPE Research Brief. On Canvas

Tina Rosenberg, “Taking Aim at Gun Violence, with Personal Deterrence,” *New York Times*, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/03/opinion/gun-violence-personal-deterrence.html>

Leadership for A Networked World, “Creating the Future of Outcomes and Impact” Cases of Kentucky and opiate addiction, San Diego and Health. On Canvas.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Assignment Due today (2-3 pp):**

Take the same case you analyzed for the first paper, and discuss the importance of engaging employees and external stakeholders in adopting and implementing the innovation.

## **November 21**

No Class – Happy Thanksgiving!

## **November 26**

Implementing Innovation: Managerial Systems

Special Guest Today: Dustin Brown, OMB  
<https://www.volckeralliance.org/dustin-brown>

Reading:

Ira Goldstein, *The Federal Management Playbook*, Chapter 4 “Creating and Leading a Well-Designed Organization” On Canvas

Sutton and Rao, *Scaling Up Excellence*, Chapter 4

Choose one of the following cases to read for today:

- a) Susan Crawford, M-C Lader, M Smith, *On the Road to "PreK for All": The Launch of UPK in New York City*. On Canvas.
- b) *USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy*, March 2012. On Canvas

## **November 28**

Risk and Reward

Reading:

OECD *Fostering Innovation in the Public Sector*, Ch. 6, Managing Risk. On Canvas

Debra Meyerson, *Rocking the Boat*, Ch. 1-2 On Canvas.

Donald Kettl, "Managing Risk, Improving Results," IBM Center for the Business of Government, 2016. On Canvas.

Tina Rosenberg, "Rape Victim Advocates Get a Role Alongside the Police," *New York Times*, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/27/opinion/rape-victim-advocates.html>

## **December 3**

Tools That (sometimes) Enhance Innovation

- Innovation Offices and Labs
- Challenges/Prizes
- Citizen Feedback

3 Group Presentations Today.

Each team will deliver a 10-15 minute presentation about its assigned tool for promoting innovation, and share with the class the strengths and limitations of the tool.

Reading:

Christian Bason, *Leading Public Sector Innovation*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Chapters 6, 9

## **December 5**

Tools That (sometimes) Enhance Innovation:

- Open data
- Digital transformation
- Artificial Intelligence

Reading:

Stephen Goldsmith, *A New City O:S*, Chapter 1 (On Canvas)

3 Group Presentations Today.

Each team will deliver a 10-15 minute presentation about its assigned tool for promoting innovation, and share with the class the strengths and limitations of the tool.

**December 10**

Leadership: Your journey to becoming a more effective innovator

What are the personal resources you bring to innovation? What strategies have you learned that you can use to be effective as an innovator?

Reading:

Michael DeArmond and Tricia Maas, "Leading Personalized Learning." Center for Reinventing Public Education, September 2018. (On Canvas)

OECD OPSI Core Skills for public sector innovation: Profiles pp 23-30 (On Canvas)

Christian Bason, *Leading Public Sector Innovation, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition*, Ch 12-13

**Prepare for class today:**

What is your personal agenda for innovation? What skills do you have? Which do you want to develop further? How will you prepare to innovate in the future?

**FINAL EXAM**

Available on Canvas at noon, December 12, Due on Canvas on December 17 at 6:00 pm EST.



## Guidelines for Written Assignments

Please submit all written assignments through the Canvas site.

Assignments should be submitted in Word or pdf format, double spaced, in 11-12-point font.

Observe the page limits.

Check your work for spelling and grammar before you submit it. Proper spelling, punctuation, and usage convey that you take your work seriously as a writer.

Cite your sources, using either footnotes or textual references.

Read your assignments before submitting them to be sure that they clearly state what you intend to say.

### Using an Example: Finding a Site for Assignments #1-2.

Your two short written assignments apply innovation frameworks to an organization that is making an important change. For these assignments, you have the opportunity to learn more about an innovation in government; NO nonprofit or private sector examples, please. The case you choose need not be a successful innovation, but it should be an effort at innovation. It should be a case that a) interests you, and b) provides you with the opportunity to find enough information to apply the framework. You should be prepared to conduct some additional research about what happened in your organization and why, drawing on published and unpublished sources, and including email or phone calls with the principal individuals involved in the case. You will use the same case for two assignments, so that you learn more about the case you have chosen. You are welcome to use a case that you already know, or a case that you'd like to learn more about.

Places to look for cases:

Your own experience, or the workplace of a friend who can serve as a source of information

OECD and World Bank, <https://innovationpolicyplatform.org/content/inclusive-innovation-policy-toolkit>

(many international examples)

OECD <http://www.oecd.org/innovation/innovative-government/innovation2018.htm>

(international examples)

Centre for Public Impact. <https://www.centreforpublicimpact.org/observatory/> (international and US)

GovEx <https://govex.jhu.edu/resource-type/examples-of-excellence/> (US state and local)

Government Performance Lab, Harvard Kennedy School, <https://govlab.hks.harvard.edu/pub> (US state and local)

Governing magazine (US state and local)

Solutions Journalism Network

### Assignment #1 (3-4 pp)

Take the case of innovation in the public sector that you have chosen in your area of interest.

Collect background information about the innovation and the organization in which the innovation was intended to be implemented.

- a) Describe the innovation and the organization in which it might be implemented.
- b) Describe the opportunities facing the manager who might be responsible for the innovation, and the conditions that make it more and less likely that the innovation can be adopted.

- c) Describe how the manager did or could connect the innovation to the organization's strategy and mission.

### **Assignment #2 (2-3 pp)**

Take the same case you analyzed for the first paper.

- a) Describe the ways in which the manager was (or was not) able to engage employees in adopting and implementing the innovation.
- b) Describe the ways in which the manager was able to engage in successful alliances with stakeholders or partners external to the unit responsible for the innovation?
- c) How successful was the manager at engaging allies? How successful was the manager at playing defense against real or potential opponents or skeptics? Did these relationships make a difference for the results experienced by the manager?

### **Group Presentation on Innovation Tools (Scheduled for either Dec 3 or Dec 5)**

At the beginning of the course, you will have a chance to express your interest in the topics for group presentations. On the basis of these interests, you will be assigned to a team. The team is responsible for delivering a coherent presentation no longer than 15 minutes long on your assigned date. The presentation should include (not necessarily in this order):

- a) Description of the tool
- b) What is the theory of change that explains why the tool might help to promote innovation in government?
- c) Examples of the tool in action
- d) What are the conditions under which this tool seems to be effective; what is necessary for the tool to work well?
- e) What are the strengths and limitations of this tool?
- f) What is your advice to members of the class who might consider using this tool in their next job?

After your presentation, I will ask the class to provide feedback to the team about the presentation. I will also ask team members to provide peer evaluations of the performance of each team member to the final product. These evaluations will factor in the grading of the presentation. Normally every team member will get the same grade for the presentation, unless the peer evaluations suggest that one member should get more credit or less credit for the team's work.

#### *Tips for effective presentations.*

Meet well in advance to plan how to divide the work, accommodating the schedules and constraints of the team members. Set up a schedule of regular meetings to review progress and to identify the key things you have learned.

Every member of the team is responsible for contributing to the content of the presentation, but the presentation should be more than adding together 4-5 individual contributions. Work together to create one product that makes effective use of every team member's contributions. One way to do this (but not the only way) is to designate one team member to act as the editor of the presentation, to pull together the final product. If you choose this option, all of the other team members need to complete their research in time to allow for this editorial process.

Engage all members of the team in making the presentation. Make sure everyone knows when and how to hand-off the presentation to the next person.

Practice! This is the only way to know whether your presentation falls within its time limits. I will stop you after 15 minutes, whether or not you have finished. So be sure that you can complete the presentation in the allotted time. Practice!

Use visual aids that match your topic. Select presentation software, video, and/or handouts as your topic suggests. It can be helpful to designate one team member to be responsible for the look and feel of the design of visual aids.

Keep your audience in mind, and help them to appreciate what you have done. Provide a roadmap at the beginning of the presentation that explains what you will cover. Make us curious to know more about your message. What are the key lessons that you want us to take away from your presentation? Focus your attention on the most important points.

### **Take Home Final Exam**

The final exam will be distributed on December 12, and will be due on December 17. The exam will ask students to use concepts discussed in class and covered in the readings, to demonstrate mastery of the concepts and the course's learning objectives.