

COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE AND CIVIL SOCIETY
UAP/GIA 5164
Fall 2005

Time: Thursdays, 6:30 -9:15 p.m.
Location: Architecture Building, VT Alexandria campus (3 times per month);
Blacksburg campus – TBA (once a month)

Instructor: Dr. Georgeta Pourchot
georgeta@vt.edu
703-721-0595

Office hours: TBA

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The second half of the 20th century witnessed a rise in a socio-political phenomenon broadly called “civil society.” Small but increasingly influential non-governmental and non-business groups sprung up at domestic and international levels to bridge a widening communication gap between governments and “the people.” Who is the “civil society” and what function(s) does it fulfill in today’s world? Why do we need civil society servants and how do they succeed or fail at what they do? Where is civil society headed and how are its functions understood by the general public and governments? The answers to most of these questions contain key concepts such as “collaboration,” “mediation,” “consensus-building,” or “global governance” to help us understand this growing dynamic between “the people” and their elected representatives. This course provides a theoretical and practical foundation for understanding and analyzing processes of collaborative governance within and among civil society entities in the service of “the public interest.”

COURSE GOALS:

1. To provide a theoretical foundation for understanding the diverse functions and forms of civil society as a bridging actor between elected officials and the people they represent;
2. To guide practical exploration into various forms of collaborative governance in which civil society representatives engage;
3. To hone analytical writing, reading and evaluating skills.

COURSE ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE:

Course is offered through VTEL (two-way television) from VT Alexandria campus, Architecture Building. Once a month, instructor travels to Blacksburg campus to teach.

There are assigned readings for each week, students are required to do the readings and participate in class discussion. Attendance is required. The syllabus, some of the required readings, and questions to guide class discussions will be posted in the Blackboard site of the course. The required books have been ordered through the VT main campus bookstore and the Northern VA bookstore in Falls Church.

Guest Speakers: Twice during the semester, a guest speaker from a non-governmental organization will make a presentation on the mission and mode of operation of their institution. Students will have the opportunity to interact, ask questions and clarify aspects of collaborative governance as they occur in real life situations.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Class Participation (25% of grade): Each week, students are required to read the assigned material and engage in class discussion. For each class, one student makes a short, verbal presentation of the required reading material and identifies issues of particular interest to be further discussed. Assignments of weekly presentations will be decided during the first day of class, August 25.
2. Research Project (25% of grade; due September 29 - October 6): Select a controversial political, social or environmental issue of personal interest in which civil society groups are involved. Research and present in writing (no less than 10 pages) and verbally to the class the following:
 - a. Position of government, business and civil society;
 - b. How and why civil society groups became involved;
 - c. Types and frequency of collaborative NGO involvement; breath and scope of NGO involvement; by-products of involvement (unintended outcomes);
 - d. Success (or failure) of NGO collaborative involvement defined: in terms of mission of the NGO; relative to the magnitude of the selected issue; relative to its contribution to public service.
 - i. Example: An environmental accident looms; industry is taking minimal steps to insure public safety; local and/or national government is too slow, hearings are organized but there is insufficient data to document danger to public safety. NGO groups take action: they request public hearings with local and/or national officials, send letters to Congress, media, or create ads to be distributed widely; they write pamphlets to raise public awareness of the issue, etc. While elected officials continue to be slow in reacting, word spreads and under public pressure, some steps are taken to insure that public safety standards are met.
 - e. Class offers feedback; students have opportunity to improve their written presentations based on class feedback; then turn in the assignment to instructor.
3. Article/book review (25% of grade; due October 27):

- a. During the first week of class, select either a book from the required readings or a set of articles required for a particular class and prepare an article/book review (10-20 pages). Reviews are presented in writing to the instructor. Instructor will offer feedback for improvements. Students have the option to improve the review after receiving feedback from instructor, to improve their grade in this particular assignment. The review should reflect the following:
 - i. Topic of book/articles; main argument; where argument fits in the overall literature on the subject;
 - ii. Methodology (how the author achieved his/her stated goals): Did the author present historical, statistical, anecdotal evidence to support his/her argument? Was the evidence sufficient? Did it address the argument? Was the evidence presented in a sequential and logical manner? Was the argument presented in a clear fashion?
 - iii. Organization of the material and sources: Is the material easy to follow? Does it make a compelling case? Are the sources reliable? Are they biased (i.e. reflecting only one side of the argument)?
 - iv. Personal critical evaluation: Has the author achieved his/her goal? Is the material a contribution to the field? What could the author have done to improve the piece under review?

4. Practical Project (25% of grade; due November 17):

- a. Based on class readings, particularly (but not only) *Managing a Nonprofit Organization*, create a template of questions to be asked of one or more NGO professionals. The template should reflect i. mission-related questions (how NGO professionals go about implementing the mission of the institution, from selection of projects to securing funding); ii. internal organization issues (how NGO professionals run their programs, relations with junior and senior staff, planning and marketing, fund raising); iii. how the NGO implements its mission in practical projects and how they interact with other NGOs/public officials; iv. roadblocks in fulfilling the mission; v. what the future holds for the organization.
- b. Select a non-governmental organization of personal choice. Recommended organizations: environmental (Greenpeace, Sierra Club, Clean Water Action), global policy (European Institute, CSIS, Enterprise Institute), trade unions, NRA, Brady Handgun Control, Habitat for Humanity, UN, UNESCO, Amnesty International, Red Cross, World Resource Institute, Counterpart International, Women's Research and Education Institute, US Institute of Peace, Center for Defense Information, Global Security. Research their website, familiarize yourselves with the institution. Select one or more "professional staff" (ask instructor for guidance) and either email or give them a call. Request an interview towards the fulfillment of this requirement. Follow the template and interview the NGO professional, asking questions that will permit you to understand how the organization functions in practical terms.

- c. Present findings in writing to instructor. Findings should address issues listed at 3.a. Combine what you learned from website, personal familiarity with NGO (if applicable) with information obtained through interviews. Does the organization live up to its public image? Does it actually do what it says it does? What is its contribution to public service?

PARTICIPATION POLICY AND HONOR CODE

The GIA and Department of Urban Affairs and Planning value the role of participation and active engagement by students in the learning process. Regular attendance, full class participation and fulfillment of students' responsibilities as defined by the syllabus are considered prerequisites for learning and integral part of the student evaluation process.

All students are expected to abide by the Virginia Tech Honor Code. Check the current university catalogue for a complete explanation of the honor code. Giving or receiving unauthorized assistance on assignments, plagiarism, and falsification are all violations of the honor code.

Additionally, students are strongly encouraged to behave courteously towards one another, with respect for cultural, educational, religious and any other differences that may lead to contentious arguments. Each student should feel free to express oneself in the class. If the opposite is the case, please contact the instructor immediately.

OTHER POLICIES

- Any student who feels that he or she may need an accommodation because of a special need, circumstance, or disability (learning disability, attention deficit disorder, psychological, physical, etc.) please make an appointment with the VT office of Students with Disabilities to discuss the issue.
- All assignments must be submitted as called for by this syllabus. Late written assignments will not be accepted, without prior arrangement. If you need special accommodation, please discuss the details with the instructor in advance so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1, August 25: Historical and Theoretical Underpinnings of Civil Society

- Introduction to the course, assignment of weekly presentations of books/articles, other organizational and structural issues as needed.
- Required Readings:
 - o Goran Hyden, "Building Civil Society at the Turn of the Millennium," in John Burbidge (ed.), *Beyond Prince and Merchant: Citizen Participation and the Rise of Civil Society*, NY: Pact Publications, Institute for Cultural Affairs International, pp. 17-46.

- Roger Simon, *Gramsci's Political Thought: An Introduction*, London: Lawrence and Wishart, ch. 9, "Civil Society, the State and the Nature of Power", pp. 68-77.
- Henk E. S. Woldring, "State and Civil Society in the Political Philosophy of Alexis de Tocqueville," *Voluntas* 9 (4): 363-73, 1998.

Week 2, September 1: Nonprofit Organizations: How and Why They Work

- Required Readings:
 - Thomas Wolf, *Managing a Nonprofit Organization*, Simon & Schuster, Prentice Hall (1st.ed.) 1990 (a different edition is acceptable).

Week 3, September 8: Collaborative Frameworks – Negotiation and Mediation

- Guest Speaker (TBA)
- Required Readings:
 - Roger Fisher, William Ury and Bruce Patton, *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In* (2nd. Ed), NY: Penguin books.

Week 4, September 15: Collaborative Frameworks – Negotiation and Planning (cont'd)

- Required Readings:
 - Thomas R. Colosi, Arthur Eliot Berkeley, *Collective Bargaining: How It Works and Why*, American Arbitration Association 1986.
 - John Forester, "Rationality, Emotional Sensitivity and Moral Vision in Daily Planning Practice," in *The Deliberate Participatory Planning Process*, The MIT Press 1999.

Week 5, September 22: Collaborative Methods – Leadership and Working Groups

- Required Readings:
 - Frances F. Korten, "The Working Group as a Catalyst for Organizational Change," in Korten and Siy (eds.) *Transforming a Bureaucracy: The Experience of the Philippine National Irrigation Administration*, West Hartford CT: Kumarian, pp. 61-89.
 - Jeffrey Luke, "Facilitating Productive Working Groups," in *Catalytic Leadership: Strategies for an Interconnected World*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers 1998.
 - Jeffrey Luke, "Leading from Personal Passion and Strength of Character," *ibid.*, pp. 218-240.
 - Kenneth H. Blanchard and Spencer Johnson, *The One Minute Manager*, Berkley Trade; 10th anniversary edition, 1983

Week 6, September 29: Research Projects due. Projects are sent to instructor via e-mail, and are presented in class.

Week 7, October 6: Research Projects due (continued). Projects are sent to instructor via e-mail, and are presented in class.

Week 8, October 13: Collaboration in Practice – Case Studies

- Required Readings (TBA)
 - o The Dayton Accords

Week 9, October 20: Collaboration in Practice – Case Studies (cont'd)

- Required Readings
 - o The Middle East Peace Map

Week 10, October 27: Book Reviews due, no class. Reviews are sent to instructor via e-mail

Week 11, November 3: Towards a Theory of Collaborative Governance

- Guest Speaker (TBA)
- Required Readings:
 - o Raphael Fishler, “Communicative Planning Theory: A Foucauldian Assessment,” *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 19 (4), pp. 358-68, 2000.
 - o Judith E. Innes and David E. Booher, “Consensus Building as a Role Playing and Bricolage: Toward a Theory of Collaborative Planning,” in *Journal of the American Planning Association* Winter 1999, v. 65 (11), pp. 1-17.

Week 12, November 10:

- Required Readings TBA

Week 13, November 17: Practical Projects due, no class. Projects are sent to instructor via e-mail

Thanksgiving Break

Week 14, December 1: Civil Society and Its Role – Bridge Or...?

- Final Discussion.