

# CRJU/POSC 320: Introduction to Public Administration

Summer Session B 2026

Asynchronous Online

June 29 – July 31, 2026

## Faculty Information

**Instructor:** David P. Adams, Ph.D.

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**Virtual Office Hours:** Tuesdays 9:30–10:30 a.m. and 7:00–8:00 p.m. on the [Discord Office Hours Channel](#), and by [appointment](#).

**Schedule meetings:** [dadams.io/appointments](http://dadams.io/appointments)

## Course Communication

All course announcements and communications will be sent via *Canvas* and university email. Students are responsible for regularly checking their *Canvas* notifications and email, and for ensuring that *Canvas* notifications are set to receive course messages. Because this is a fully asynchronous course running on a compressed five-week schedule, students are expected to check *Canvas* and their email **at least once daily**, including weekends.

**Response time:** I will strive to respond to all student emails, Discord posts, and *Canvas* messages within 24 hours, except on weekends and holidays. If you have not received a

response within 24 hours, please send a follow-up message. If you are still waiting after 48 hours, contact me via phone or SMS at (657) 278-4770.

## Technical Problems

If you encounter any technical difficulties, contact the instructor immediately to document the problem. Then contact: [student IT help desk](#), [email](#), phone (657) 278-8888, walk-in [student genius center](#), or online chat via the [portal](#) (“Online IT Help” then “Live Chat”).

**For issues with Canvas:** Canvas Support Hotline = (657) 278-8888, [search the CSUF Canvas Guides](#), or [report a problem](#).

**Alternative submission:** If you cannot submit an assignment via *Canvas*, contact the professor as soon as possible to document the issue and arrange an alternative. Because of the compressed summer schedule, do not wait to report a Canvas issue.

## Course Information

**Prefix, number, title:** CRJU/POSC 320, *Introduction to Public Administration*

**Modality:** Fully asynchronous online (Canvas)

**Term dates:** June 29 – July 31, 2026 (5 weeks)

**Units:** 3    **Schedule Code:** CRJU 320 – 10669 / POSC 320 – 10670

**Catalog description:** Introduces public administration through current trends and problems of public sector agencies in such areas as organization behavior, public budgeting, personnel, planning and policy making. Examples and cases from the Criminal Justice field. (POSC 320 and CRJU 320 are the same course.)

**Policy regarding the use of generative AI:** See the *Policy on the Use of Generative AI and Other Technology* section below.

**Course materials and equipment:** Canvas; reliable computer and internet connection; a Google account with access to Google Docs (all written work in this course is submitted as a Google Doc); access to Zoom for optional meetings.

**Required text:** Kettl (2023). See *Required Text* below.

## Course Description

Public administration impacts our daily lives in countless ways. This course explores what public administrators do, how decisions are made, and how political environments shape administrative actions. We examine how public administrators respond to citizen demands and institutional pressures while balancing core values of accountability, efficiency, and equity.

This course introduces both the science and art of public administration. Students will explore theoretical and practical aspects of public administration in the American political system, including organizational theory, decision making, systems analysis, performance evaluation, and administrative improvement. Emphasis is placed on understanding the roles and responsibilities of public administrators in a democratic society.

Because the course runs across five weeks rather than a full semester, weekly workload is condensed. Plan to invest the equivalent of a full-time course's effort during each week of the term.

## Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Display broad understanding of public administration and its role in democratic society.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of core concepts and theories in public administration.
3. Identify complex problems facing public organizations.
4. Exhibit critical thinking by interpreting information, comparing ideas, and developing informed opinions.
5. Contrast public and private administration, including their benefits and limitations.
6. Demonstrate effective written communication skills.

# General Education Information

## Requirements Satisfied

This course satisfies General Education Explorations in Social Sciences subarea D.4 for students using Catalog Years 2018 and later. The writing assignments in this course, including the scaffolded management brief project described below, meet the requirement of UPS 411.201:

Writing assignments in General Education courses shall involve the organization and expression of complex data or ideas and careful and timely evaluations of writing so that deficiencies are identified, and suggestions for improvement and/or for means of remediation are offered. Evaluations of the student's writing competence shall determine the final course grade....

A grade of "D" (1.0) or higher is required to meet this General Education requirement. A grade of "D-" (0.7) or below will not satisfy this General Education requirement.

## General Education Student Learning Goals

Students completing courses in this subarea shall encounter the following learning goals:

1. Examine problems, issues, and themes in the social sciences in greater depth; in a variety of cultural, historical, and geographical contexts; and from different disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives.
2. Analyze and critically evaluate the application of social science concepts and theories to particular historical, contemporary, and future problems or themes, such as economic and environmental sustainability, globalization, poverty, and social justice.
3. Analyze and critically evaluate constructs of cultural differentiation, including ethnicity, gender, race, class, and sexual orientation, and their effects on the individual and society.
4. Apply theories and concepts from the social sciences to address historical, contemporary, and future problems confronting communities at different geographical scales, from local to global.

## Required Text

1. Kettl, Daniel F. 2023. *Politics of the Administrative Process*, 9th ed. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Additional readings, if any, will be posted on *Canvas* and noted in the course schedule.

## Student Resources Website

It is the student's responsibility to read and understand the required and important [student information for course syllabi](#). Included is information about:

- University learning goals and General Education learning objectives
- Students' rights to accommodations
- Campus student support resources and academic integrity
- Emergency preparedness; library and IT services
- Software privacy, accessibility statement, diversity statement, and land acknowledgement
- Final exam schedule and semester calendar

## Course Requirements

### Course Format

This is a fully asynchronous online course. There are no required synchronous meetings. The course consists of 15 modules over 5 weeks (three modules per week). Each module includes video lectures (posted to Canvas and YouTube) and required readings from the textbook and any supplemental materials. Each week also includes two multiple-choice quizzes covering that week's modules and one discussion forum. Optional virtual office hours are available on Discord (see *Faculty Information*).

## **Video Lectures and Reading Quizzes (30% of Final Grade)**

Each module includes a short video lecture. Each week features two interactive quizzes (covering that week's modules) assessing your understanding of the assigned material. Quizzes consist of multiple-choice questions delivered through *Canvas*. Late quizzes are not accepted due to the compressed schedule.

## **Discussion Participation (15% of Final Grade)**

Each week includes a discussion forum prompt. Students must participate professionally, follow university netiquette policies, and maintain respectful, academic discourse.

## **Management Brief Project (45% of Final Grade)**

This course features a scaffolded management brief project designed to build your analytical and writing skills in applied public administration. You will complete a series of focused stages that develop over five weeks into a single professional management brief (7–10 pages total) integrating concepts from the Kettl textbook, supported by current sources (2020 or later).

**Submission format — Google Docs only.** All stages of the management brief project must be drafted and submitted as a single Google Doc that you carry forward across all five weeks. **Before your first submission, share the document with [dpadams@fullerton.edu](mailto:dpadams@fullerton.edu) as an Editor** (Share → add [dpadams@fullerton.edu](mailto:dpadams@fullerton.edu) → set access to *Editor*). Each week, paste the shareable link into the Canvas assignment by the Friday deadline. Microsoft Word, PDF, or other file uploads will not be accepted. If you lose editor access or move the file, your submission will be considered late until access is restored.

### **Project Stages and Deadlines**

- 1. Problem Statement and Research Foundation (4.5% of Final Grade) — Due Friday, July 3**
  - Define a public administration problem and connect it to Kettl's framework of accountability, efficiency, and equity.
- 2. Stakeholder Analysis and Context (6.75% of Final Grade) — Due Friday, July 10**

- Map primary and secondary stakeholders and analyze the political, legal, and resource context shaping the problem.

**3. Organizational Problems and Civil Service Analysis (9% of Final Grade) — Due Friday, July 17**

- Apply organizational problems and civil service concepts to analyze structural and personnel dimensions of the problem.

**4. Management Challenges and Solutions (11.25% of Final Grade) — Due Friday, July 24**

- Analyze decision-making and implementation barriers, and propose preliminary solutions informed by budgeting and performance concepts.

**5. Final Recommendations and Executive Summary (13.5% of Final Grade) — Due Friday, July 31**

- Submit final, evidence-based recommendations addressing accountability and oversight, along with a polished executive summary at the top of the document.

## **Research Logs (10% of Final Grade)**

Each week, submit a 2–3 sentence reflection documenting your research process: what you learned, how your understanding evolved, and how new information connects to course concepts. Research Logs are due alongside that week’s Management Brief stage and are worth 2% of the final grade each (5 logs × 2% = 10%).

## **Grading Policies and Standards**

**a. Grading scale:** See Table 1 for the full letter-grade percentage scale used in this course.

**b. Course assignment weights:** See Table 2.

**c. Participation policy:** Because this course is asynchronous, “participation” means timely completion of weekly quizzes, discussion posts, Management Brief stages, and Research Logs. There are no live class sessions to attend.

Table 1: Grade scale

Grade	Percent	Grade	Percent
A+	97.0–100.0	C+	77.0–79.9
A	93.0–96.9	C	73.0–76.9
A-	90.0–92.9	C-	70.0–72.9
B+	87.0–89.9	D+	67.0–69.9
B	83.0–86.9	D	63.0–66.9
B-	80.0–82.9	D-	60.0–62.9
		F	0.0–59.9

Table 2: Assignment weighting

Assignment	Weight	Due
Video Lectures and Reading Quizzes (10)	30%	Weekly, Fridays
Discussion Participation	15%	Weekly, ongoing
Problem Statement and Research Foundation	4.5%	Friday, July 3
Stakeholder Analysis and Context	6.75%	Friday, July 10
Organizational Problems and Civil Service Analysis	9%	Friday, July 17
Management Challenges and Solutions	11.25%	Friday, July 24
Final Recommendations and Executive Summary	13.5%	Friday, July 31
Research Logs (5)	10%	Weekly, Fridays
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	

**d. Make-up and late submission policy:** All assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. on the date specified in the course schedule. Because of the compressed five-week schedule, late work cannot be accommodated except in cases of documented illness or other unforeseen circumstances. Extensions must be requested in writing *before* the due date. Reading quizzes cannot be made up.

**Alternative procedures for submitting work:** All written work in this course is submitted as a Google Doc, with the shareable link posted in the corresponding *Canvas* assignment by the deadline. If you cannot submit via *Canvas* or are unable to share the Google Doc, contact the professor immediately to arrange an alternative.

**e. Authentication of student work:** Students may be required to submit their work to a plagiarism detection service. Cal State Fullerton uses Turnitin©. Submitted work may be checked for authenticity and originality.

**f. Extra credit:** There are no extra credit assignments in this course.

**g. Retention of student work:** Work submitted for a grade through Canvas shall be retained for a reasonable time after the term ends, not to exceed the last day of the subsequent semester. Students have the right to review graded work in the presence of the instructor. (UPS 320.005) Students are also responsible for retaining personal copies of all submitted and returned work.

## Academic Integrity

Students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity. Any student found to have engaged in academic dishonesty will be subject to the sanctions described in the [Academic Dishonesty Policy](#) (UPS 300.021). Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, and submitting previously graded work without prior authorization. Students are expected to be familiar with the university's policy and to adhere to it in all aspects of this course.

## Policy on the Use of Generative AI and Other Technology

Generative AI (including large language models, image generators, and other tools) is permitted in this course, but use must be transparent, intentional, and in service of learning. The core principle is simple: **you must do the intellectual work of this course**. AI can amplify your thinking, but not replace it.

### Permitted uses:

- Brainstorming and outlining arguments
- Explaining concepts you don't understand (then explaining it back in your own words)
- Literature searching and summarizing sources
- Editing, proofreading, and revising your work
- Sanity-checking your analysis or logic
- Generating synthetic examples or test cases for your ideas

## **Not permitted:**

- Using AI to generate your analysis, arguments, or conclusions
- Submitting AI-generated text as your own writing
- Using AI to avoid engaging with course concepts or readings
- Letting AI do the intellectual heavy lifting (interpreting sources, building arguments, synthesizing ideas)

## **Disclosure requirement:**

If you use generative AI tools in ways beyond basic editing, you must disclose your use. Include a brief note at the end of your assignment explaining what tools you used and how (e.g., “I used Claude to help organize my outline and check the logic of my argument in the stakeholder analysis section”). This is not a confession—it’s transparency about your process.

## **What this means:**

The goal of this course is for *you* to learn to think like a public administrator and to develop your own informed arguments about public administration. AI is a tool that can enhance that learning if used thoughtfully. Using it to avoid thinking will undermine your own education and violates academic integrity. Questions about what constitutes appropriate use? Ask before you submit.

## **Technical Competencies**

Students need:

- Proficiency with Canvas, including submitting assignments, participating in discussions, and accessing course materials
- Ability to use university email and Canvas messages for course communication
- A Google account and proficiency with Google Docs, including sharing documents and using *Suggesting mode* (all written work is submitted as a Google Doc)
- Reliable computer and internet connection

- Ability to use Zoom for optional virtual meetings
- Ability to use online research tools and library databases to find academic sources

## Calendar of Topics / Schedule of Classes

We will follow the schedule below as closely as possible. If adjustments are needed, you will receive advance notice on *Canvas*. All assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. Pacific time on the listed Friday.

### Important dates:

- Course begins: Monday, June 29
- Independence Day: Saturday, July 4 (observed over the weekend; no deadlines fall on this date)
- Last day of class: Friday, July 31

### Week 1: June 29 – July 5

**Modules 1–3:** Course introduction and overview; the foundations of public administration (politics, performance, and accountability); accountability in democratic governance; what government does and how it does it.

### Readings

- Kettl, chapters 1–3

### Assignments

- Module 1–3 video lectures and quizzes (closes Friday, July 3)
- **Discussion:** Your Experience with Government
- **Management Brief:** Problem Statement and Research Foundation due Friday, July 3
- **Research Log:** Week 1 reflection due Friday, July 3

## **Week 2: July 6 – July 12**

**Modules 4–6:** What is public administration?; organizational theory foundations and applications; the executive branch and its structure.

### **Readings**

- Kettl, chapters 4–6

### **Assignments**

- Module 4–6 video lectures and quizzes (closes Friday, July 10)
- **Discussion:** Who's Involved, and Why It's Complicated
- **Management Brief:** Stakeholder Analysis and Context due Friday, July 10
- **Research Log:** Week 2 reflection due Friday, July 10

## **Week 3: July 13 – July 19**

**Modules 7–9:** Common organizational problems; administrative reform movements; civil service systems and personnel management.

### **Readings**

- Kettl, chapters 7–9

### **Assignments**

- Module 7–9 video lectures and quizzes (closes Friday, July 17)
- **Discussion:** Structure, staffing, and the struggle to perform
- **Management Brief:** Organizational Problems and Civil Service Analysis due Friday, July 17
- **Research Log:** Week 3 reflection due Friday, July 17

## **Week 4: July 20 – July 26**

**Modules 10–12:** Human capital management and modern workforce challenges; decision-making under constraints; public budgeting processes.

### **Readings**

- Kettl, chapters 10–12

### **Assignments**

- Module 10–12 video lectures and quizzes (closes Friday, July 24)
- **Discussion:** Decision-making under pressure
- **Management Brief:** Management Challenges and Solutions due Friday, July 24
- **Research Log:** Week 4 reflection due Friday, July 24

## **Week 5: July 27 – July 31**

**Modules 13–15:** Implementation and performance measurement; regulation and judicial oversight; accountability mechanisms and democratic oversight.

### **Readings**

- Kettl, chapters 13–15

### **Assignments**

- Module 13–15 video lectures and quizzes (closes Friday, July 31)
- **Discussion:** Balancing regulation and innovation
- **Management Brief:** Final Recommendations and Executive Summary due Friday, July 31
- **Research Log:** Final reflection due Friday, July 31
- **Course Wrap-Up:** Summary and next steps