Course Description:

The democratic republic established by the Founding Fathers created a subtle system of checks and balances among Congress, the presidency, and the judiciary-as well as the complex relationship between federal and state governments - that has endured to this day. The Founding Fathers (and some Founding Mothers) were familiar with government functions, but did not anticipate the huge, multi-layered federal, state, and local government bureaucracies that exist today. While constitutionally part of the executive branch, the bureaucracy at all levels of government has grown so large and diverse that many scholars consider it a fourth, distinct branch of government. We will examine the structures and operations of executive agencies and regulatory bodies, the sources of their authority, and the informal and formal influences that constitute the environments in which they operate, including how they brush up against the political system. While the course will focus primarily on the federal government, state and local governments will also be discussed from time to time.

Required work:

Note: All required work is due on the date and time specified in the syllabus. If there are extraordinary circumstances that may require a delay, permission must be granted by the instructor before the due date.

1. A term paper - approximately 3,000 words long, double-spaced (exclusive of footnotes, bibliography, diagrams, and tables.) The paper will be an analysis of a federal, state, or local agency program of your choice. It can be an existing program or a program whose work has been completed or terminated. The paper should analyze the political, administrative, structural, social, and ethical issues that affect the administration of the program, and come to some conclusion as to the reasons for the success or failure of the program. Remember: careful documentation with appropriate citations and a complete and balanced bibliography are an important part of any term paper. The choice of the subject agency and the program to be analyzed, your intended hypothesis, and three sources you plan to use are due on or before Wednesday, September 26. The finished paper is due on or before Wednesday, November 28.
2. A midterm examination. The midterm exam will be an in-class closed book (and computer) exam and will include several definitions, and one longer essay to be chosen from three or four broader questions. The midterm exam will be in class on Wednesday, October 31.

3. Two book reviews. They may be taken from the list of suggestions in this syllabus. If you do not use one of these, you must tell me what book you plan to use before the deadline date for the book review. The review should describe the basic thesis (or theses) of the book, how the author articulates and supports this thesis, and your own analysis of the thesis and the author’s treatment of it. (Is it good or bad, adequate or inadequate, relevant or irrelevant, useful or a waste of time?) The first book review is due on Wednesday, October 17, and the second on Wednesday, November 14.

4. The final exam will be on Wednesday, December 12 in class (closed books and computers). Blue or Green Books preferred.

**Computation of final grade:**
Term paper: 30%
Midterm exam: 20%
Final exam: 30%
Two Book Reviews: 20%: 10% each

**Academic Integrity:** GMU is an Honor Code university. Read the University Catalog for a full description of the code and the Honor Committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially this: when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task. When you rely on someone else’s work in the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification.

**Some Useful Campus Resources:**

- **GMU Email Accounts:** Students will use their email accounts – either the existing “MEMO” system or the new “MASONLIVE” account to receive important University information, including messages and material related to this class, and to submit papers and exams. See [http://masonlive.gmu.edu](http://masonlive.gmu.edu) for more information.

- **Office of Disability Services:** If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS. See [http://ods.gmu.edu](http://ods.gmu.edu) for more information.

- **Writing Center:** People at the Writing Center will help with your writing skills. It is located in Room A114 Robinson Hall: 703-993-1200; [http://writingcenter.gmu.edu](http://writingcenter.gmu.edu).
• University Libraries “Ask a Librarian”:  
  http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMref.html.


• University Policies: The University Catalog, http://catalog.gmu.edu, is the central source for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university academic affairs. All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.

_____________________________________________

Textbook:  
(Available in the Johnson Center Book Store)


Suggested readings for book reports:


Alexis de Tocqueville. Democracy in America. There are many edition of this classic book


David Sanger. *The Perfect Weapon*


**Class Schedule and Assignments**

**August 29:** Opening Day. Discussion of semester’s work and assignments. General course overview and introduction of some basic concepts.

**September 5:** Kettl, Chapters 1 (Accountability) and 2. (What Government Does and How it Does it.

**September 12:** Kettl, Chapter 3 (What is Public Administration?) and Chapter 4 (Organizational Theory).
September 19: Kettl, Chapters 11 (Budgeting) and 12 (Implementation). Guest Lecturer: Mike Hall, Principal, Madison Associates: Former staff of the Senate Appropriations Committee – staff director of four subcommittees.

September 26: Term Paper Topic Due.

October 3: Kettl, Chapter 6 (Organizational Problems) and Chapter 7 (Administrative Reform). Guest Lecturer: Col. Jean Reed, Professor at The National War College, former Deputy Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Chemical and Biological Defense Programs and Chemical Demilitarization Programs, former professional staff member of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on the Armed Services and retired Colonel in the U.S. Army.

October 10: Fall Break

October 17: First Book Review Due: Kettl, Chapter 14 (Accountability and Politics).

October 24: Kettl, Chapter 10 (Decision Making).

October 31: Midterm Exam.

November 7: Kettl, Chapter 13. Regulation and the Courts: Guest Lecturer: Ross Starek, Former Member of the Federal Trade Commission.

November 14: Kettl, Chapter 8 (The Civil Service) and Chapter 9 (Human Capital). Second book review due.

November 21: Thanksgiving Break

November 28: Kettl, Chapter 5 (The Executive Branch). Term Paper Due. Guest Lecturer: Mike Becker, Executive Vice President and CEO, National Association of Professional Insurance Agents and former student in this class.

December 5: Last Day of Class: Course Wrap up.

Thursday, December 13 – 7:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Final Exam in Class