Western University
Department of Political Science

PA 9923 – Strategic Planning and Management -- Spring 2020

Instructor Information
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Course Information
Lectures: May 4-8, Virtually via Zoom

Course Description:
Strategic management and planning are key competencies for public sector professionals. There are a variety of perspectives, models and approaches used in strategic planning that speak to understanding the multidimensional aspects of planning, and how it creates public value. The way that a strategic plan is developed depends on the nature of the organization's leadership, culture of the organization, complexity of the organization's environment, size of the organization, expertise of the planners, etc.

During the course, a variety of strategic planning approaches will be discussed, including:
- Goals based planning
- Issues based planning
- Organic strategic planning

This course will involve both theoretical and practical components pertaining to strategic planning in the public sector, with lectures in the morning and group work in the afternoons. The course will also take the student through the strategic planning process including: developing the vision and mission statements, identifying the critical roles council, management and staff play in the process, articulating the local government's goals and objectives, and establishment methods of program monitoring, evaluation and deviation. The student will work in a simulated management team environment for the purpose of developing a municipal three-year strategic plan.

Objectives:
1. To critically evaluate the range of strategic planning practices and techniques to better understand their situational applicability.
2. To learn the technical aspects of strategic planning, tools and processes for managing decision-making and establishing organizational direction, such as environmental analysis, constituency facilitation, organizational alignment, and effective evaluation techniques.
3. To hone effective collaborative working and communication skills, for both collegial and community settings.

Learning Outcomes

By the course's conclusion, the students will have a set of planning tools that they will be able to utilize in a variety of professional settings including:

- Conducting Strategic Planning: including process, models, and engagement strategies.
- Benefits of Strategic Planning: including organizational alignment, systems of program evaluation, and creating positive work environments.
- Increased appreciation of the power of team work, including a set of tangible skills and resources for managing and coordination group processes
- The ability to write effectively in a professional environment

Methods

This course will split between lectures involving content that will encompass the theory of strategic planning (in addition to numerous practical examples) and a participatory teamwork environment for group-based learning. An independent critical analysis of a municipal strategic plan will form the basis of each student's written assignment obligation, demonstrating their competency, due two weeks after the conclusion of the in-class component.

Required Readings

Gabris, Gerald T. (1992). Strategic Planning in Municipal Government: A Tool for Expanding Cooperative Decision Making between Elected and Appointed Officials. Public Productivity & Management Review 16(1), 77-93 (available through JSTOR using Western University access: http://www.jstor.org/stable/3380807?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents)

Korosec, R. L. (2006). Is Department-Based Strategic Planning More Effective than Organization-Wide Strategic Planning? Empirical Evidence from Senior Managers. Public Performance & Management Review, 30(2), 221-244 (available through JSTOR using Western University access: http://www.jstor.org/stable/20447628?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents)

Theodore H. Poister and Gregory Streib (1999). Performance Measurement in Municipal Government: Assessing the State of the Practice. Public Administration Review 59(4), 325-335 (available through JSTOR using Western University access: http://www.jstor.org/stable/3110115?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents)

Recommended Readings

This list is provided as supplementary for those who choose to delve more into particular lecture topics, or as a useful resource list in preparing for the final assignment. The Bryson text would,

under normal circumstances, be deemed required reading; however, access to print materials may be delayed and thus we will make do with the materials we have on hand.

Bryson, J. M. (2011). Strategic Planning for Public and Non Profit Organizations: A Guide to Strengthening and Sustaining Organizational Achievement. Fourth Edition. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Berry, F. S. (2007). Strategic Planning as a Tool for Managing Organizational Change. International Journal of Public Administration, 30(3), 331-346.

Boyne, G., & Gould-Williams, J. (2003). Planning and performance in public organizations an empirical analysis. Public Management Review, 5(1), 115-132.

Boyne, G. A., & Walker, R. M. (2010). Strategic Management and Public Service Performance: The Way Ahead. Public Administration Review, 70, s185-s192.

Faucher, Kane & Bill Irwin (2016). Strategic Planning in a New Key. Municipal World (April, May, and June editions).

Faucher, Kane (2017). A Dozen Reasons Why Plans Fail. Municipal World (May).

Haine, Stephen G. (2000). *The Systems Approach to Planning and Management.* Florida: CRC Press

Hildebrand, R., & McDavid, J. C. (2011). Joining public accountability and performance management: A case study of Lethbridge, Alberta. Canadian Public Administration (March), 54(1), 41-72.

Kabir, S. M. H. (2007). Strategic Planning in Municipal Government: The Case of City of Ottawa. Canadian Social Science, 3(5), 5-14.

Kaplan, R., S, & Norton, D., P. (2007). Using the Balanced Scorecard as a Strategic Management System (July-August). Best of Harvard Business Review, see www.hbrreprints.org

Lane, J.-E., & Wallis, J. (2009). Strategic management and public leadership. Public Management Review, 11(1), 101-120.

Lightbody, J. (1993). The Strategic Planning Component in Policymaking Process for Municipalities in Canada. Policy Studies Journal, 21(1), 94-103.

Meier, K. J., O'Toole, L. J., Jr., Boyne, G. A., & Walker, R. M. (2007). Strategic Management and the Performance of Public Organizations: Testing Venerable Ideas against Recent Theories. Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory: J-PART, 17(3), 357-377.

Mintzberg, H. (1994). The Fall and Rise of Strategic Planning. Harvard Business Review, 72(1), 107-114.

Mintzberg, H., Lampel, J., & Ahlstrand, B. (2000). Strategy Safari: A Guided Tour Through the Wilds of Strategic Management: Simon and Schuster. [Available in the LG Library].

Moore, M. H. (1995). Creating Public Value: Strategic Management in Government: Harvard University Press. [Available in the LG Library].

Plant, T. E. (2008). Strategic Planning for Municipalities: A Users' Guide. Municipal World. [Available in the LG Library].

Poister, T. H. (2010). The Future of Strategic Planning in the Public Sector: Linking Strategic Management and Performance. Public Administration Review, 70, s246-s254.8

Poister, T. H., & Streib, G. (2005). Elements of Strategic Planning and Management in Municipal Government: Status after Two Decades. Public Administration Review, 65(1), 45-56.

Porter, Michael E. (2004). *Competitive Strategy.* New York: Simon and Schuster.

Swanstrom, T. (1987). The Limits of Strategic Planning for Cities. Journal of Urban Affairs, 9(2), 139-157.

Ugboro, I. O., Obeng, K., & Spann, O. (2011). Strategic Planning As an Effective Tool of Strategic Management in Public Sector Organizations. Administration & Society (January), 43(1), 87-123.

Walker, R. M., Andrews, R., Boyne, G. A., Meier, K. J., & O'Toole, L. J. (2010). Wakeup Call: Strategic Management, Network Alarms, and Performance. Public Administration Review, 70(5), 731–741.

Lecture Format

Given the realities of Covid-19 and the need for social distancing measures, we will be conducting our course virtually via Zoom. This is far from ideal given my inimitable charm in person; however, we will make the most of our time together through virtual meetings. I hope to be completely up to speed on Zoom's features by the time we meet. It will be an adjustment for all of those (such as myself) who is used to being in the physical room with everyone.

Scheduled daily meetings happen at 9 am. I will spend the morning walking us through a presentation and facilitating discussion on each of the topics as listed in our itinerary. This will wrap up by lunch time, after which point the meeting will end and you will be in contact with your group.

Virtual Teamwork

I will be providing a separate document on how we are going to conduct the group work component. I will not be making group presentations mandatory. However, I will expect a presentation / written report to be submitted to me on the final day of the course.

Once we have created groups, the methods your group chooses to work collaboratively is your choice. You may use anything from Zoom to Google Docs, etc., to communicate with one another, share key documents, and co-edit materials.

Course Itinerary

DAY	Lecture Topics	Readings
1 - AM	WHAT IS STRATEGIC PLANNING? PROCESSES AND PRODUCT * Strategic Planning and the Local Government Context * Approaches to planning * Planning to Plan - Why is Planning Important? - The Cost of Doing Nothing * Skills: Decision-Making, Creative Thinking, Problem-Solving, Time Management * Internal or External? The Question of Performing Planning In-House or Hiring Out	
1 - PM	Establishing group project teams; icebreaker exercise	
2 - AM	ACTORS AND ROLES * Processes, Techniques, Technologies, and the Human Factor - Facilitation * Organizational Alignment - Why and How (people-people, documents-documents) * Bringing Council, SMT, Staff, and the Public Together * Inclusivity in Planning * Public Facilitation Methods (Incl, a unit on social media usage)	Korosec
2 - PM	Group work	
3 - AM	RESEARCH AND DATA INPUTS * Analytics: SWOT, PEST, and other Valuable Tools for Organizational Positioning * Alignment and Change Management * Visioning, Mission Statements, and Prioritization * Outcomes: Articulating Targets and Validation * Implementation Strategies - From Approval to Consolidation	Gabris
3 - PM	Group work	
4 - AM	WRITING AND IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN * Writing the Plan - From Draft to Ratification * Implementation and Operationalization * Much Ado on Evaluation * Baking Action into Plans * Benchmarking, Timelines, and Knowing What/How to Measure * "Low-Hanging Fruit" and "Who Does What and When." * Evaluation Models * Taking the Opportunistic Approach	Poister
4 - PM	Group work	
5 - AM	CONCLUSION * Why Plans Fail: A Cautionary Tale	PRESENTATION DAY
5 - PM	Group presentations	

Assignments

(1) **Group Project**: The goal of this assignment will be to construct a viable, three-year strategic plan for a local governmental body (regional municipality, county, municipality) or an affiliated body (board, committee, commission) of the group's choosing. Although five-year plans are more customary, the time-compressed nature of this course might make such a task onerous. Groups will make use of established strategic planning tools to develop a strategic plan that will be submitted on the last day of the class.

      Due: May 8
      Value: 50%

(2) **Independent Critical Analysis**: The goal of this assignment will be to select an already approved strategic plan from a local governmental body of their choice (all are publicly available via municipal websites), and to evaluate its effectiveness and potentially make recommendations based on any additional data acquired. This should be a sustained and professional analysis making use of a wide range of analytic tools, of a significant length of between 10-15 pages. Preferably, the analysis will consider the previous strategic plan to determine an arc of success.

      Due: June 15
      Value: 50%

Submission: Preferably, all submissions for the final assignment should be through Owl Sakai in PDF.

Consultation: Given the intensive and compressed nature of our course where we will be in contact every day, office hours are not possible. I will, however, make myself available via email and other socially distancing means.

A Few Notes on the Group Assignment:

Strategic plans do not materialize out of thin air; they are always based on precedent and the situational context. Although this mock planning process will not have access to facilitating meetings with local government partners or the public, there will be sufficient work to do. During group work, it is expected that the group will be in contact with one another in class and possibly outside class to share vital information. Strategic priorities should be built on a firm knowledge of situational demographics, the organization's financials, and to review previous plans so as to avoid revisiting certain priorities that have been deemed untenable. Moreover, keeping the broader context in mind, such as (for example) provincial and federal legislation that may impact local governments will be key to determine feasibility, if not also building in flexibility and opportunism into a plan. Making use of any and all municipal resources (council meetings/minutes, budgets, planning documents) will be essential.

The temptation is to assume too much of any individual strategic plan: it can do almost anything, but it cannot do everything. There are very real limits on resources (time, staff, money). A plan that tries to do too much results in a plan that largely achieves nothing. Keep in mind that the plan your group creates would not be the very last and final plan that will ever be developed; so, modest goals are preferable to overreaching.

Presentation does matter. In a purely academic context, substance is king. Although substance is required in your presentation, you must consider the context of the presentation itself. Know your audience. For example, if this were being presented to the public, visualization is key as well as not going too deeply into the weeds on technical jargon. If you were presenting to council, then different approaches apply. For the purposes of this assignment, you will represent a consulting firm presenting to council, or the CAO at the head of an internal strategic planning process.