

**Project Management in the Public Sector:
Challenges, Methods, Tools, and Skills**

**PPM 880P05
Spring 2009**

**Page Hall 0060
Thursday 5:30-8:18pm**

For those students wishing to prepare for the PMP® certification exam, this course includes six additional one-and-one-half hour lectures that will be offered in June and July.

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Office Hours: To be arranged

Required Reading:

A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge, Fourth Edition (the PMBOK® Guide), PMI, 2008

Instructor Provided Readings

Overview

In an environment of rapid change and constrained resources, public- and private-sector organizations are engaged in high-risk, high-visibility projects. As a result, organizations are recognizing the linkage between solid project management and organizational success and survival, and managers at all levels are being challenged to manage complex projects. Project management is an increasingly desirable skill set for those aspiring to senior management roles.

Project management is a discipline that has matured and grown rapidly in the early years of the 21st century. Project management as currently defined includes:

- Project management methods built on established standards, most notably those established by the Project Management Institute (PMI^(R))
- Project management maturity models that allow organizations to benchmark their project management improvement against other organizations
- Certification of project managers, either using national programs (e.g., the Project Management Professional (PMP^(R)) established by PMI or locally created

- programs designed to match specific organizational project management processes
- Use of project management software at the desktop or enterprise level
 - Broad application of project management training for project managers, team members and those responsible for identifying the project's business requirements
 - Creation of management structures, like project management offices, to coordinate and govern projects

Project management can be argued to be the perfect management tool for organizations seeking to pursue rational-goals, and there is evidence to support the capability of project management to increase the ability of organizations to identify goals, build projects designed to accomplish those goals, optimize the use of resources, and create business value. It has been put to increasing use by public- and private-sector organizations in order to focus the attention of the organization on short-term, achievable deliverables and objectives, make optimal use of scarce resources, reduce project risk in high-value, strategic projects, clearly assign responsibility for task performance, and identify the tradeoffs created by alternative decision paths.

Managing projects is always a challenge, especially when those projects involve multiple stakeholders, new or unproven technology, shifting or unclear project requirements, and constrained resources. Those project challenges multiply in the public sector. Managing public-sector projects can be more difficult than many private-sector projects because public-sector organizations:

- Operate in an environment of often-conflicting goals and outcomes
- Involve many layers of stakeholders with varied interests
- Must placate political interests and operate under media scrutiny
- Are allowed little tolerance for failure
- Require projects to be performed under constraints imposed by administrative rules and often-cumbersome policies and processes
- Require the cooperation and performance of agencies outside the project team for purchasing, hiring, and other functions
- Must make do with existing staff resources more often than private-sector projects

This course exposes students to requirements for effective project management and the many challenges it presents. The course will introduce students to international standards and methods for project management; the application of project management tools, the basic, ancillary, and "soft" skills necessary for successful project management; the challenges of project management in the public sector; and the strengths and limitations of project management in a complex organizational environment. This course requires "hands-on" application of project management methods as well as an understanding of project management concepts.

Grading and Course Requirements:

The requirements for this course consist of class contribution, a mid-term exam, a final exam, and a final course paper that will consist of a detailed project plan. Grades will be assigned as follows:

Class Contribution:	20%
Mid-term	25%
Final (non-comprehensive)	25%
Paper	30%

Transformation of numerical grade to a letter grade will be according to the schedule below:

A 93-100	B+ 87-89.9	C+ 77-79.9	D+ 67-69.9
A- 90-92.9	B 83-86.9	C 73-76.9	D 60-66.9
B- 80-82.9	C- 70-72.9	E < 60	

Class Contribution

Class contribution is one of the best and most reliable ways that you can demonstrate your understanding of the ideas and techniques presented in class, as well as your ability to apply them to real public sector situations. While trite, what you take away from this course will be a direct function of the effort you put forth inside and outside of class.

Effective class contribution entails providing good answers to questions. Good answers to questions indicate that you are actively listening to others and are providing comments relevant to the ongoing discussion. Relevant comments add to our understanding of the underlying conceptual material, challenge and clarify the ideas expressed by others, integrate material from past classes or other courses, and show evidence of analysis rather than mere opinion or “gut feeling”. Excellent responses demonstrate that you have thought deeply about the material and can develop creative and innovative insights through this analytic effort. Excellent answers to questions can be the basis of class discussion for 15 minutes or more. Effective class contribution does not entail faking answers, monopolizing “air time”, ignoring the contributions of others, or repeating facts or statements from the readings without analysis. Contribution represents 20% of your final grade.

Class attendance is not required. However, students should be aware of the fact that when you miss a class, you cannot contribute. Each decision to skip a class requires a risk-return tradeoff by the student.

In many of the class sessions, students will be engaged in exercises. Active participation in those exercises contributes to your participation grade as well.

Mid-term and Final

There will be two exams in the course. Both are take-home and will require a thoughtful answer to 2-3 questions. For each exam, students will be given a number of questions to choose from. The final exam is non-comprehensive. Students should pay attention to the question that is being posed and not assume that recapitulation of course materials

is an adequate answer. A good answer to an exam question should require about one page (space and a half) of analysis.

Final Report (Project Plan)

Early in the course, each student will be required to identify a small group of students with whom they will work to create the final report. Groups are limited to 3 students. If students have a problem identifying a group, the instructor will assist in group formation.

Each group must select a real-life project that has not been completed. (It may be in process or not yet started.) The project does not need to be work-related by may not include weddings, family events, or other social engagements. The group's choice of a project must be submitted to the instructor for approval.

For the selected project, the group must create a detailed project plan. That plan must include:

- A project charter
- A work breakdown structure
- An activity list and project network diagram indicating the critical path
- A plan for duration compression
- A communications plan, including identification of stakeholders and their interests
- A risk register, including identified risks, risk prioritization, risk response strategies, secondary risks, and risk triggers
- Quality indicators for the project and the product of the project

At the last class meeting, each group will present their project plan to the class, and the presentation will form part of the grade. Groups must involve all members of the group in the presentation and should consider the time available and the best form of presentation to make. If slides are used, careful attention should be paid to the amount of detail provided. That is to say that a slide containing a detailed project network diagram is not an effective tool for presenting schedule information.

COURSE POLICIES

Academic and personal misconduct are defined and dealt with according to the procedures in the Code of Student Conduct (http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp). Your work should be original. Excessive quotation and paraphrasing of other's work with or without citation will not be accepted.

If you cannot deliver an assignment in person, you are responsible for submitting assigned material to me through some other means (delivery to Page Hall 310B or email a Microsoft Word attachment to wirick.2@osu.edu). Informing the instructor of your intention to be absent does not waive your obligation to submit assigned work. **Late work will be accepted with a one-third-letter grade penalty each day that it is late (A- to B+).**

Grade Appeals

Grades on assignments are intended to reflect the overall quality of performance of the student. You may appeal your grade on an assignment if you think the grade does not reflect the quality of your performance on the assignment. To appeal a grade, submit a clear written explanation describing why you believe the assigned grade is inappropriate within one week after your work is returned. The instructor will carefully consider all such appeals. The instructor will not re-grade an individual component of an assignment; instead the instructor will re-grade the entire assignment. As a result, the final grade for the re-graded assignment may be greater than, less than, or equal to the original grade.

Outline:

Session	Topics Covered	Readings/Assignments
Session 1: April 2	Course overview, the challenge of public-sector projects, distinguishing characteristics of public-sector projects, foundations of public-sector project management, why projects fail, CSFs, maturity models, software, scaling project management methods, overview of the PMP® certification, the definition of projects, grouping projects	
Session 2: April 9	The foundations of public-sector project management, process groups, knowledge areas, the project flow, necessary skills for public-sector project managers, project initiation and integration, the role of the project charter	<i>PMBOK</i> ®, Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4 Instructor provided reading
Session 3: April 16	Project scope management, progressive elaboration, the scope management plan, requirements definition, work breakdown structures (WBS), scope verification, scope change control, best practices in managing public-sector project scope	<i>PMBOK</i> ®, Chapter 5 Instructor provided reading
Session 4: April 23	Project time management, the challenges of public-sector time management, activity definition, sequencing, duration estimating, network diagrams, scheduling, duration compression	<i>PMBOK</i> ®, Chapter 6 Instructor provided reading
Session 5: April 30	Project cost management, the challenges of managing public-sector costs, earned	<i>PMBOK</i> ®, Chapter 7 Instructor provided reading Mid-term exam due

	value management and mid-term exam	
Session 6: May 7	Project communications management and challenges, project human resource management, project quality management	<i>PMBOK</i> [®] , Chapter 8, 9 and 10 Instructor provided reading
Session 7: May 14	Project risk management, risk planning, risk identification, qualitative risk analysis, quantitative risk analysis, risk response planning, risk monitoring and control	<i>PMBOK</i> [®] , Chapter 11 Instructor provided reading
Session 8: May 21	Project procurement management, new demands and new tools, challenges of managing outcomes for project vendors, required documents	<i>PMBOK</i> [®] , Chapter 12 Instructor provided reading
Session 9: May 28	Managing complex projects, the role of uncertainty, modified strategies for complex projects	Instructor provided reading Final exam due
Session 10: June 4	Group project plan presentations	None
PMP [®] review sessions June 15 – July 17 (six sessions)	Selected topics covered on the exam, investigation of sample questions, analysis of test preparedness	Assigned sections of the <i>PMBOK</i> [®] <i>Guide, Fourth Edition</i>