Purpose

Public administrators are frequently called on by elected officials and politically appointed department heads to establish facilities and offices from which the public will be served or to reorganize existing facilities and offices. The spectacular growth in the availability of government services—which arose to satisfy a robust growth in the demand for government services—was necessarily related directly to the expansion of the government’s infrastructure of central offices and regional/local branch offices throughout the last half century. While citizens have grown dependent on government services, they have also grown restless with mounting tax bills and the national government’s frightful accumulation of debt.

Confronted with the choice of reducing the availability of popular government services and streamlining operations to reduce the cost of government services, elected officials and public administrators will rationally opt for the latter wherever possible. Furthermore, public officials and nonprofit managers are expected by the public to offer high-quality services, both in terms of effective care and in terms of speedy attention. Failure to provide such quality will cause a public official or nonprofit manager to “hear about it” from the news media, voters, and so forth. Administrators who do not want their careers to suffer owe it to themselves to understand and apply the principles of operations management.

Learning Objectives

- Be able to apply mathematical models pertaining to inventory control, queuing theory, site location, and other issues of operations management.
Understand the special challenges of delivering services, as opposed to products.

Understand the focus on quality that dominates contemporary thinking in service delivery in the public and nonprofit sectors.

Be able to apply end-user computing (such as Microsoft Office software--Word, Excel, Access, and PowerPoint--and SPSS) to assignments to demonstrate understanding of computing in the context of public-administration production and problem solving.

Course Requirements

1. TEXTBOOK

The required textbook, which is available at the bookstore, is:


Study the assigned readings on a timely basis in accordance with the attached schedule. To "study" does not mean to scan; rather, to "study" involves careful reading and note-taking (or underlining) to facilitate retention of facts and to facilitate review for the examination.

2. PROFICIENT USE OF SOFTWARE IN PREPARING ASSIGNMENTS

All members of the class will use computer software during class sessions, parallel to our discussions and exercises. If a student is sufficiently concerned about lack of proficiency with computer software, he or she should consider the possibility of taking an undergraduate computer course before undertaking POLS 7660.

As all of us develop proficiency with computer software, we will be expected to utilize this software in preparing assignments and in taking the midterm and final examinations. The examinations will require use of computer software: Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and SPSS.
If you don’t have a jump drive, please obtain one. Bring your jump drive to each class.

3. HOMEWORK

Eleven homework problems are assigned. Each problem accounts for 2 percent of the course grade. Late homework will not be accepted.

A few words about plagiarism: Don't do it. I encourage students to study together and to discuss homework solutions together. But you may not copy from each other in writing up your assignments. Your written solutions and statements must be your own work, not a copy of someone else's. Plagiarism can cause you to fail this course. If you don't understand this rule, don't experiment: Give me a call and we'll talk about it in detail.

4. EXAMINATIONS

There will be a midterm examination on Wednesday, October 14. It will account for 20 percent of the course grade. There will be a final examination on Wednesday, December 9. It will account for 25 percent of the course grade.

If, when an examination is in progress, you have in your possession an electronic device that emits a signal, I will collect your examination and you will be ejected from the classroom. Any refusal to acquiesce may result in a grade of zero and submission of a disciplinary complaint.

5. OPERATIONS-MANAGEMENT APPLICATION PAPER

You are required to write an operations-management application paper about a practical problem in an actual (not hypothetical) public or nonprofit setting that can be addressed with the rationale and methods presented in this course (see the supplemental material and the homework problems described in the “Schedule of Reading Assignments”). Your paper must present an analytical approach (based on the methods that we used for the homework problems) to addressing the practical problem. If you are pursuing an M.P.A. degree with a concentration in Criminal Justice Administration, be sure that your paper focuses on a problem in a criminal-justice setting (operating a police station, scheduling criminal trials, or something similar). If you are pursuing an M.P.A. degree with a concentration in Public Health Administration,
be sure that your paper focuses on a problem in a health-care setting (operating a medical practice, handling hospital admissions, or something similar). Reference to your textbook is essential.

The operations-management application paper is due on Wednesday, November 18. Please submit two hardcopies. Do not use report covers; just staple. The paper will account for 30 percent of your grade. Lateness will involve a 10-percentage-point penalty per week or part thereof; the instructor will not be obligated to accept any term paper submitted after the final examination is concluded.

6. CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

The integrity code of the University of North Georgia—"On my honor, I will not lie, cheat, steal, plagiarize, evade the truth, or tolerate those who do"—reflects the university’s commitment to academic integrity. The "Academic Integrity Policy" (2015-2016 Undergraduate Bulletin, at http://ung.catalog.acalog.com/content.php?catoid=19&navoid=461#Academic_Integrity_Policy; see also the Student Handbook) and the "Academic and Professional Integrity Policy" (described in the 2015-2016 Graduate Bulletin at http://ung.catalog.acalog.com/content.php?catoid=18&navoid=427#Academic_and_Professional_Integrity_Policy) are incorporated herein by reference. Please note that in this course, as in all others at UNG, plagiarism and other forms of cheating are expressly prohibited. Any student who commits plagiarism or cheating may receive a reduced grade, which may involve a failing grade, and his or her matriculation in the M.P.A. Program may be terminated by the M.P.A. Advisory Committee. A report of the incident will be provided to the university’s Academic Integrity Council. The council and the vice president for academic affairs may take additional action, which may include a formal reprimand, probation, suspension, or expulsion.¹

7. ATTENDANCE

Attendance is compulsory. You are considered responsible for being attentive to lectures and class discussions, for taking notes, and for being aware of the content of all class announcements. Please take note of the university's policy on "Class Attendance"

¹ If you would like to read a discussion of the rationale for the rules about plagiarism, you are welcome to read my essay that is accessible on the Internet at http://faculty.northgeorgia.edu/bfriedman/Studies/plgrm.htm.
8. PARTICIPATION

Class participation and proper conduct are both expected, and will determine 5 percent of the course grade. As stated in the "Regulations of the M.P.A. Program," the participation requirement is based on this policy:

In most classes, it is improper for a student to be a passive spectator in class sessions. M.P.A. students are expected to be active participants in the proceedings of their classes. Contributions to class discussions are vital to the experience of graduate study in public administration and enhance the value of the program for all students enrolled in it.

Accordingly, the score for participation and conduct will involve these considerations: (1) ability to cite and interpret readings assigned for homework, (2) contribution to collective problem-solving processes, (3) demonstration of adaptability in coping with new situations, and (4) ability to support and enhance the value of the work of peers.

The conduct requirement includes the expectation that you will not allow any cellphones or other electronic devices to emit signals that will disturb the class. Turn them off or don’t bring them to class.

9. COURSE GRADES

Your instructor uses the conventional grading scale: 90-100%, A; 80-89%, B; 70-79%, C; 60-69%, D; below 60%, F.

Course grades are available on BANNER within about two days of the end of final examinations. Except in emergency situations, please do not request grades by telephone, E-mail, or similar method.

10. INCORPORATION OF OTHER CONTROLLING AUTHORITY

The contents of the following are incorporated by reference:

- All of the rules, regulations, and standards published in UNG’s undergraduate and graduate bulletins.
The supplementary information that appears on the Web page at this URL address:

http://ung.edu/academic-affairs/policies-and-guidelines/supplemental-syllabus.php

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<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic and Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>Aug. 19</td>
<td>Introduction to Service Operations Management</td>
<td>Ch. 1</td>
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<td>Introduction to Service Operations Management</td>
<td>Microsoft Word</td>
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<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>Aug. 26</td>
<td>Developing a Service Operations Strategy</td>
<td>Ch. 2</td>
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<td>Developing a Service Operations Strategy</td>
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<td><strong>Supplemental material for Aug. 26:</strong> Read handouts about “Site Selection for Demand-Sensitive Services” and “Gravity Model of Demand,” solve Problems 16.1 and 16.6, and submit your solutions at the beginning of the class period.</td>
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<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>Sep. 2</td>
<td>Service Process Improvements</td>
<td>Ch. 3</td>
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<td>Service Process Improvements</td>
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<td><strong>Supplemental material for Sep. 2:</strong> Read handout about “Queuing Theory,” solve Problems 14.1 and 14.2 in the handout, and submit your solutions at the beginning of the class period.</td>
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<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>Sep. 9</td>
<td>Leadership and Teams</td>
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<td>Leadership and Teams</td>
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Supplemental material for Sept. 16: Read essay about “Basic Economic Order Quantity (EOQ) Model” at http://faculty.UNG.edu/bfriedman/Courses/POLS7660/EOQ.htm, solve Problems 1 and 2 on that Web page, and submit your solutions at the beginning of the class period.


W Oct. 14 MIDTERM EXAMINATION
This examination will need to be accomplished on the computer during the exam period. Thus, you will need to know Windows, Microsoft Word, and Microsoft Excel.

W Oct. 21 Service Operations Performance Ch. 7 Quality
Service Operations Performance Quality
Microsoft PowerPoint
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 28</td>
<td>Sustainable Service Operations</td>
<td>Ch. 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 28</td>
<td>Service Operations Performance</td>
<td>Ch. 9</td>
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**Supplemental material for Oct. 28:** Read handout about “Overbooking,” solve Problem 12.1 in the handout, and submit your solution at the beginning of the class period.

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 4</td>
<td>Nonprofit- and Public-Sector Operations</td>
<td>Ch. 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 4</td>
<td>Operations Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 11</td>
<td>Pursuit of Simplicity in Service Operations</td>
<td>Ch. 11</td>
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<td>Nov. 11</td>
<td>Operations</td>
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**Supplemental material for Nov. 11:** Read handout about “Constructing a Project Network” (learn and use the activity-on-arrow (AOA) method for PERT charts), solve Problems 15.1(a,c,d) and 15.2(a,c,d) in the handout using the AOA method, and submit your solutions at the beginning of the class period.

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 18</td>
<td>APPLICATION PAPER DUE</td>
<td>Ch. 12</td>
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<td>Nov. 18</td>
<td>Electronic-service Operations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 18</td>
<td>Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 25</td>
<td>No Class – Thanksgiving Eve</td>
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Questions that may appear on the M.P.A. comprehensive examination

1. Name at least four distinct variables that a would-be entrepreneur or founder would take into account in order to develop a potentially useful strategy for creating a new enterprise.

2. What kind of people gravitate toward interactive Web sites that process transactions (such as sales)? What features of a Web site gratify such individuals? What features might alienate such individuals?

3. An agency or organization provides a core product or service, but what other features of a transaction determine the level of service that a customer receives and his perceived “experience”?

4. Identify four distinct advantages that might motivate management to separate the front office and the back office.

5. What motivates the management of some organizations to outsource some of their functions? What are possible disadvantages of outsourcing?

6. What behaviors of a government agency determine the level of quality of its service to the public? What attitude of management and front-line employees would be most likely to produce high-quality service to the public?

7. Why do transportation companies, hospitality establishments, and some other service providers overbook?
How do they determine how much overbooking to do? What happens to those who are “bumped”?

8. The basic EOQ model allows an operations manager to calculate $q^*$. What is $q^*$? What is the effect of ordering $q^*$ units?

9. Why do waiting lines develop in service facilities? What might management do to constructively manage the waiting line (e.g., to reduce the annoyance felt by people in the queue or to reduce the length of a customer’s waiting time)?

10. In using scheduling processes such as PERT, how do operations managers calculate the estimate of how much time is necessary to complete a project?

11. Explain the purpose, logic, and method of the “gravity model of demand.”

Vocabulary
Coincidence and diversity
of demand
Simulation
Load factor
Responsiveness

Accessibility
Microsoft Access
Capacity
SPSS