

## **Public Management Field Exam**

**June 2, 2016**

You have 9 hours to complete the exam. Please answer a question in each of the 3 parts of the exam.

Part I. Please answer the following question:

1. One of the ways scholars seek to distinguish the theory and practice of public management from management in business or other sectors is that “public” management is practiced in a democratic context. Democracy is presumably one of the reasons, perhaps the primary reason, why we differentiate public management from other varieties of management. Dwight Waldo, for example, was one of the first to acknowledge the centrality of public bureaucracy to democratic theory. In an article published in 1952, Waldo argued, “If administration is indeed ‘the core of modern government,’ then a theory of democracy in the twentieth century must embrace administration.” Over the years, how have theories of public management incorporated the institutional realities of their democratic context? Identify and critically assess efforts by public management scholars to accommodate or reconcile public management theory with democratic theory. In what ways, if any, is public management theory different from generic management theory because of the democratic context in which public managers and organizations operate?

Part II. Please answer one of the follow two questions:

1. Normative controversies and empirical issues abound over the extent and methods of political control over public bureaucracies. In an essay addressing major themes in the literature, summarize the normative arguments regarding how much political control over the bureaucracy should exist and the empirical findings to date about the effectiveness of various mechanisms for achieving political control over the bureaucracy.
2. Donald Kettl asserted recently that the level of interdependence in governance has “radically changed the jobs of public administrators, who must now not only manage the functions of their own agencies but must also build critical linkages with others.” What types of policy making and service delivery arrangements do governments use that are based in such “critical linkages”? To what extent can public management scholars and practitioners usefully borrow from research done on bureaucratic organizations and to what extent should the field of public management move away from bureaucracy as its defining structure and concentrate on research done on multiorganizational structures? Which approaches to research do you think would be least and most effective for contemporary scholars in identifying and explaining differences between the two contexts?

Part III. Please answer one of the following two questions:

1. Understanding and improving employee motivation has been a primary concern of policymakers, practitioners and scholars. During the last four decades we have witnessed the emergence of several prominent theories of work motivation. What have we learned from this literature on work motivation? Do you see common themes and points of convergence across these different theories? Assess the potential for integrating these theories into a more general theory of work motivation.
2. Gulick and others advanced the notion of POSDCORB to summarize the key administrative steps or functions performed by executives. POSDCORB stands for: Planning, Organizing, Staffing, Directing, Co-Ordinating, Reporting and Budgeting. Do public management scholars focus on some of these functions more than others, and if so, which ones have garnered the most attention? How much have we learned about effective execution of these functions? What value does POSDCORB have as an approach to the study and practice of public management? What are its limitations?