

Strategic Planning and Leadership - Fall 2021

Public Administration 525, section 50 (online)

Instructor

Gordy Pace

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(I usually respond promptly to emails, but please allow for a 24-hour response time)
- Phone: (406) 243-2371 (office); (406) 370-3075 (cell) - Please call M-F between 8-5
- Office: Law School 154
- Office hours: By Zoom at umontana.zoom.us/my/gordypace or by phone on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 3:00-4:30 p.m. Please make an appointment in advance. Other meeting times available by request.
- One-on-one conferences: By appointment over Zoom or phone.

Course delivery

This course is online, meaning we do not meet in person. You will need to access the course through Moodle. Understanding the [Moodle](#) course site is essential to completing this class successfully so if you have questions, please ask for help early.

Course materials are organized by week. Weeks run from Monday through Sunday. Each week will include a combination of a short video lecture, required readings, other online media, and discussion forums or other written assignments when applicable. I will make reading material available for future weeks, but weekly lectures will not be available until the beginning of each week.

The course will include interactive discussions that will take place in Moodle. There will also be opportunities for video conferencing either as a group or one-on-one. We will use [Zoom](#) as our conferencing tool.

Course description

In *Good Strategy Bad Strategy*, Richard Rumelt writes: "The core of strategy work is always the same: discovering the critical factors in a situation and designing a way of coordinating and focusing actions to deal with those factors. A leader's most important responsibility is identifying the biggest challenges to forward progress and devising a coherent approach to overcoming them."

Our exploration of strategy will consider traditional strategic planning approaches used by government and non-profit organizations juxtaposed with emerging adaptive approaches to strategy required in the "age of acceleration." Our primary focus will be on strategic thinking rather than strategic planning. We will seek to strengthen your strategic thinking skills as well as your ability to facilitate strategic thinking, design thinking, creativity, and innovation in your organization.

Our leadership examination will focus on organizational change through disciplined execution of strategy. We will examine issues around organizational values, culture, structure, coordination, and communication with the goal of moving the organizations we lead from good to great.

Learning objectives

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Articulate the distinction between traditional strategic planning approaches and adaptive strategy
- Evaluate and describe the difference between "good strategy" and "bad strategy"
- Demonstrate skill in developing insights through a combination of critical analysis and creative synthesis
- Design and facilitate group dialogue aimed at generating insights, ideas, and innovative approaches to solving problems
- Evaluate and implement mechanisms to stimulate performance and measure progress towards strategic goals
- Demonstrate understanding of how organizational culture impacts strategy and execution

Course readings

- Rumelt, Richard. *Good Strategy / Bad Strategy: The Difference and Why It Matters*
- Sloan, Julia. *Learning to Think Strategically* 4th Edition
- Collins, Jim. *Good to Great and the Social Sectors: A Monograph to Accompany Good to Great*
- Additional supplemental materials provided in Moodle

Course expectations

COVID-safe department policy

Although this course does have assignment deadlines that should be followed, the Department asks that if you are sick or become sick, please work with your professor to develop a plan for successful completion in this course. Our department will follow federal, state, local, University and CDC guidelines for COVID-19. If a student, a member of their family or immediate social group becomes symptomatic, please follow federal, state, local, university, and CDC guidance and work with me to complete required coursework. Please take the time to review our department's [COVIDSafe FAQ guide](#).

Using Moodle

This is a fully online course. You are required to use Moodle. You should check the Moodle course site daily. If you're new to Moodle, you should enroll in the [Moodle 101 tutorial](#).

University email

All email communication will be sent to your official University of Montana email address. You should check your UM email account regularly. Email support is available at umt.edu/it/support/email.

Guidelines for written work

Strong writing skills are essential in public service work. All written assignments should meet the following criteria unless otherwise noted in the assignment instructions or the professor:

1. All work must be typed, double-spaced, utilize 12 point font, and have one inch margins.

2. Citations should follow a proper style guidelines such as, MLA, Chicago, or APA (in-text citations and a reference page are necessary)
3. Assignments are due on the date listed in the course schedule; late assignments will not be accepted. If a student is absent on the day an assignment is due, he/she should make arrangements to turn in the assignment ahead of time.
4. All assignments must be turned in electronically (unless otherwise noted in the course syllabus) via Microsoft Word to the designated Moodle assignment dropbox. If the instructor cannot open the document, the student will not receive a grade. Submission of assignments via e-mail will not be accepted unless specific arrangements have been made.
5. Written work will be evaluated both in terms of content, following instructions, organization, and writing/grammar.
6. Student collusion is not allowed for individual assignments and will be treated as an act of plagiarism.

The University of Montana [Writing and Public Speaking Center](#) is a great resource to review written assignments and readily available to meet the needs of students. Please set up an appointment in advance for staff to review your work before assignments are due.

MPA portfolio

If you are using any assignments from this course for your final MPA portfolio, it is your responsibility to keep track of individual grades and professor feedback. Use your computer's "snipping tool" or screenshot to capture graded feedback to save with your files. We ask that you very carefully read the [MPA Portfolio requirements](#) listed on our website (e.g. no you cannot use outlines or case write ups). We ask that you be mindful of individual and group projects you participate in each semester so you stay on track - we appreciate you doing so. Each DPAP professor will always offer an option to complete projects on your own. If questions, contact the MPA Director, Dr. Sara Rinfret.

Assignments

1. Analyze a strategic plan

Obtain a copy of a strategic plan for a public or nonprofit organization of your choice. Analyze the plan for evidence of the following:

- Planning process used
- Involvement and participation in the process (Who had input? What was their role?)
- Approach and depth of analysis aimed at identifying obstacles and opportunities
- Identification of strategic issues
- Implementation and action plans, including roles, responsibilities, and timelines
- Monitoring, evaluation, and adaptation plans
- Indications of Rumelt's "bad strategy" (fluff, failure to face the problem, mistaking goals for strategy, bad strategic objectives)

If possible, interview stakeholders who were involved in the process. Include in your analysis any information you can obtain as to the status of the implementation of the plan and results obtained. Conclude your report with an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations for improvement of the strategy and execution process.

Length of paper: 5-7 pages

Due date: October 10 by 11:59 p.m.

2. Design a strategy and execution process proposal

Develop a proposal for an organization of your choice that advocates for a more adaptive strategic planning process and improved approaches to execution.

Your proposal should include the following:

- An analysis of the significant challenges faced by the organization and rationale for why a new approach to strategy and execution would benefit the organization
- Recommendations for how to design a strategy-making process that results in a more creative and adaptive strategy culture. You can draw inspiration from course materials and/or outside sources
- Recommendations for a strategy implementation approach that ensures accountability and achieves results.

In addition to a written proposal, you will deliver a 5-7 minute presentation advocating a new approach to strategy. The audience for your proposal and presentation is organizational leaders (executive officers, boards of directors, etc.).

Length of paper: 5-7 pages

Due date: December 13 by 11:59 p.m.

Length of presentation: 5-7 minutes using Zoom

Presentation dates: December 7-10

3. Participate in discussion forums

You will be divided into small discussion groups for the semester. There will be six discussion forums during the semester using the Moodle discussion board. The discussions will focus on material covered during a two-week period.

Most weeks there will be three discussion topics in each forum. You will be expected to post an original response to at least two topics by Wednesday. Between Wednesday and Sunday, you will be expected to respond to classmates' posts by asking clarifying questions and adding insights. The discussions should be ongoing and not occur all on one day. The goal is for you to post at least 5-6 total times during the week.

Grading

During the semester I will not assign grades or scores to individual assignments. Instead I will provide written or verbal feedback on the assignments that you turn in. In my feedback I will identify the strong aspects of the assignment, point out information or concepts that were missing from your assignment, and/or suggest additional work (thinking, writing, reading, etc.) that you need to do in order to improve your understanding of the topic. Ideally this feedback will help you deepen your understanding of the material and concepts.

This class employs contract grading. One goal of contract grading is to reduce the anxiety about grades that students often experience. Another goal is to encourage students to develop their own motivations for excellence. A key aspect of contract grading is to emphasize qualitative evaluative feedback over quantitative assessments of students' written work.

In courses with contract grading, the instructor sets a clear and unambiguous bar for earning a B in the course. If students meet this bar, they are guaranteed a B in the course. Students must go above and

beyond this bar in order to earn an A in the course, and they must fall below the bar in order to earn a C in the course.

Grading contract

You are guaranteed a final grade of B in this class if you:

1. Meet the stated criteria for all assignments;
2. Meet due dates for all assignments;
3. Actively participate in all class discussions and exercises;
4. Give thoughtful feedback during peer exercises; and
5. Meet guidelines for written work

The grade of B does not derive from my judgment about the quality of your writing, the uniqueness of your ideas, or your enthusiasm for qualitative research methods. Instead, you will earn a B in this course entirely on the basis of what you do (not on how well you do it). If you meet the conditions above, you will earn a B in this class. However, your final grade will fall rapidly below a B if you do not meet these conditions. I will let you know via email or in person if you are in danger of falling below a B in the course.

A grade of A in this course does rest on my judgment about the quality of your writing, the uniqueness of your ideas and the depth of your understanding of qualitative research methods. To earn an A in the course, you must do everything that you must do to earn a B as well as:

1. Demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of the material and concepts presented in class
2. Produce creative, unique, thoughtful assignments;
3. Receive critiques during peer exercises and workshops in a professional and non-defensive manner;
4. Turn in papers that are concise, carefully edited and easy to read

To earn an A, your performance in all aspects of this class must be exceptionally high quality. In addition to feedback on assignments, I will indicate whether the assignment met, exceeded, or fell short of expectations. Feedback will be provided within a week of submission of the assignment.

You are welcome to discuss this grading contract, your performance in the course or your concerns about your final grade with me during my office hours. Grade questions and concerns are always best addressed earlier rather than later.

Course schedule

This schedule may be modified as the semester progresses.

Date	Topic	Readings Assignments
Week 1 August 30- September 5	Getting started <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Getting to know each other• Course content and expectations• Getting to know Moodle	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• View video lecture• View cultural awareness video• Review course syllabus• Introduce yourself to the class in the discussion forum by Wednesday at 11 p.m.• Sign up for a Zoom conference time

Week 2 September 6-12	History and evolution of strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View video lecture • Read Sloan chapters 1-3
Week 3 September 13-19	Strategy vs. strategic planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View video lecture • Read <i>The Fall and Rise of Strategic Planning</i> (Mintzberg) • Read <i>The Big Lie of Strategic Planning</i> (Martin) • Read <i>Strategic Planning is Dead. Long Live Strategy</i> (O'Donovan and Flower) • DISCUSSION FORUM #1 (weeks 2-3 material)
Week 4 September 20-26	Good strategy / bad strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View video lecture • Read Rumelt chapters 1-5
Week 5 September 27-October 3	Thinking like a strategist part 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View video lecture • Read Rumelt chapters 16-18 • Read Sloan chapters 4-7 • DISCUSSION FORUM #2 (weeks 4-5 material)
Week 6 October 4-10	Thinking like a strategist part 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View video lecture • Read Sloan chapters 8-13 • ASSIGNMENT DUE 10/10 by 11:59 p.m.: Analysis of a strategic plan
Week 7 October 11-17	Thinking like a strategist part 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View video lecture • Read Sloan chapters 14-18 • Mid-semester learning evaluation • DISCUSSION FORUM #3 (weeks 6-7 material)
Week 8 October 18-24	Co-creation of strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View video lecture • Read <i>Co-Creation in Government</i> • Read Prahalad and Ramaswamy: <i>The Co-Creation Connection</i>

Week 9 October 25-31	Design thinking approach to strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View video lecture • Read <i>Designing for Growth</i> chapters 1-2 (Liedtka and Ogilvie) • Read <i>An Introduction to Design Thinking Process Guide</i> • Optional read: <i>What is Design Thinking and Why Is It So Popular?</i> (Dam and Siang) • Optional video: <i>TED Talk: Tim Brown on Design Thinking</i> • DISCUSSION FORUM #4 (weeks 8-9 material)
Week 10 November 1-7	Facilitating creative and strategic processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View video lecture • Read <i>How to Kill Creativity</i> (Amiable) • Read <i>The Surprising Power of Liberating Structures</i> chapter 2 <i>Why Microstructures Matter</i> (Lipmanowicz and McCandless)
Week 11 November 8-14	Leading change: from good to great	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View video lecture • Read <i>Good to Great</i> article (Collins) • Read <i>Good to Great and the Social Sectors</i> (Collins) • Optional: Collins videos • DISCUSSION FORUM #5 (weeks 10 and 11 material)
Week 12 November 15-21	Leading change: Sources of power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View video lecture • Read Rumelt chapters 6-15 • Sign up for Week 15 presentation times • Optional: submit draft of strategy and execution proposal for feedback
Week 13 November 22-28	Research week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanksgiving week: No lecture or readings
Week 14 November 29-December 5	Leading change: Structure and culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View video lecture • Read <i>Accelerate</i> (Kotter) • Read <i>Leading in Place: Leadership Through Different Eyes</i> (Hilton and O'Leary) • DISCUSSION FORUM #6 (weeks 12 and 14 material)

Week 15 December 6-12	Presentations and wrapping up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations • Course evaluation
Week 16 December 13-17	Finals week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASSIGNMENT DUE 12/13 by 11:59 p.m.: Strategy and execution proposal

Academic and class policies

Academic and Student Conduct: See [University of Montana Student Conduct Code](#).

Extra Credit: Not available for this course.

Classroom Etiquette: A driving component of our MPA program is professionalism and your ability to work well with teams/groups. Thus, the expectation is that students will maintain a high level of professionalism in their classroom conduct with me, and with their fellow students. This means being respectful during class discussions, and in all communications with the professor and others.

E-mail Etiquette: E-mail is a wonderful tool for you to contact me with questions, but it does not replace office hours. If you have involved questions about course material, you should set up a time to come see me or set up a phone conversation.

Incompletes or Withdrawals “W” for the Course: If for some reason the course is not working out for you please adhere to the University’s policies for the last day to drop a class.

Late Assignments: Students are expected to submit all work on the date specified in the course calendar. Any exceptions to this must be approved by the instructor 72 hours before the date in question. Students must complete all assignments to receive a grade for the course.

University Attendance Policy: Students who are registered for a course but do not attend the first two class meetings may be required by the instructor to drop the course. This rule allows for early identification of class vacancies and to permit other students to add classes. Students not allowed to remain must complete a drop form or drop the course on the Internet (<http://cyberbear.umt.edu>) to avoid receiving a failing grade. Students who know they will be absent should contact the instructor in advance.

Wikipedia: This online source is not reliable and should not be cited in any course assignment. The goal is to become accustomed to using scholarly sources for all work in any of your courses at the University of Montana.

Academic Dishonesty (Plagiarism): Students must follow the University’s policies for academic dishonesty. For detailed information, please view. As such, all work submitted must be your own; no duplicate work (work completed for another class) will not be accepted. Acts of cheating or plagiarism will result in a grade of zero (0) for the assignment. Moreover, acts of plagiarism will also be reported to the Academic Court. To avoid acts of plagiarism, cite each reference or source you use and give proper credit for the ideas, opinions, and findings of others. When you are using the exact words of others, you must use quotation marks and include the page number where you found the quote in your citation.

Sensitive Course Materials: College education aims to expand student understanding and awareness. Thus, it involves engagement with a wide range of information, ideas, and creative representations. In college courses, students can expect to encounter—and critically appraise—materials that may differ

from and perhaps challenge familiar understandings, ideas, and beliefs. Students are encouraged to discuss these matters with the professor.

Disability Assistance: The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors. The link for this is information: Disability Services for Students. If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with Disability Services, please contact Disability Services in Lommasson Center 154 or call 406.243.2243. I will work with you and Disability Services to provide an appropriate modification.

Additional information

Land acknowledgement statement

The University of Montana acknowledges that we are in the aboriginal territories of the Salish and Kalispell people.

Help with technology

Please make sure that your Internet browser settings meet the requirements to be Moodle compatible. Call UM Online by phone, (406) 243-4999 or email umonline-help@umontana.edu if technological problems arise. There is no on-call assistance during nights and weekends.

COVID leave policy

Central to our public service mission is collectively working together. Although this course does have assignment deadlines that should be followed, the Department asks that if you are sick or become sick, to please work with the department chair (Dr. SaraRinfret) to develop a plan for successful completion in this course. The Department will follow federal, state, local, university and CDC guidelines for COVID-19. If a student, a member of their family or immediate social group becomes symptomatic, please follow federal, state, local, university, and CDC guidance and work with DPAP department chair and course professor (me) to complete required coursework. Please take the time to review our Department's [COVID-Safe FAQ guide](#).