

**Ph.D. Comprehensive Exam in Public Administration
Summer 2011**

Answer three of the following questions in 4.5 hours. Keep duplication between answers to a bare minimum. Responses should demonstrate a comprehensive command of the literature by citing a sufficient number of scholars and/or studies as evidence for the position taken in each question.

1. Identify the book, article, or set of articles published since 2000 that you believe has/have had the biggest impact on the intellectual development of public administration. Justify your position by explaining the merits of the work itself, as well as providing examples of how it has influenced the work of others.
2. Meier and Bohte wrote that “[t]he exercise of administrative power is a problem for American democracy because bureaucrats are not elected. Eliminating bureaucratic power is impractical; effective public policy is impossible without bureaus that possess autonomy and discretion. The question remains... can bureaucracy be made responsive to public demands and desires?”

Explain the tension between bureaucracy and democracy in U.S. public administration. Answer Meier and Bohte’s question about bureaucratic responsiveness as part of your essay, and be sure to support your position with existing research in public administration and/or political science.

3. In a recent article in *Public Administration Review*, Joyce and Pattison wrote that “[p]ublic budgeting in 2010 is dominated, at all levels of government, by continuing high demands for government services and large budget deficits. Looking ahead to 2020, these struggles are likely to continue.”

Identify 3-4 *specific* streams of research in public budgeting that you believe to be particularly important if the field is to solve these problems. Make sure that you identify how these streams of work can inform the issue that Joyce and Pattison note above, as well as the primary approaches and scholars associated with each.

4. The U.S. spends more on health care than any other country in the world, but there are widening gaps in access and quality of care. Some have argued that poorly-managed intergovernmental relations are to blame for our inability to “fix” these health care problems. Draw from research on intergovernmental relations and federalism to explain how management deficiencies among federal, state, local, and non-governmental actors have contributed to problems in health administration. Identify 3-4 research questions that scholars in these areas should address to assist the field in remedying these problems.
5. Write an essay explaining how the judiciary shapes the environment of public administration. What role does the U.S. Supreme Court play in preserving the integrity of administrative agencies? Why do public managers need to rely on constitutional competence? Why is preserving and upholding the rule of law essential to the maintenance and preservation of democratic governance?
6. Evaluate the overall quality of research methods in the public administration literature. Identify the primary strengths and weaknesses in public administration research today. Use relevant research to illustrate the strengths and weaknesses that you choose, and be sure to explain why you have selected these areas as particularly strong or weak. What recommendations would you make to the next generation of public administration scholars to improve the quality of research methodology? Explain the logic behind your recommendations.
7. Bozeman’s 1987 book was titled *All Organizations are Public*, a title that reflects the fact that public management scholars increasingly reject the idea that organizations can be dichotomously divided into “public” agencies and “private” firms. Do you agree? Why or why not? Be sure to review relevant empirical research about publicness as you write your response.