

School of Public Affairs
American University
Ph.D. Comprehensive Examination in Public Administration
January 14, 2005

Answer three questions. Four and one-half hours. Avoid using the same or similar material in separate answers.

1. Although administrative reformers often claim to be developing and relying on new theories, they often draw heavily upon public administration's classic literature. Explain the connections between contemporary reforms in one of the following four areas and ideas associated with classical ("orthodox") public administration:

Leadership

Decisionmaking

Administrative Structure

Aspects of the President's Management Agenda.

2. In *The Administrative State*, Dwight Waldo argued that public administrative theory is necessarily political theory as well. Similarly, it could be argued that major administrative reforms embody political theories. What are the underlying political theories of the new public management or reinventing government movements? What are the similarities and differences between these theories and those of the classical or orthodox public administration about which Waldo wrote?

3. In *Administrative Reform Comes of Age*, Gerald Caiden writes: "Administrative reformers know much about public organization, administration and management and what afflicts them, but they do not as yet cure much and their many failures in the past have made public leaders wary of them." What are some examples of reformers coupling adequate administrative diagnosis with faulty prescriptions for administrative reform? What accounts for public administration's difficulty in moving from diagnosis to accurate prescription?

4. Compare and contrast the concept of representative bureaucracy with Max Weber's ideal type bureaucracy.

5. Dating from around 1975, the federal courts have sometimes been called "new partners" in public administration. What are the main aspects of the contemporary role of the courts in public administration? What are the consequences of the new partnership for public administrative theory and practice?

6. Writing in the 1920s and 1930s before the public administrative orthodoxy had fully crystallized, W.F. Willoughby argued that "Due largely to the unfortunate use of the words 'executive' and 'administrative' as almost interchangeable terms, the

chief executives of our governments are very generally regarded by the public as being the custodians of administrative authority. In this the public is wholly in error. . . ." He viewed Congress as the "source" of federal administration. Mainstream public administration rejected his ideas and became overwhelmingly executive centered. What accounts for the tendency of mainstream authors, such as those on the Brownlow Committee, to argue against an expansive role for legislatures in public administration? How well has the executive centered approach served public administration in terms of theory and practice?

7. Looking back over the broad development of the field of public administration in the U.S. from the *Federalist Papers* to *Reinventing Government*, what would you say have been its most valuable theoretical breakthroughs and most substantial mistakes? Explain.