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# Chapter 1

## Defining Public Administration

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# 1.The Definitions of Public Administration

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# 1. The Definitions of Public Administration

- It's easy to define public administration if you are content with being simplistic : it is government in action—the management of public affairs or implementation of public policies.(p.6)
  - Public administration is so vast that there is no way to encompass it all with only one definition. So we clustered them into 4 categories : political, legal, managerial, and occupational. This quartet of definition essentially expands upon the trio—managerial, political, and legal—established by David H. Rosenbloom (p.7)
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## 1.1 Political Definitions of Public Administration

- Public administration cannot exist outside of its political context. It is the context that makes it public—that makes it different from private or business administration. Consequently, our first definition of public administration focus on its political nature.(p.7)
  - Throughout the world, government employees do things that affect the daily lives of their fellow citizens. Usually these effort are beneficial, but sometimes they are not. (p.7)
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- As a profession, public administration has developed values and ethical standards. But as an activity, it has no value. It merely reflects the culture norms, beliefs, and power realities of its society. It is simply government doing whatever government does—in whatever political and cultural context it happens to exist. (p.8)
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- In 1955 Dwight Waldo was the first to insist that that analysts “see administration in terms of its environment” because “it enables us to understand different in administration between different societies which would be inexplicable if we were limited to viewing administration analytically in terms of the universals of administration itself.” So essentially similar administration acts can be performed differently in different culture.(p.8)
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## Public Administration Is Both Direct and Indirect

- It is direct when government employees provide services to the public as varied as mortgage insurance, mail, delivery, and electricity.
- It is indirect when government pays private contractors to provide goods or services to citizens.

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- The current trend toward greater privatization of government functions, which began most notably in 1980s during Reagan administration in U.S. and the Thatcher administration in the U.K., is now worldwide. This trend has been reinforced by the growth of nonprofit sector, which receives much of its funding from government contracts—especially for social services and research.(p.9)
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- The increasingly expansive nature of public administration, its branching out into private and nonprofit sectors, has given new meaning to the word government. (p.9)
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## Public Administration Is a Phase in the Public Policymaking Cycle

- “to be or not to be” Governments are in a constant flurry over whether to do or not to do. And whatever they do or do not is public policy. All such decision( including decisions not make a decision) are made by those who control political power and implemented by the administrative officers of the bureaucracy. Thus public policy and public administration are two sides of the same coin. (p.10)
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## Public Administration Is Implementing the Public Interest

- The public interest is the universal label in which political actors wrap the policies and programs that they advocate. Would any lobby, public manager, legislator, or chief executive ever propose a program that was not “in the public interest”? Hardly! Because the public interest is generally taken to mean a commonly accepted good, the phrase is used both to further policies that indeed for the common good and to obscure policies that may not be so commonly accepted as good. (p.10)
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- E. Pendleton Herring accepted laws passed by legislatures are necessarily the products of legislative compromise; thus they are often so vague that they need further definition. The bureaucrat, by default, then has the task of giving defining detail to the general principles embodied in a statute by issuing supplement rules and regulations. (p.11)

(Case1:觀光開發管制 政府得硬起來)

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- "Upon the shoulders of the of the bureaucrat has been placed in large part the burden of reconciling group differences and making effective and workable the economic and social compromises arrived at through the legislative process." In effects, it becomes the job of the anonymous administrator to define the public interest.(p.11)
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## Public Administration Is Doing Collectively That Which Cannot Be So Well Done Individually

- Similarly, collective action is the remedy for the “tragedy of the commons,” where individuals acting in their self-interest destroy public resources such as land and water. In this context public administration is central to the process of regulating individual behavior in the interest of the common good.(p.11)
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## 1.2 Legal Definitions of Public Administration

- Public Administration is inherently the execution of a public law. Every application of general law is necessarily an act of administration. Administration cannot exist without this legal foundation. (p.12)
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## Public Administration Is Law in Action

- While many books have been written about the implementation of this or that government program, there is ultimately only one thing that government is in essence capable of implementing: the law. Of course, the law is often in turmoil. The legislative basis of program, or specific agency rules and regulations, is constantly being challenged in court by those who oppose as well as who support the program involved.(p.13)
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- While public administration is the law in action, the law of how, when, and where these actions can be taken is called administration law. In American context administrative law does not deal with the substantive content of agency policies and practices. Instead, it focus on the procedures that agencies use in exercising their authority. (p.13)
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# Public Administration Is Regulation

- It is government telling citizens and businesses what they may and may not do.
- Our lives are constantly governed, or interfered with, by regulation. We are not officially born until we have a birth certificate—regulation. We must attend school up to a certain age—regulation. And it doesn't even there. (p.14)

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# Public Administration Is the King's Largesse

- The King's Largesse is whatever goods, services, or honors the ruling authority decides to bestow. This was the earliest meaning of public administration. Since everything was owned by the crown, whatever was granted to the nobles and peasants was a gift. In the modern. In the modern world this version of public administration can be seen in traditional monarchies and dictatorships, where hospitals, schools, and such are touted as something given by the autocrat to a grateful people.(p.14)
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# Public Administration Is Theft

- There are those who believe that a government should do little more than provide police and military protection; other than that, it should not interfere—either for good or ill—in the lives of its citizens. A major intellectual force advocating such libertarianism was Ayn Rand, the objectivist philosopher who attacked welfare state notions of selflessness and sacrifice for a common good in novel such as *The Fountainhead* (1943) and *Atlas Sbrugged* (1957).(p.15)
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- In capitalism: The Unknown Ideal (1966), she wrote, "The only proper function of government of a free country is to act as an agency which protects the individual's right, i.e., which protects the individual from physical violence. Such reactionary attitudes are an extreme form of conservatism. (p.15)
  - Conservatives are continuously fearful of public policies involving redistribution, such as social welfare policies and programs whose goal is to shift wealth or benefits from one segment of the population to another. The basic mechanism for redistribution is founded on this notion of redistribution.(p.15)
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- While many government actions could be construed as theft by portions of the populace, there is a line separating metaphorical and actual thievery. Just as the fictional British secret agent James Bond had a “license to kill.” government employees in some countries consider their jobs a license to steal — usually by soliciting bribes. This is extremely common in developing countries where bureaucrats are not paid reasonable wages and have almost no choice but to engage in petty corruption. Often an informal system of fees evolves that tells that citizen, for example, how much is expected to “fix” a parking ticket or to speed up a building permit.(p.16)

(Case2:江明修：把公民力量串起來)

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## 1.3 Managerial Definitions of Public Administration

- Public administration is so much a branch of management that many graduate schools of management (or business or administration ) are divided into public and private—and now increasingly nonprofit—programs. Its legal basis allows public administration to exist, but without its management aspect, not much of the public's business would get done. (p.16)
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# Public Administration Is the Executive Function in Government

- In democratic states, where they are republics or constitutional monarchies, it is government agencies putting into practice legislative acts that represent the will of the people.(p.17)
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# Public Administration Is a Management Specialty

- Management refers both to the people responsible for running an organization and to the running process itself—the use numerous resources ( such as employees and machines) to accomplish an organizational goal. Top managers make the big decisions and are responsible for the overall success of organization. In government the top managers are always the political leaders of society whether they gain power by election. Appointment, or assassination.(p.17)
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- Consequently, the public administration of jurisdiction (the actual management specialists) are to be found in the vast area of middle management—the group responsible for executive and interpretation of top-management policies and for the day-to-day operation of the various organizational units. These individuals often have advance degrees in general fields such as public administration.(p.17)
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- There are the people who have made the management of government programs their life's work(p.18)
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## Public Administration Is Mickey Mouse

- Organizations create and retain such seemingly rigid “practices and features” because they promote efficiency and equity on the whole—even though this may not be true in many individual cases. After all, “one person’s ‘red tape’ turns out to be at the core of our institutions rather than an excrescence on them.(p.19)

(Case2:江明修：把公民力量串起來)

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# Public Administration Is Art, Not Science —or Vice Versa

- It is inherently both. Of course, the more science you have, the more better artist you'll be. But “book learnin” won't make you an artist if you don't possess an element of the gift in the first place.(p19)
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- Just because you have a master's or even a doctorate in public administration or a related field doesn't mean that you can function as a high-level administrator. Being highly educated does not always equate with being professionally able.(p19)
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## 1.4 Occupational Definitions of Public Administration

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## Public Administration Is an Essay Contest

- Oral presentation skills are also essential, but because more people can speak than write effectively, write is more decisive in determining whose ideas get advanced. All organizations place great value on the person who can write succinctly in time of stress.
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## Public Administration Is Idealism in Action

- Many people enter public service careers because they are idealists; they believe in and seek to advance noble principles. “Noble” is the key word here because traditionally the nobility had public service obligation. They were the warrior class, so it was their obligation to heroically protect the weak and less fortunate, to accept the notion of noblesse oblige.(p21)
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- Idealism draws people into public administration because it provides them with worthwhile—and exciting—things to do with their lives. Nowhere else can someone without private wealth achieve such so quickly. Even the children of the very wealth—such as the Kennedys and Rockefellers—tend to enter public service for the same reasons other people do.(p22)
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- It is strange how these idealists in government who only want to do good for their fellow citizens are considered not much better than thieves and social parasites by others—usually not by those who need government help but by those rugged individualists who don't. Many who seek careers in public service believe that government is a legitimate vehicle for solving social problems—and they want to be driving that vehicle when the problem gets solved.(p22)
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## Public Administration Is an Academic Field

- It is the study of the art and science of management applied to the public sector. But it traditionally goes far beyond the concerns of management and incorporates as its subject matter all of the political, social, culture, and legal environment that affect the running of public institutions.(p23)
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- Indeed, it can be argued that because public administration borrows so much from other fields, what is left as its core is hardly worthy of being considered a legitimate academic field at all. Yet, there is a center about which parts of public administration have coalesced.(p23)

(Figure 1.1)

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- It is difficult to trace the exact moment of their conception. What is certain is that the first real American public administration text is Introduction to the Study of Public Administration by Leonard White, published in 1926.(p24)
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- Woodrow Wilson noted four critical assumptions that formed the basis for the study of public administration:
    - 1. Administration is a unitary process that formed can be studied uniformly, at the federal, state, and local levels.
    - 2. The basis for study is management, not law.
    - 3. Administration is still art, but the ideal of transformation to science is both feasible and worthwhile.
  - Administration “has become, and will continue to be the heart of the problem of modern government.” (p24)
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- AS an independent academic field, public administration has always been controversial. First, it was the stepchild of political science. And in many colleges, the field is still represented by a few courses within the political science curriculum. Later, schools of business or management began to offer it as one of a variety of administration specialties. (p24)
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- In 1975 Dwight Waldo was decrying that “Public administration is suffering from identity crisis, having ”enormously expanded its periphery without retaining or creating a unifying center.” A quarter-century later, this crisis shows no sign of abating. (p25)
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# Public Administration Is a Profession

- 1. A body of academic and practical knowledge that is applied to the service of society.
  - 2. A standard of success theoretically measured by serving the needs of society rather than seeking purely personal gain.
  - 3. A system of control over the professional practice that regulates the education of new members and maintains both a code of ethic and appropriate sanction. (p25)
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- Public administration amply meets all three of these criteria even though, unlike law or medicine, it cannot control entry to practice through licenses and examinations. (p25)
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## 2.The Evolution of Public Administration

- Most of the content of introductory public administration texts can be universally applicable. There exists a unified whole (public administration in general) that is greater than the sum of its parts (public administration in each jurisdiction). The core concept of the unified approach to introducing public administration is to write the material in such a manner that it can be readily applied to the differing political systems within the American federal system and throughout the rest of the world. (p28)
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The End

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