

Where the Citizen Meets the State: An Administrative Burden Perspective
(2 ECTS)

Lectures by Donald Moynihan, guest lecture Pamela Herd

When: August 20, 21, 22 (2.5 days), 2024

Where: University of Bern, UniS, Schanzeneckstrasse 1, 3012 Bern

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Registration: Please sign in by email to kpm.kpm@unibe.ch by **04 August 2024**.

Maximal number of participants: 15 (*first come, first served*)

The idea of administrative burden is intuitive. We recognize it from our experience as citizens engaging with the state. It reflects the time we spend getting a new driver's license, or the lines when we vote. For many, it also reflects the difficulties in accessing public services such as income supports. All policies that require citizens to engage with the state will, to varying degrees, create venues where the state may burden citizens.

This class explores administrative burdens as a new theoretical framework to understand citizen-state interactions. This framework has emerged over the last decade by drawing insights from public administration, political sociology, psychology and behavioral economics. Burdens affect whether people will be able to exercise fundamental rights of citizenship, like voting, or can access benefits that can improve quality of life, like health insurance.

Burdens can alter the effectiveness of public programs. Social programs often reach only a fraction of their target population, automatically weakening their effectiveness by shutting out those who fail to negotiate the required procedure.

These lectures examine the concept of burdens, behavioral aspects, consider measurement issues, the relationship with inequality, and comparative topics. Burdens are central to big questions about the administrative state: Are people able to enjoy in practice the rights and benefits provided to them in theory? Are public policies working? How does the state facilitate or minimize inequality? How can we design citizen-state interactions to better achieve shared normative goals?

Tasks

If the document is not open access, readings will be posted as PDF in a Dropbox.

Professor Moynihan will be available for individual counselling sessions at the end of the first two days, and on the third day. If you wish to participate in this, provide a short overview of your PhD topic, methodological approach, and specific questions you wish to pursue and send it to the Don Moynihan, Donald.moynihan@georgetown.edu, by **14 August 2024** the latest. Sign-up spots will be assigned.

Participants in the course will be asked to lead discussion for a reading, presenting the key points for 5-10 minutes. *If taking the course for credit*, participants will also be asked to draft a research proposal (5-10 pages, double-spaced). In this paper you will:

- a) Identify an area of administrative burden you are aware of that has not been studied
- b) Hypothesize a series of causal arrangements (e.g. why burdens exist, or their effects) with as much detail as you can OR propose a descriptive paper that seeks to describe the scale of burdens, how they operate, and how people experience them.
- c) Describe how you would study the topic.

Due two weeks after final class (or longer if you need extra time).

Day 1 (20 August 2024)

Morning: Basic Concepts

Herd and Moynihan, *Administrative Burden: Policymaking by Other Means*, Introduction & Chapter 1

Lowery, Annie. 2021. [The Time Tax: Why is so much American bureaucracy left to average citizens?](#) *The Atlantic*.

Chudnovsky, M., & Peeters, R. 2021. The unequal distribution of administrative burden: A framework and an illustrative case study for understanding variation in people's experience of burdens. *Social Policy & Administration*, 55(4), 527-542.

Madsen, Jonas Krogh, Kim Mikkelsen, and Donald P. Moynihan. 2022. "Burdens, Sludge, Ordeals, Red Tape, Oh My! A User's Guide to the Study of Frictions." *Public Administration*. 100(2): 375-393.

Group activity: brainstorm administrative burden topics

Afternoon: The Political Economy of Burdens

What explains burden tolerance?

Baekgaard, Martin, Mette Kjærgaard Thomsen and Donald Moynihan. 2021. [Why do policymakers support administrative burdens? The roles of deservingness, political ideology and personal experience.](#) *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 31(1): 184-200.

Baekgaard, Martin, Aske Halling, and Donald Moynihan. 2024. Burden Tolerance: Developing a Validated Measurement Instrument across Seven Countries.

Bell, E., Mkrtchyan, A. T., Wehde, W., & Smith, K. 2021. Just or unjust? How ideological beliefs shape street-level bureaucrats' perceptions of administrative burden. *Public Administration Review*. 81(4): 610-624.

How do people respond to burdens?

Peeters, R., Trujillo Jimenez, H., O'Connor, E., Ogarrio Rojas, P., Gonzalez Galindo, M., & Morales Tenorio, D. (2018). Low-trust bureaucracy: Understanding the Mexican bureaucratic experience. *Public Administration and Development*, 38(2), 65-74.

Barnes, Carolyn. 2021. "It takes a while to get used to": The costs of redeeming public benefits. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 31(2): 295-310.

Masood, A., & Nisar, M. A. 2020. [Administrative capital and citizens' responses to administrative burden](#). *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 31, 56–72.

What is the role of third party actors?

Yu, Lilly. 2023. Third-Party Brokers: How Administrative Burdens on Nonprofit Attorneys Worsen Immigrant Legal Inequality. *The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences* September 2023, 9 (4) 133-153; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7758/RSF.2023.9.4.06>

Tiggelaar, Maria and Bert George. 2023. No two-party game: how third-sector organizations alter administrative burden and improve social equity. *Public Management Review*.

Afternoon session: Counselling on research

Day 2 (21 August 2024)

Morning: Behavioral perspectives

Susan Dynarski, C.J. Libassi, Katherine Michelmore & Stephanie Owen. 2021. Closing the gap: The effect of a targeted, tuition-free promise on college choices of high-achieving, low-income students. *American Economic Review*

Olsen, Asmus Leth, Jonas Høgh Jeppesen, and Donald P. Moynihan. "The Unequal Distribution of Opportunity: A National Audit Study of Bureaucratic Discrimination in Primary School Access." *American Journal of Political Science*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12584>

What are practical tools to reduce burdens?

Herd and Moynihan, *Administrative Burden: Policymaking by Other Means*, Chapter 10

Moynihan, Donald P. Eric Giannella, Pamela Herd, and Julie Sutherland. 2022. "[Matching to Categories: Learning and Compliance Costs in Administrative Processes](#)." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*.

Afternoon: Administrative Burdens and Inequality (guest lecturer, Pamela Herd)

Ray, Victor, Pamela Herd, and Donald Moynihan. "[Racialized burdens: Applying racialized organization theory to the administrative state](#)." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* (2020).

Heinrich, Carolyn J. "[Presidential address: A thousand petty fortresses](#)": Administrative burden in US immigration policies and its consequences." *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 37, no. 2 (2018): 211-239.

Christensen, J., Aarøe, L., Bækgaard, M., Herd, P., & Moynihan, D. 2020. [Human capital and administrative burden: The role of cognitive resources in citizen-state interactions](#). *Public Administration Review*, 80, 127–136.

Martin, Lucie, Liam Delaney and Orla Doyle. 2023. [Everyday Administrative Burdens and Inequality](#). *Public Administration Review*.

Afternoon session: Counselling on research

Day 3 (22 August 2024)

Individual counselling on research