

JSGS 846.3 Co-operatives in the New Economy: Institutions, Governance and Policy

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN CAMPUS	
INSTRUCTOR:	Marc-Andre Pigeon
PHONE:	306-966-8505 (o) / 639-998-7558 (c)
E-MAIL:	marc-andre.pigeon@usask.ca
OFFICE HOURS:	See below.
OFFICE LOCATION:	Room 188 - 101 Diefenbaker Place, Saskatoon
TERM:	Spring 2022: May 24 - June 10
ROOM:	Online. We will have optional (but encouraged) <u>three-hour in-person live meetings</u> on <ul style="list-style-type: none">● May 24, 16h -17h30● May 26, 18h30 – 20h00● May 30, 16h – 17h30● June 2, 18h30 – 20h00● June 6, 16h – 17h30● June 9, 18h30 – 20h00

***All times are Central Standard Time, which is the time zone for Saskatoon and Regina.**

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The University of Saskatchewan campus of the Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy is situated on Treaty 6 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis, while the University of Regina campus is situated on Treaty 4 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis. We pay our respect to the First Nation and Métis ancestors of this place and reaffirm our relationship with one another. As we engage in Remote Teaching and Learning, we would also like to recognize that some may be attending this course from other traditional Indigenous lands. I ask that you take a moment to make your own Land Acknowledgement to the peoples of those lands. In doing so, we are actively participating in reconciliation as we navigate our time in this course, learning and supporting each other.

HONOUR CODE

At the Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy (JSGS), we believe honesty and integrity are fundamental in a community dedicated to learning, personal development, and a search for understanding. We revere these values and hold them essential in promoting personal responsibility, moral and intellectual leadership, and pride in ourselves and our University.

As JSGS students, we will represent ourselves truthfully, claim only work that is our own, and engage honestly in all academic assignments.

Since articulated standards and expectations can influence attitudes, and because each of us shares the responsibility for maintaining academic integrity (see below for details on academic integrity at the JSGS), we are committed to upholding the Academic Honor Code.

Academic Honour Pledge

As a member of the JSGS community, I pledge to live by and to support the letter and spirit of JSGS's Academic Honour Code.

REMOTE LEARNING CONTEXT

We acknowledge the complex circumstances – i.e., a worldwide pandemic – in which this course is taking place. Since remote teaching and learning context is new to both instructors and students, all participations should interact with empathy, patience and care. Links to online learning resources are provided below.

Calendar Description

This course examines how societal institutions and policy shape the role played by co-operatives in the economy, and how co-operative practices and innovations have in turn shaped these institutions and policy. Combining theoretical insights from the areas of institutions, economics, organizational

behaviour, law and policy with case studies of co-operative organizations, the course allows students to develop their knowledge of the actions that both the state and co-operatives have undertaken, and provides students with a conceptual framework within which these actions can be viewed.

JSGS Core Competencies

The JSGS competencies reflect the values of the Canadian Association of Programs of Public Administration (CAPPA), through which the MPA program receives professional accreditation. Furthermore, the competencies directly mirror the competency maps used by Canadian governments in their recruitment and promotion of public servants. The Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy and its faculty are committed to help you flourish as a public administration professional in modern public and private sector organizations as well as in the non-profit sector.



In addition to the theoretical and subject-matter content in your other MPA courses, you will develop your skills in the areas listed below. Through the development of the following competencies, JSGS MPA graduates will be prepared to meet the policy challenges of a rapidly changing world:

- **Analysis and Use of Evidence** – how to use evidence and providing them with analytical skills.
- **Politics and Democracy** – ensuring that they have a deep understanding of the role of politics and democracy in public policy development including the roles of the various institutions and policy actors.
- **Policy Delivery** – the importance of effective delivery and ongoing evaluation of public policy.

Course Overview

When policymakers sit down to think about how they can address vexing policy problems, there is an overwhelming tendency to frame the analysis in terms of government intervention and/or market-based solutions. Want to make sure everyone has access to healthcare solutions? Set up a government-run health care system. Want to lower the cost of telecommunications services? Force incumbents to let

competitors use their distribution networks. Want to help Indigenous communities reduce the cost of providing ambulance, fire, police and other services? Increase subsidies to the communities.

It is a rare public servant who thinks outside this policy box to consider a different option, one that looks to vest ownership and control with the people who need to use or consume the goods or services. It is a rare public servant who considers the possibility of turning to democratically-controlled cooperatively structured organizations. Our goal with this course is to make sure that you understand that policymakers have another option. A co-operative may not always be the best option but sometimes, it just might be. To tell the difference, a policymaker needs to:

- understand the origins of co-operation on an individual level, evolutionarily, and socially;
- recognize that organizations -- not markets -- are the main way we provide for the goods and services that sustain our lives and make the world go around;
- see that co-operatives *already* operate in almost every imaginable sector of the economy but also recognize where they can go wrong and work less well;
- appreciate how co-operatives can and do govern themselves;
- be wary of claims that co-operatives are somehow less efficient, less agile and less successful than their investor-owned counterparts;
- understand that the strength of a co-operative stretches beyond the business case to encompass associational values and the passion of founders and operators who see co-operatives as more than just a business tool; and
- recognize how intentional policy or its absence has always shaped the way co-operatives evolve.

As we go about exploring these topics, you will learn about co-operatives from a variety of perspectives. You will hear directly from scholars and experts about their experiences and research on co-operatives. You will read articles from disciplines as diverse as behavioural economics, public administration, and history. You will also engage in a major case study with your colleagues and work through real scenarios. Throughout the course, we will discuss some of the most challenging issues facing co-operatives.

Co-operatives are not a solution to all of society's problems. But a good policymaker should have them in their toolkit because governments and markets alone are probably not going to fix all of our problems.

Learning Outcomes Specific to this Course

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. **Identify** the fundamental qualities of a co-operative and how they differ from other kinds of organizations
2. **Discuss** how the policy environment affects the development and sustainability of co-operatives
3. **Explain** the opportunities and limitations of using co-operatives as a tool to achieve public policy objectives

4. **Describe** the major social, economic, and historical roots of co-operatives
5. **Analyze** the position of co-operatives in the economy and identify the various products and services they can provide
6. **Apply** concepts from behavioural economics, organizational theory, game theory, and related disciplines to the governance and study of co-operatives
7. **Use** knowledge of co-operative formation, policy, governance and strategy to **analyze** the future of co-operatives

JSGS Competencies and Outcomes

The assignments are used to deepen a set of core competencies that you will need in your career. In particular, we see the assignments as an opportunity to:

- Conduct policy-relevant research by drawing on reputable sources
- Compose a briefing note that follows JSGS guidelines
- Integrate relevant data and statistics
- Write in a fashion that is coherent, well-structured, and grammatical

Structure of the Course

Normally, this course would consist of 12 modules but since this course is condensed, I have pared it back to 11. I will unlock modules well in advance so that people can read ahead as they choose. I will hold six live sessions overall, or two a week. Please see above for precise dates and times.

Office Hours

I will hold two 'live' synchronous sessions via Zoom per week, for a total of six live sessions as indicated above in the row entitled 'Room.' I will use the first four live sessions as an opportunities for you to ask me questions and engage in a conversation with your peers. These will also be opportunities to work through the case studies at the end of the modules, including two of the graded case studies indicated below. These sessions will be recorded and posted to the Canvas website. Students should come prepared to discuss the cases, or any other co-operative related policy issue, from the perspective of the seven learning objectives identified above. Students are not required to attend these sessions but strongly encouraged to do so. They will be fun and engaging.

These sessions will also help you prepare for the group presentations in the last two live sessions during the week of June 6. Groups will use these sessions to present their draft group report and receive additional critical feedback. While I recognize that the live sessions are indicated as 'optional' in the course calendar, one member from each group must attend these last two sessions. If for reason this is impossible, I will arrange a separate time that is suitable to all concerned – your group and me – but this is strictly a last resort. You and I will benefit much more from presenting to a group of your peers.

Finally, if you would like to meet outside these live sessions, feel free to email me directly at marc-andre.pigeon@usask.ca to arrange a meeting.

Course Outline

The first two parts of the course are meant to develop and deepen your understanding of organizations *in general* and then familiarize you with co-operatives *in particular* as a unique (and powerful) type of organization. While we work in policy considerations throughout these two first parts of the course, we move deeply into policy considerations in part three of the course. Given the structure of the group assignment, I would strongly encourage you to read ahead as much as possible. Part three will be particularly important for your group project. The three parts of the course and their respective modules are itemized below.

Part 1: Pre-history and History of Co-operatives

1. What is a Co-operative?
2. Collective Action and the Cooperation Problem
3. Evolutionary Roots of Co-operatives * **Mandatory Discussion Board**
4. Historical Roots of Co-operatives

Part 2: Co-operatives in Practice

5. Co-operatives as Organizations
6. Co-operative Varieties and Contexts
7. Strategy for Co-operatives
8. Governance Issues in Co-operatives * **Mandatory Discussion Board**

Part 3: Co-operatives as a Policy Instrument

9. Co-operatives and the Institutional Environment
10. Co-operatives and Public Policy * **Mandatory Discussion Board**
11. The Co-operative Lifecycle, Demutualization, and the Future of Co-operation

Readings

The readings for this course are available online. We have provided links to the reading at the beginning of each module. In many cases, you will need to log into the Library to access the reading.

Assignments and Grading

Discussion Board (2%; 4%; 9%)	15%
Group Project Report	25%
Group Project Presentation	15%
Self-assessment in Group Work	10%

Peer-Assessment in Group Work	10%
Individual Briefing Note	25%

Discussion Boards: 15%

The conclusion of each module includes a case study (or two) and questions for reflection. Students must participate in the online (written) discussion forums for **Module 3** (week 1) and **Module 8** (week 2) and **Module 10** (week 3). These contributions should be **no more than 300 words**. All other discussion forums are optional and will not be graded. I will use your contributions to the three graded module discussions to provide you quick and critical feedback about your work. The grading rubric will closely follow the eight course objectives identified earlier.

As you might have noticed, the grading weight increases for every marked discussion assignment – from 2% for the first discussion board, to 4% for the second, and 9% for the third and final one. This gives you a chance to practice in the first two discussion forums and not suffer too much if things don't quite go right. It also gives me an opportunity to give you quick feedback so that you can show improvement over the course and into the final project.

Group Project Reports: 25%

Group work is an important part of any public administration career. With that in mind, I will create groups comprised of three individuals. Each group will be assigned a case study of a co-operative policy issue for which they must write a background paper of at least six pages. They must share a draft of their report in Canvas, and present its findings, during the last two sessions in the third week of class (week of June 6). After integrating feedback from the presentation, each group must submit their **final report by June 15th**.

Group Presentations (15%)

As noted, I strongly encourage students to attend the synchronous sessions during the first two weeks of class. This will give you an opportunity to sharpen your public speaking skills and communicate your point effectively, all vital competencies for future work in government or elsewhere. As such, your 'group presentation' grade will hinge on the quality of your presentation, more so even than the substance. Did you stick to time? Did you get your point across? Were you able to answer questions effectively and succinctly? Did you do an effective job *as a group* in presenting your content?

Self (10%) and Peer Assessment (10%) for Group Work

In many government and private sector workplaces, employees are expected to self-assess their performance as part of their annual review process. Some employers include peer assessments as part of that process (a '360 degree feedback' process for example). I include both these elements in my final assessment to build in individual accountability but also motivate strong collaboration. Please note that I

will treat with some skepticism self-assessments that deviate too much from peer assessments. This situation will invite a follow-up a conversation.

Individual Briefing Notes (25%)

Each member of the class must write one briefing note about the renewable energy sector. Students can use the reports generated by their peers to inform the briefing notes (but cannot use the information in their own group briefing note) or a different topic altogether (this would of course require more work). Each briefing note should be no more than two pages long. The briefing notes are due **June 22nd**. Students **must** follow the JSGS briefing note guide, which is available on the course webpage in Canvas. Students can choose the type of briefing note they wish to write (i.e., information, Response, or Decision) but must include, separately, a rationale for their decision.

Plagiarism

In Module 1, we will include a link to a video that explains the issue in great detail. We strongly encourage you to watch it. At the University of Saskatchewan, plagiarism is understood as the presentation of the work or idea of another person in such a way as to give others the impression that it is the work or idea of the presenter. There is an onus on every student to become informed as to what does and does not constitute plagiarism. Ignorance of applicable standards of ethical writing is not an acceptable excuse.

Examples of Plagiarism

- 1) The use of material received or purchased from another person or prepared by any person other than the individual claiming to be the author. [It is not plagiarism to use work developed in the context of a group exercise (and described as such in the text) if the mode and extent of the use does not deviate from that which is specifically authorized.]
- 2) The verbatim use of oral or written material without adequate attribution.
- 3) The paraphrasing of oral or written material of other persons without adequate attribution.

Learning Resources

- Help with writing: <https://libguides.usask.ca/writing-help>
- Mental health: <https://students.usask.ca/health/healthy-mind.php#Relationships>

Grading Scheme

The following describes the relationship between literal descriptors and percentage scores for courses in the College of Graduate Studies and Research:

90-100 Exceptional

A superior performance with consistent strong evidence of

- a comprehensive, incisive grasp of subject matter;
- an ability to make insightful, critical evaluation of information;
- an exceptional capacity for original, creative and/or logical thinking;
- an exceptional ability to organize, to analyze, to synthesize, to integrate ideas, and to express thoughts fluently;
- an exceptional ability to analyze and solve difficult problems related to subject matter.

80-89 Very Good to Excellent

A very good to excellent performance with strong evidence of

- a comprehensive grasp of subject matter;

- an ability to make sound critical evaluation of information;
- a very good to excellent capacity for original, creative and/or logical thinking;
- a very good to excellent ability to organize, to analyze, to synthesize, to integrate ideas, and to express thoughts fluently;
- a very good to excellent ability to analyze and solve difficult problems related to subject matter.

70-79 Satisfactory to Good

A satisfactory to good performance with evidence of

- a substantial knowledge of subject matter;
- a satisfactory to good understanding of the relevant issues and satisfactory to good familiarity with the relevant literature and technology;
- a satisfactory to good capacity for logical thinking;
- some capacity for original and creative thinking;
- a satisfactory to good ability to organize, to analyze, and to examine the subject matter in a critical and constructive manner;
- a satisfactory to good ability to analyze and solve moderately difficult problems.

60-69 Poor

A generally weak performance, but with some evidence of

- a basic grasp of the subject matter;
- some understanding of the basic issues;
- some familiarity with the relevant literature and techniques;
- some ability to develop solutions to moderately difficult problems related to the subject matter;
- some ability to examine the material in a critical and analytical manner.

<60 Failure

- An unacceptable performance.

Student with Special Needs

University of Saskatchewan (U of S): Students in this course who, because of a disability, may have a need for accommodations are encouraged to discuss this need with the instructor and to contact Access and Equity Services (AES) at 966-7273.

Students Experiencing Stress

University of Saskatchewan (U of S): Students in this course who are experiencing stress can seek assistance from the University of Saskatchewan Student Wellness Centre. For more information, please visit this website: <https://students.usask.ca/health/centres/counselling-services.php>, or call (306) 966-4920 between 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday.

Academic Integrity and Conduct

All students should familiarize themselves with University Council policies and guidelines concerning academic integrity. For further information please consult:

http://www.usask.ca/university_secretary/honesty/ .

It is your responsibility to be familiar with the University of Saskatchewan *Guidelines for Academic Misconduct*. More information is available at <http://www.usask.ca/secretariat/student-conduct-appeals/Student%20Academic%20Misconduct%20Regulations%20APPROVED%20JUNE%2023%20in%20effect%20JAN%201%202017%20-%20With%20Fillable%20Form.pdf>

Student Supports

There are personal and academic support services and programs available for students and the university community. For more information and a comprehensive guide, please go to:

<https://students.usask.ca/>.

Access and Equity Services (formerly Disabilities Services for Students) assists students by offering programs and advocacy services – fostering an accessible and welcoming campus. All students with disabilities are encouraged to register. Access to most services and programs provided is restricted to students who have registered with the office. For more information, please visit

<https://students.usask.ca/health/centres/access-equity-services.php> .

The University Learning Centre offers students help in writing and learning strategies. Please visit <http://www.usask.ca/ulc/> for more information on the services provided.