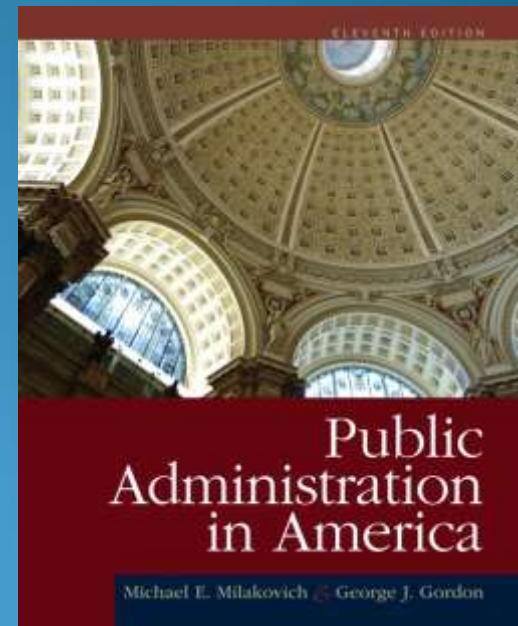


Public Administration in America 11e

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Chapter Two: Public Administration, Democracy, and Bureaucratic Power



Public Administration, Democracy, and Bureaucratic Power

- The *governmental system* is continuously reshaped by society's values and beliefs

Political Values	Administrative Values
Accountability	Efficiency
Responsiveness	Effectiveness
Representation	Representativeness
Participation	Rationality
Democracy	Professionalism
Citizenship	Discretion

Political and Administrative Values

- Fundamental beliefs underlying government and public bureaucracy
- Values impact public administration
- Conflicting values affects conduct of politics and administration

Political and Administrative Values

- **Liberal democracy** (political system)
 - Popular sovereignty
 - Limited government
- **Capitalist** (economic system)
 - Means of production owned by private citizens

Political and Administrative Values

- **Representation**

- Legislative selection that provides demographic **representativeness**
- Public discontent with system has grown in recent years
 - Disputed issues include affirmative action, immigration policy, government spending, preferential hiring

Political and Administrative Values

- Limited Government
 - Checks and balances
 - Separation of powers
 - Federalism
 - Judicial review

Political and Administrative Values

- Individualism
 - Belief in the worth and dignity of the individual
- Pluralism
 - Stresses group organization as means of securing protection for broad interests
 - Groups have right to organize, pursue interests
 - Resulting compromises benefit all

Political and Administrative Values

- Values *how* things are accomplished more than *what* is accomplished
 - **Due process of law**
 - But gap between ideal/operational reality

Representative Democracy

- Representatives nominated and elected from individual districts
 - Legislature makes binding decisions
 - Majority rule AND minority rights
 - Requires widespread involvement in process

Direct Participation in Democracy

- **Participatory democracy**

- Direct involvement by citizens in processes of governmental decision making
- Changes thinking about democracy and way some government decisions made

Administrative Values, Pluralism, and Political Accountability

- Politics and administration previously seen as separate and distinct
 - Pre-20th century: politically neutral/passive
 - “Science of administration” view in response to widespread corruption
 - Efforts to separate politics and administration continue thru mid-century

Administrative Values, Pluralism, and Political Accountability

- Problems with separation of politics and administration
 - Approaches not all consistent with political values articulated by the Constitution
 - Protections have created possibility of *administrative excesses*
 - Conflict between Constitution and administrative values
 - Unchecked power vs. problem solving/efficiency

Pluralist Democracy vs. Administrative Efficiency

Pluralist Democracy

- ✓ Power dispersed and divided
- ✓ Suspicion of executive power
- ✓ Politicians, interest groups and citizens have power
- ✓ Political bargaining okay
- ✓ Emphasis on private interests

Administrative Efficiency

- ✓ Power concentrated and centralized
- ✓ Emphasis on chief executive (accountability)
- ✓ Experts and professional bureaucrats have power
- ✓ Avoid politics
- ✓ Emphasis on technical and scientific reasoning

Political Accountability

- Political participation and equality of opportunity
 - 1700s= voting, holding office (limited by wealth, social status, race, gender, etc.)
 - 1830s=political eligibility begins to broaden
 - Modern=all citizens eligible, can be involved
 - Today=mandatory inclusion issues

Democracy and Public Administration

- Democracy requires mechanisms for both participation and accountability
- Public administration poses problems for such a system
 - Bureaucratic accountability has to be achieved through *indirect popular* influence
 - Conflict between competence and citizen participation

Freedom of Information and Sunshine Laws

- **Sunshine laws**

- Increases public's ability to inquire into activities of bureaucracy and government

- **Sunset laws**

- Requires positive legislative action to renew agency mandates

Freedom of Information and Sunshine Laws

- **Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)**
 - Enables private citizens to gain access to variety of government records and files
 - Breaks down bureaucratic secrecy
 - *U.S. v. Landano*
 - **WikiLeaks**

Freedom of Information and Sunshine Laws

- Legislation at the national level
 - Freedom of Information Act
 - Fair Credit Reporting Act
 - Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
 - Privacy Act of 1974
 - Fair Credit Billing Act
 - **Bureau of Consumer Protection (BCP)**

Dimensions of Democratic Administration

- Challenges for democratic norms:
 - Citizen participation
 - Bureaucratic representativeness
 - Bureaucratic responsiveness
 - Administrative effectiveness (possible threat to personal freedom)

Citizen Participation

- Roots in participatory democracy
 - Reborn in civil rights movement
 - Decentralization of urban governments
- Many forms: advisory or coproducers of services
 - Reduces citizen alienation from government
 - Centralization vs. decentralization
- Programs used to increase participation
 - **Community control**
 - **Public interest groups (PIGs)**

Citizen Participation

- Who is to participate and to what extent has important implications
- Possibility that citizen participation will be **co-optation** and tokenism
- Decentralizing and localizing control over governmental programs may not guarantee increased participation

Citizen Participation

- Citizen participation has mixed record of success
- Tension between citizens and government
- Citizen input
 - Coproduction, empowerment, partnership, and full control

Bureaucratic Representativeness

- Delegate role
 - Constituents' opinions and preferences reflected in legislative voting
- Trustee role
 - Representatives exercise independent judgment and individual conscience

Bureaucratic Representativeness

“The attainment of the democratic ideal in the world of administration depends much less on majority votes than on the inclusiveness of the representation of interests in the interaction process among decision makers.”

Bureaucratic Representativeness

- Delegation of authority
 - The people give authority to Congress and legislatures
 - Legislatures give authority to bureaucracies
 - Discretionary authority may diminish the representational quality of decisions

Bureaucratic Representativeness

- Women, gays, and ethnic minorities, believe greater representativeness is needed
- Evangelical Fundamentalist Christians, **Neo-Conservatives**, and the Tea Party take similar stances

Bureaucratic Responsiveness

- Depends on assumptions about what *is* and what *should be* in the conduct of government and public-policy making
- Requires meaningful access to the right decision makers
- Government must be able to respond to emergencies and policy demands in new ways to meet new threats.

Bureaucratic Responsiveness

- Constraints

- Ideally, public expectations should be realistic, reasonable, and manageable
- Government agencies cannot—or do not—respond equally to all societal interests

Administrative Effectiveness and Personal Liberty

- Dilution of individual liberties
- Does not necessarily occur deliberately
 - **USA PATRIOT Act**

The Political Environment of Bureaucratic Power

- Lack of centralization
 - Competition for power
 - Constrains and creates opportunities for stakeholders
 - Lack of cohesive political majorities within the two houses
 - Lack of clarity in legislative mandates to government agencies of Congress

The Political Environment of Bureaucratic Power

- Legislative oversight
 - Legitimate function of Congress
 - Results in strict control by a legislative committee or subcommittee
- Definitions of agency power not equivalent to actual power
- Agencies' power influenced by relationships with other political actors and institutions

The Political Environment of Bureaucratic Power

- Jurisdiction
 - Bureaucratic imperialism
 - Interest groups
- Institutions act as *unified entities* and *arenas of political competition*

Bureaucratic Expertise and Political Support

- Bureaucratic experts acquire increasing influence because of specialized knowledge
 - Full-time attention to a problem
 - Specialization in the subject
 - Monopoly on information
 - Pattern of increasing reliance for technical advice
 - Use of **specialized language**

Bureaucratic Expertise and Political Support

- To gain legislative support, agencies must
 - Respond promptly to requests for information
 - Effectively promote and manage programs
 - Cooperate administratively with legislators' electoral needs
 - Anticipate legislative preferences regarding the operations of particular programs

Bureaucratic Expertise and Political Support

- Executive Support
 - Decisive in determining success or failure
 - Office of Management and Budget (OMB)
 - Interagency alliances

Bureaucratic Expertise and Political Support

- Clientele groups
 - Depend on the agency for satisfaction of their policy demands
 - Trade expertise for political resources
- General public
 - Public opinion can tilt the political balance of power

Subsystem Politics in America

- Parallels between national government, bureaucracy and Congress
 - Division of labor
 - Congress and the bureaucracy are organized primarily according to function
 - Specialized nature of smaller units

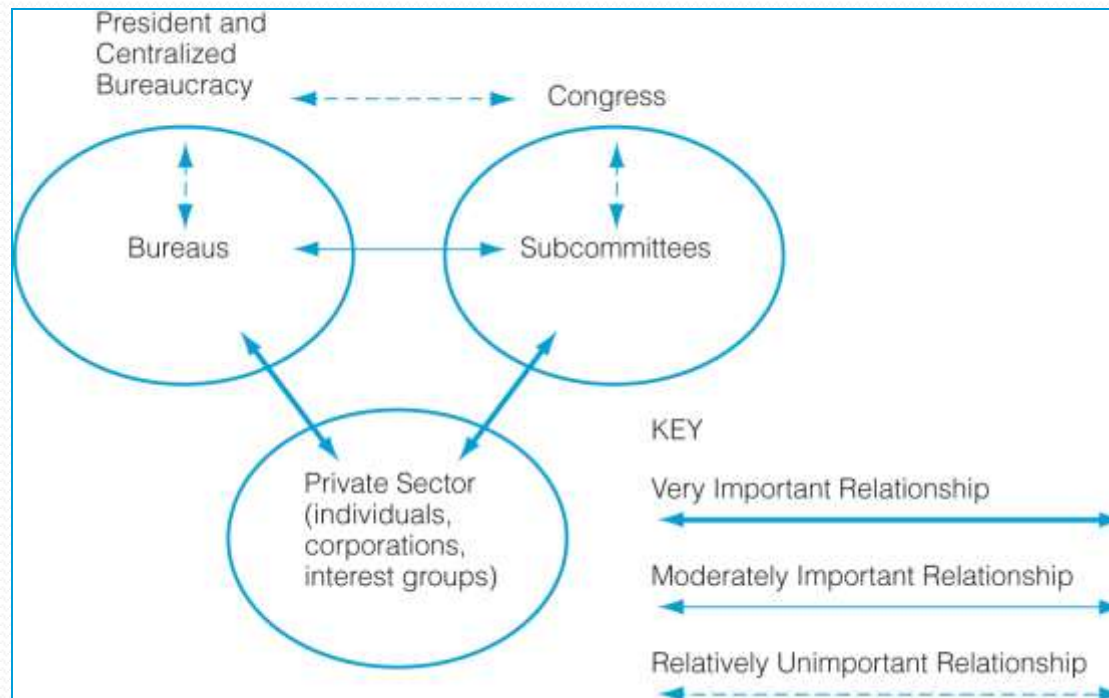
Subsystem Politics in America

- Large institutions defer to specialized units
 - Misleading to assume influence concentrated only “at the top”
- Bureaucratic expertise is a source of bureaucratic power
 - Legislators attracted to committees in which they can have the most impact in policy areas that interest them

Interest Groups and “Iron Triangles”

- Pooling of political resources creates **subsystems** (iron triangles)
 - Members have influence in the policy-making process
- Combine the benefits of bureaucratic expertise, congressional leverage, and interest group capabilities

Interest Groups and “Iron Triangles”



Source: Randall B. Ripley and Grace A. Franklin, *Congress, the Bureaucracy, and Public Policy*, 5th ed. (Pacific Grove, Calif.: Brooks/Cole, 1991), p.102.

Interest Groups and “Iron Triangles”

- Subsystem activity tends to remain behind the scenes
 - Quiet cooperation
- Bills may be referred to multiple committees (**multiple referral**)
 - Joint, sequential or split

Interest Groups and “Iron Triangles”

- Weakening of subsystems
 - **Gridlock**
 - **Partisanship**
 - Members of Congress subject to stronger pressures to respond to *party* rather than *committee* leaders

“Issue Networks”

- Similar to subsystems
- Open and fluid groupings of individuals both inside and outside of government
- Exist when policy question emerges that activates wide range of interests

Bureaucratic Power and Political Accountability

- Enforced through multiple channels, legislative and executive
- Difficulties
 - Authority delegated by both chief executive and legislative branch
 - Inability of executives to command wholehearted responses from subordinates

Bureaucratic Power and Political Accountability

- **Bureaucratic accountability**
 - Political entities not beyond control of other entities in a checks-and-balances system
 - Entities have responsibility to adhere to broad will of the governed

Instruments of Control

President

- Powers of appointment and dismissal
- Initiative in lawmaking
- Executive Office of the President (EOP)
- Financial leverage
- Mass media
- Bureaucratic restructuring
- **Line-item veto**

Congress

- Appropriations power
- Government Accountability Office (GAO)
- Hearings before congressional committees
- Other devices

Bureaucratic Power and Political Accountability

- Responsibility for legislative oversight passed from full committees to subcommittees
 - Congress more dependent on agencies and interest groups
 - Less inclined to “challenge the existing relationships between agencies and interest groups”

Bureaucratic Power and Political Accountability

- Accountability hampered by prevalence of technical subject matter
- Competing criteria for decisions
- Bureaucratic agencies held to account by mass media
 - Internet revolution

Administrative Discretion and Political Accountability

- Administrative discretion has one very positive aspect
 - Program managers better in making decisions about the broader public interest
- Interference with administrative discretion brings about narrow responsiveness to private interests