

The Public Policy Process: Theories and Actors

Course Number: GAFL 490-001/PSCI 138-001

Mondays, 4-7 p.m.

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Course Overview

This course is an opportunity for students to combine the major theoretical perspectives on the policy process with practical application to current policy issues. Students will gain theoretical tools to explain policy change, a comprehensive understanding of the actors that influence policymaking and politics, an overview of the major policy issues being currently debated, and experience writing policy documents. The course is designed to complement an internship in the public policy arena, providing context and background that will enrich the internship experience. The course can be taken either before or after completion of an internship.

Requirements

Students are expected to attend all classes and to have read the assigned readings prior to class. This class is heavily dependent on class discussion, and all students are expected to participate. Oral presentations and written assignments are typical of work done by a policy analyst. All assignments are due at the date and time assigned.

The course requirements are:

- Problem definition paper (3-5 pages) (10%)
- One oral presentation of a policy issue (25%)
- Mid-term exam (15%)
- Legislative history (5 pages) (15%)
- Written (15 pages) and oral congressional testimony presentation (25%)
- Class participation (10%)

Readings

We will be using one textbook which will be supplemented by chapters and articles. The textbook is *Public Policy: Politics, analysis, and alternatives*, 2nd ed., Michael E. Kraft and Scott R. Furlong. The text is required and is available for purchase at the Penn Bookstore; chapters and articles will be available on Blackboard. A bibliography can be found at the end of this syllabus.

Course outline

(1) Monday, September 10

Introduction: Course overview, Congressional procedure overview
Presentation by CWIC Advisor

(2) Monday, September 17

Topics: Overview of public policy actors and introduction of stages model.
Issue: Welfare
Readings: Kraft/Furlong chapters 1, 2, and 9; (Easton 1965) pp 1-33, (Nakamura 1987) pp 1-14
Assigned: One-pager

(3) Monday, September 24

Topics: Issue networks and the Advocacy Coalition Framework, preliminary legislative action
Issue: Environment and Energy Policy
Readings: Kraft/Furlong chapter 11, (Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith 1993) pp 13-39, (Dye 2008) pp 60-92, (Freudenberg and Gramling 2002) entire article.
Due: One-pager

(4) Monday, October 1

Topics: Policy theories, particularly rational choice; vouchers and school choice.
Issue: Education policy
Readings: Kraft/Furlong chapter 3 pages 63-70 on theories and chapter 10, (Ostrom 1990) pp 1-8, (Morris, Oppenheimer et al. 2004) pp 1-29, (Chubb and Moe 1990) pp 185-229, (Stone 2002) pp ix – 14, (Green and Shapiro 1994) pp 1-32

(5) Monday, October 8

Topics: Multiple streams, punctuated equilibrium, and interest groups
Issue: Economic and Budgetary Policy
Readings: Kraft/Furlong chapter 7, (Kingdon 1984) pp 205-215, (Zahariadis 2003) pp 1-9, (Anderson 2006) pp 80-120, (Wright 1996) 37-113, (Jones and Baumgartner 2005) pp 1-27
Returned: One-pagers

(6) Monday, October 15 --- NO CLASS – FALL BREAK

(7) Monday, October 22

Topics: Legislative histories peer review
Issue: Health Care Policy
Reading: Kraft/Furlong Chapter 8
Due: Mid-term today in class, legislative histories due

(8) Monday, October 29

Topics: Policy analysis and committee action
Issue: Criminal justice
Readings: Kraft/Furlong chapter 4, (Dye 2008) chapter 4, (Deering and Smith 1997) pp 1-24, 162-168, 183-236

(9) Monday, November 5

Topics: Problem analysis and developing alternatives
Issue: Defense and homeland security
Readings: Kraft/Furlong chapters 5 and 12, (Schneider and Ingram 1997) pp. 189-207

(10) Monday, November 12

Topics: Policy assessment, regulation.
Issue: Immigration and language policy
Readings: Kraft/Furlong chapters 6 and pp 84-91, (Swain 2007) pp 114-138, (Schmidt 2000) pp 11-37, and (Eisner, Worsham et al. 2006) pp 1-32.

(11) Monday, November 19

Topics: PACs and Money in Politics, legislative oversight
Issue: Morality and Public Policy
Readings: (Hershey 2005) pp 212-237, (Herrnson 2004) pp 129-158, (Gordon 2005) pp 125-141

(12) Monday, November 26

Assignments/issues for this class pending possible speaker.

(13) Monday, December 3 – Final Class

Topics: Final wrap-up
Oral testimony presentations
Due: Testimony, oral and written.

- Anderson, J. E. (2006). Public policymaking : an introduction. Boston, Houghton Mifflin.
- Chubb, J. E. and T. M. Moe (1990). Politics markets & America's schools. Washington, D.C., The Brookings Institution.
- Deering, C. J. and S. S. Smith (1997). Committees in Congress. Washington, D.C., CQ Press.
- Dye, T. R. (2008). Understanding public policy. Upper Saddle River, N.J., [Pearson/Prentice Hall.
- Easton, D. (1965). A systems analysis of political life. New York,, Wiley.
- Eisner, M. A., J. Worsham, et al. (2006). Contemporary regulatory policy. Boulder, Colo., Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc.
- Freudenberg, W. R. and R. Gramling (2002). "How crude: Advocacy coalitions, offshore oil, and the self-negating belief." Policy Sciences **35**: 17-41.
- Gordon, S. B. (2005). Campaign contributions and legislative voting : a new approach. New York, Routledge.
- Green, D. P. and I. Shapiro (1994). Pathologies of rational choice theory: a critique of applications in political science. New Haven, Yale University Press.
- Herrnson, P. S. (2004). Congressional elections : campaigning at home and in Washington. Washington, D.C., CQ Press.
- Hershey, M. R. (2005). Party politics in America. New York, Pearson Longman.
- Jones, B. D. and F. R. Baumgartner (2005). The politics of attention : how government prioritizes problems. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.
- Kingdon, J. W. (1984). Agendas, alternatives, and public policies. Boston, Little, Brown.
- Morris, I. L., J. A. Oppenheimer, et al. (2004). Politics from anarchy to democracy : rational choice in political science. Stanford, Calif., Stanford University Press.
- Nakamura, R. (1987). "The textbook process and implementation research." Policy Studies Review **1**: 142-154.
- Ostrom, E. (1990). Governing the commons : the evolution of institutions for collective action. Cambridge [England] ; New York, Cambridge University Press.
- Sabatier, P. A. and H. C. Jenkins-Smith, Eds. (1993). Policy change and learning: An advocacy coalition approach. Theoretical Lenses on Public Policy. Boulder, Westview Press.
- Schmidt, R. (2000). Language policy and identity politics in the United States. Philadelphia, Temple University Press.
- Schneider, A. L. and H. M. Ingram (1997). Policy design for democracy. Lawrence, University Press of Kansas.
- Stone, D. (2002). Policy Paradox: the art of political decision making. New York, W.W. Norton & Company.
- Swain, C. M. (2007). Debating immigration. Cambridge ; New York, Cambridge University Press.
- Wright, J. R. (1996). Interest groups and Congress : lobbying, contributions, and influence. Boston, Allyn & Bacon.
- Zahariadis, N. (2003). Ambiguity and choice in public policy: Political decision making in modern democracies. Washington, Georgetown University Press.

A final word – please read Penn’s policy on plagiarism/academic integrity -- <http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/osl/acadint.html> and if you are unsure about what constitutes plagiarism, please feel free to ask.