

POLS 302: Introduction to Public Policy

MWF 12:00-12:50 Morgan 316

Fall 2022

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Office Hours (Virtual, Email, or Phone; Face to face with sufficient notice to obtain a conference room):

MWF 11-12, Tuesday 1PM-2PM

(Please let me know 24 hours in advance if you would like to video chat over Zoom or Skype or if you'd like to meet face to face in a conference room).

Course Description:

Welcome! Despite the popular perception that the policy process is akin to that of making sausage, this course will, indeed, force us all to look at how policy is made and implemented. In doing so, we will identify relevant actors, groups, and contextual factors that shape American public policy, especially at the federal level. We will attempt to bridge the gap between theory and practice by: (a) exploring the seminal writings of policy theorists and analysts, on the one hand, and (b) working in small groups to deal with actual policy problems. In addition, we will discuss basic methods of policy analysis, program evaluation, and decision-making. Finally, we will pay careful attention to the roles of rhetoric and argumentation that help us to debate public policy.

Course Objectives:

- To become familiar with general theories of the policy process
- To learn and understand the importance of key actors, groups, political climates, and other sources of influence in this process
- To comprehend and consider normative policy imperatives, some of which we will heartily agree with and others of which we will vehemently despise
- To acquire a rudimentary knowledge of the techniques involved in policy analysis
- To work independently, and with group members, in fulfilling the aforementioned objectives
- To create and maintain an open setting for crucial debates on a myriad of policy arenas
- To have fun and to learn from one another!

Core Competencies this Course will Address:

Through the writing assignments, you will develop your abilities to write in a few different ways. First, you will learn to communicate succinctly in the limited space of a policy memo. Second, you will learn to fully flesh arguments out through the course term paper. Through our course discussions, you should develop your oral communication skills and your appreciation for other perspectives.

Through the readings and exams, you should develop your ability to think

critically.

My commitment: I will be 100% available for any questions, comments, concerns, or suggestions that you wish to proffer. You may call, e-mail, visit my office, or leave an anonymous note with the department's office manager at any point during the semester. I promise that I will do all I can to answer your questions and consider your suggestions to improve the course. This course is for YOU, so take advantage of these opportunities!

Your commitment: To attend each course session unless a major catastrophe prevents you from doing so; To come prepared to ask questions, To READ offer insightful comments, and listen to your classmates. To offer the highest quality versions of your own original work for performance evaluation (grading). The nature of this course is such that it will be virtually impossible to pass, much less excel, if you do not complete the assigned readings.

Academic Integrity: Please refer to your undergraduate or graduate handbook for WIU's policy on Academic Integrity (for Plagiarism and other forms of cheating). It is impossible to learn from one another if any of us recycle the ideas of others. Please turn in your own original work, use quotation marks “ “ when quoting a source, and use a recognized citation style (preferably APA). Please do not speak to one another during the course of an exam. If I suspect that you may be cheating, I will contact the University Judicial Office or take other necessary measures. If your actions are judged as academically dishonest, you will receive an automatic zero on the assignment and may receive a grade of F in the course.

Name, Pronoun, or Other Requests: Please let me know if you prefer to be called by a name other than the one indicated on the official university roster. Please also feel free to let me know if there are any preferred pronouns you'd like me to use when discussing your ideas.

Students with disabilities: In accordance with University values and disability law, students with disabilities may request academic accommodations where there are aspects of a course that result in barriers to inclusion or accurate assessment of achievement. To file an official request for disability-related accommodations, please contact the Disability Resource Center at 309-298-2512, disability@wiu.edu or in 143 Memorial Hall. Please notify the instructor as soon as possible to ensure that this course is accessible to you in a timely manner. **Please feel free to discuss any disability issues with me in private, and I will make reasonable accommodations to ensure that you may fully participate in every aspect of this course. Please don't hesitate to inform me of any needs you have. If I don't know, I won't be able to help you.**

University values, Title IX, and other federal and state laws prohibit sex discrimination, including sexual assault/misconduct, dating/domestic violence, and stalking. If you, or someone you know, has been the victim of any of these offenses, we encourage you to report this to the Title IX Coordinator at 309-298-1977 or anonymously online at:http://www.wiu.edu/equal_opportunity_and_access/request_form/index.php. If you disclose an incident to a faculty member, the faculty member must notify the Title IX Coordinator. The complete Title IX policy is available at:<http://www.wiu.edu/vpas/policies/titleIX.php>.

Web address for student rights and responsibilities:
<http://www.wiu.edu/provost/students.php>

Web address for Academic Integrity Policy: <http://www.wiu.edu/policies/acintegrity.php>

Decorum/Expectations of Proper Conduct:

Be civil and treat one another as you would like to be treated. You might learn something from someone who has a different perspective or opinion. Don't be afraid to listen with an open mind.

Assignments and Grading

Note on Attendance

Attendance in our face to face class meetings is highly encouraged and represents the best opportunity to fully engage with the material and other course participants. Still, the pandemic has caused lots of things to go out of balance and requires flexibility from instructors. You will not be penalized for missing class due to illness, family illness, or other Covid-19 related occurrences. If you need to miss class, let me know in advance if possible so that I can provide materials to help you stay in the loop.

Quizzes 25%

There will be multiple quizzes during the course of the semester. If you read and participate, you'll have no trouble with these. Make up quizzes will rarely, if ever, be given. In the online quiz system, remember you have unlimited attempts on each quiz. These quizzes are available in WesternOnline, and you have unlimited opportunities.

Midterm and Final Exam: 25% each= 50% total

Specifics on each exam will be provided prior to the administration of the exam. We will devote a substantial portion of course time to reviewing for the midterm and final. Make up exams will rarely, if ever, be given.

Gun Control (or other policy) Policy Memo: 10% Due on WesternOnline by

week 10. For this assignment, you will write a 2-3 page memo on some aspect of gun control. You may write in support or opposition of concealed handgun carry, magazine capacity limits, ammunition sales restrictions, universal gun training, revising the background check process, etc. If you'd like to choose another policy issue, just make sure to run it by me first and I'll likely give you a green light. Use the "How to write a policy memo" lecture as your starting point. More detailed instructions will be provided as the semester progresses.

Biography and Mock Interview 15% Due on Western Online

by Week 15.

Select one author of an excerpt from the course readings (e.g., Orwell, Kuhn, Etzioni, Bentham) and provide a 1-2 page explanation of his/her contributions to the field of public policy. Afterward, based on your research on this scholar and his/her written work, conduct an "interview" with this scholar asking at least 5 questions similar to the prompts listed below. Conclude your essay by reiterating the main contributions of this scholar and how his/her work has been influenced by, and influences new policy research/arguments/movements.

- (1) What is the most important consideration for a policy maker?
- (2) How do events since your writings were published affect your arguments/ideas? Is this what you would have predicted? What did we get right about your work? What did we fail to pay sufficient attention to?
- (3) Which of your contemporaries was most influential in your work? Which scholars did you build off of to write your Classic essay(s)?
**Check References List and "related articles/books" from Google Scholar.
- (4) How should policy makers manage expectations from stakeholders such as: elected officials, clientele, citizens, professional associations, and others? Whose demands take priority?
- (5) What recent (within the last decade) book or article uses your ideas most effectively to build new knowledge?
- (6) What bodies of theory in public policy build off of your work? With which scholars would you have debates or even tension?

Tips for Written Assignments

Please be clear in expressing your ideas. I do not accept "ipse dixit" arguments as justifications for theses. Whether you are using relevant literature in the field of PA

and/or personal interview citations, please support your statements! *Also, significant spelling/grammatical errors that make your paper difficult to understand will result in point deductions.* Print your paper and read it aloud to yourself or someone else before turning it in. In order to avoid these deductions, please PROOFREAD and spell-check your assignments before turning them in. For assistance with written assignments, WIU invites you to take advantage of the Writing Center. To make an appointment with a faculty/staff officer at the center, visit: www.wiu.edu/UWC/

Required Texts

Birkland, *An Introduction to the Policy Process*. Routledge (most recent edition is preferred; older editions will work)

Course Schedule: Please Note that the schedule contained in this syllabus is subject to change and/or revision at the discretion of the instructor. Please come to class so that

you may keep up with the activities of this course.

Additional reading assignments (e.g., Journal Articles, etc.) will be announced as the course progresses. Please make sure that you complete ALL readings before the class session in which they will be discussed. All Articles Listed on this Syllabus are available in assigned texts, on J-Stor, or On-line.

WEEK 1:

Monday 08/22-Friday 08/26

Introduction

Debating Policy

https://www.ted.com/talks/farah_nasser_the_power_of_intellectual_humility

WEEK 2

Monday 08/29-Friday 09/02

Defining Policy

Birkland, Chapter 1-2 Defining Public Policy

WEEK 3

09/05: LABOR DAY!!

Class meets 09/07-09/09

Policy as Art, Science, System

<https://www.eden-gallery.com/news/art-vs-science>

Jeremy Bentham, "On the Principle of Utility"

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/utilitarianism-history/>

David Easton, The Political System Under Stress

<https://www.politicalsciencenotes.com/articles/system-s-theory-according-to-david-easton/500>

http://online.sfsu.edu/sguo/Renmin/June2__system/Political%20S_ytem_Easton.pdf

Thomas S. Kuhn

The Nature and

Necessity of Scientific Revolutions (1970)

<https://www.nature.com/articles/484164a>

Birkland, Chapter 3 & 8

Listen:

<https://www.wpr.org/shows/looking-eleven-walks-expert-eyes>

WEEK 4

09/12-09/16

Rhetoric in Policy

Welcome To Hyperreality: Where The Physical And Virtual Worlds Converge

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/kianbakhtiari/2021/12/30/welcome-to-hyperreality-where-the-physical-and-virtual-worlds-converge/?sh=4ca8ff755028>

George Orwell “Politics and the English Language “

<https://www.orwellfoundation.com/the-orwell-foundation/orwell/essays-and-other-works/politics-and-the-english-language/>

Daniel J. Boorstin “The Image: A Guide to Pseudoevents in America”

<http://www.columbia.edu/itc/journalism/j6075/edit/boor.html>

Alternative Facts Do Exist: Beliefs, Lies, and Politics

<https://theconversation.com/alternative-facts-do-exist-beliefs-lies-and-politics-84692>

WEEK 5

09/19-09/23

Pluralism, Elitism, Historical Institutionalism in Policy

James Madison

The Federalist No. 10 (1787)

https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/fed10.asp

David Truman

The Governmental Process (1951)

https://adambrown.info/p/notes/truman_the_governmental_process

C. Wright Mills The Power Elite (1957)

<http://www.faculty.rsu.edu/users/f/felwell/www/Theorists/Essays/Mills2.htm>

Contemporary Examination of Robert A. Dahl's "Who Governs?"

https://whorulesamerica.ucsc.edu/local/new_haven.html

WEEK 6

09/26-09/30

Agenda Setting and Policy Leadership

Birkland, Chapter 6

Anthony Downs

Up and Down with Ecology-The Issue-Attention Cycle (1972)

https://fbaum.unc.edu/teaching/articles/Downs_Public_Interest_1972.pdf

John W. Kingdon

Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies (1995)

<https://academics.skidmore.edu/blogs/bobturner/files/2020/08/Kingdon-How-do-issues-get-on-the-public-agenda.pdf>

Charles A. Beard An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/23737552>

Gerald T. Gabris (1992) Strategic Planning in Municipal Government: A Tool for Expanding Cooperative Decision Making between

Elected and

Appointed Officials

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/3380807?seq=1>

WEEK 7

10/3-10/7

Decision-Making

Birkland, Chapter 10

Lipsky, "Street Level Bureaucracy"

[/https://repository.law.umich.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3857&context=mlr](https://repository.law.umich.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3857&context=mlr)

Charles E. Lindblom The Science of "Muddling Through" (1959)

<https://faculty.washington.edu/mccurdy/SciencePolicy/Lindblom%20Muddling%20Through.pdf>

Amitai Etzioni Mixed Scanning: A "Third" Approach to Decision Making
(1967)

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/973394>

WEEK 8

10/10-10/12

10/12: Midterm Exam!!

10/14: FALL BREAK!!!

WEEK 9 Legislative, Executive, and Judicial Roles in Policy

10/17-10/21

Birkland, Chapters 4&5

The EOP: An Historical Overview

<https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/98-606.pdf>

The Attitudinal Model

https://scholar.princeton.edu/sites/default/files/tpavone/files/segal_and_spaeth- the scotus the attitudinal_model_revisited.pdf

Spiller & Gely, Strategic Judicial Decisionmaking

<https://deliverypdf.ssrn.com/delivery.php?ID=829105006026087115091083102118113014019023066041063035095014028002120112024072078037029082091103113091120064037015003116086001090069100080028114077070027022089098012027027094004113087117071078008&EXT=pdf&INDEX=TRUE>

WEEK 10

10/24-10/28

Writing a Policy Memo

Gun Policy

Best Practices in Writing a Policy Memo

https://educationalequity.org/sites/default/files/documents/best_practices_-_policy_memo.pdf

Just Facts: Gun Policy

<http://www.justfacts.com/guncontrol.asp#general>

New “Gun Safety” Bill

<https://www.npr.org/2022/06/25/1107626030/biden-signs-gun-safety-law>

Supreme Court Ruling in New York State Rifle and Pistol Association v. Bruen

<https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2022/07/08/supreme-courts-gun-rights-decision-opens-state-restrictions>

WEEK 11

Implementation and Program Evaluation

10/31-11/04

Hardin, “The Tragedy of the Commons”

<https://www.econlib.org/library/Enc/TragedyoftheCommons.html>

Basic Guide to Program Evaluation

<https://managementhelp.org/evaluation/program-evaluation-guide.htm#anchor1585345>

Matland, Ambiguity Conflict Model of
Implementation

https://www.jstor.org/stable/1181674?seq=1#metadataname=info_tab_contents

WEEK 12

11/7-11/11

Economic Policy

Education Policy

<https://www.npr.org/2022/08/11/1116229743/inflation-reduction-act-questions-answered>

<https://www.marketwatch.com/story/top-fed-officials-say-u-s-interest-rates-to-keep-rising-until-high-inflation-eases-11659457477>

<http://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2015/08/13/430050765/five-big-ideas-that-don-t-work-in-education>

<https://www.edchoice.org/school-choice/types-of-school-choice/what-are-school-vouchers-2/>

WEEK 13

11/14-11/18

Healthcare Policy

Immigration Policy

<https://www.rand.org/health-care/key-topics/health-policy/in-depth.html>

“Sick Around the World” PBS:

<https://www.pbs.org/video/frontline-sick-around-the-world/>

“Coronavirus Pandemic” PBS:

<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/coronavirus-pandemic/>

<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2022/01/11/key-facts-about-u-s-immigration-policies-and-bidens-proposed-changes/>

<https://cis.org/Historical-Overview-Immigration-Policy>

WEEK 14

11/21-11/25: THANKSGIVING!!!

WEEK 15

11/28-12/2

Cannabis Policy

Interview Project Workshop

Governance Theories

MORE Act (US HOUSE, 2020)

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/3884>

Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act

https://www2.illinois.gov/IISNews/20242-Summary_of_HB_1438_The_Cannabis_Regulation

[and_Tax_Act.pdf](#)

Promise and Pitfalls 2 years in

<https://news.wttw.com/2022/04/21/more-2-years-after-illinois-legalized-recreational-marijuana-some-say-law-falls-short>

Tips for Conducting Research Interviews

<https://guides.lib.vt.edu/researchmethods/interviews>

“The Next Government of the United States”

<http://www.businessofgovernment.org/sites/default/files/Performanceinthe21stCent.pdf>

David Cameron, “The Next Age of Government”

https://www.ted.com/talks/david_cameron_the_next_age_of_government/transcript?language=en

Denhardt & Denhardt (2002): The New Public Service

<http://www.mcrhrdi.gov.in/91fc/coursematerial/management/4%20Serving%20rather%20than%20steering.pdf>

WEEK 16

12/5-12/9

FINAL EXAM REVIEW

Week 17

12/12

FINAL EXAM!!!

MONDAY 1pm