

POLS 520
American Public Policy
Spring, 2008
DuSable 252

Class Hours: Monday, 6:30-9:10
 Instructor: Heidi Koenig
 Office Hours: Monday 4:30-5:30 (252 DuSable) ;
 Wednesday 2:30-3:30,
 Thursday, 11:30-1:00
 or by appointment.
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REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:

- Michael E. Kraft and Scott Furlong. 2007. *Public Policy: Politics, Analysis, and Alternatives*, 2nd ed. Washington, D.C.:CQ Press.
- Christopher Borick, et al. 2004. *Classics in Public Policy*. Addison Wesley.
- Elaine Kamarck. 2007 *The End of Government...as we know it*.
- Assigned Articles (On Blackboard Course server)

RECOMMENDED (PhDs - buy these; MPAs buy if you want)

- David Braybrooke and Charles Lindblom. 1970. *A Strategy of Decision Making*, 2nd ed. New York: Free Press.
- Anthony Downs. 1965. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York: Harper Collins
- Michael Hill and Peter Hupe. 2003. *Implementing Public Policy*. Thousand Oaks, CA:Sage Publications
- Mark P. Petracca. 1992. *The Politics of Interests: Interest Groups Transformed*. Boulder, CO:Westview Press.
- Steven E. Rhoads. 1996. *The Economist's View of the World: Government, Markets, & Public Policy*. New York:Cambridge University Press.
- Paul A. Sabatier. 2007. *Theories of the Policy Process*, 2nd ed. Perseus Books.
- Deborah Stone. 2001. *Policy Paradox, revised edition*. W.W. Norton & Company.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this course is to provide an overview of the development of American public policy. The making of public policy will be examined from several different vantages: how a problem gets to the level at which it becomes a "policy issue"; how the process of public policy making may be understood analytically; and how a public policy originates, grows, and sometimes dies. Environmental policies will be examined in depth during the semester. By looking at these policies in detail it is to be hoped some understanding of the policy making process "in the real world" will be gained.

During this course you will be writing about public policy as well as reading about it. While the primary purpose of the course is to ensure that you have an opportunity to understand the policy making process, an additional purpose is to hone your writing skills. To that end, there will be only writing assignments. These assignments, and the grading criteria, are set out below.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Midterm	
Final	Presentations
Long paper	Attendance

MIDTERM, FINAL

The midterm and final examinations will consist of several short-answer questions and two long essays. Some level of choice will exist on the examination. The purpose of the examinations is to allow you to demonstrate your comprehension of the material covered in the readings and presented in class. Students will be expected to provide their own blue books.

PAPER

This will be a small group project.

Choose a policy topic. Briefly outline the range of the policy and identify a particular element of interest. (no more than 4-5 pages). Then analyze the case, using *two* theoretical perspectives discussed in this course. You could contrast the importance of interest group influence versus public participation, for example. Discuss whether the perspectives explain the element of the particular public policy you have decided to study. Would you consider this to be a good empirical test of the theory? Why or why not? If this is not a good empirical test of the theory, how would you improve on it to make such a test?

At the end of the semester, each small group will lead a class session (with the aid of the professor!) on the policy selected. More will be said about this during the second class.

PRESENTATIONS

Half way through the semester, the small groups of students will be required to lead a brief discussion about their policy. The purpose of this discussion is twofold: first, the group must be proceeding in their research; and second, the group dynamics of presentation should be worked out before the final segment of the course. The discussion will be incorporated into the class discussion for that evening, but the beginning of the class is the responsibility of the groups presenting that night.

ATTENDANCE/MATERIAL COVERED

Attendance will be taken in class. Tardiness is considered an absence. The instructor reserves the right to alter the grade of students based on class attendance and participation. The professor reserves the right to alter the syllabus at any time during the semester.

GRADES

Grades will be determined in the following manner:

Participation	50 points
Midterm examination	200 points
Paper	300 points
Class discussion of topic	100 points
Final	250 points
Class Presentation	<u>100 points</u>
Total	1000 points

A=900-1000 points, B=800-899 points, C=700-799 points, D=600-699 points

NOTE: IF YOU HAVEN'T BOUGHT THE PhD BOOKS, DON'T WORRY ABOUT READING THEM. JUST PREPARE TO BE AMAZED BY THE AMOUNT OF INFORMATION PhD STUDENTS HAVE IN THEIR HEADS!!

COURSE OUTLINE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS:

WEEK	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
Jan. 14	1. Introduction to class, Basic concepts of PA/PP	
Jan. 21	2. What is public policy?	BB: First, Second K&F: Chapter One
Jan. 28	3. Government and Economics	K&F: Chapters Two, Seven S,L,&B: Chapters One, Five
Feb. 4	4.	
Feb. 11	5. Management of Public Policy	Kamarck, Chapters 1 - 4
Feb. 18	6. Theories of Public Policy	K&F: Chapter Three S,L,&B: Chapters Two, Four
Feb. 25	7.	
March 3	8. Midterm Examination	
March 10	9. Spring Break	
March 17	10. Analyzing Public Policy	K&F: Chapters 4,5,6 S,L,&B: Chapters 6, 9,3 (lightly)
March 24	11. Policy Topics	
March 31	12.	
April 7	13.	
April 14	14.	
April 21	15.	
April 28	16. Presentations	

FINAL EXAM MONDAY, MAY 5, 6:00-8:30