

PUBLIC POLICY

G53.2371

Fall 2004

Tuesdays, 6:20-8:20 PM

726 Broadway, room 700

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Hours: Tues 3-5 PM

or by appointment

This is an advanced course on policymaking in the American federal government. Students are presumed to have some prior background in public policy, either through employment or prior study. This course is aimed mainly at graduate students planning to do policy research for their Masters projects or Ph.D. dissertations.

I have two objectives. The first is to teach, or to review, leading theories of policy analysis and the policymaking process at an advanced level. The second is to teach an approach to public policy research that connects policy analysis with political analysis. In the policy literature, these subjects are usually separate. But in my conception, one first develops a position about how best to solve some major public problem, on the merits, and then *goes on* to analyze why actual policy falls short of that ideal. A tension is expected between desirable policies and political and institutional constraints. Each is understood and critiqued in terms of the other. In this way, a policy perspective can yield new insights into the nature of the regime.

The readings including leading examples of policy research that make this connection. Students will write papers developing their own research topics.

Readings

The course will use these texts, in about this order. All are on sale at the book store and also on reserve at Bobst. Buy as many as you are able:

Michael Howlett and M. Ramesh, Studying Public Policy: Policy Cycles and Policy Subsystems, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2003).

Michael C. Munger, Analyzing Policy: Choices, Conflicts, and Practices (New York: Norton, 2000).

Deborah Stone, Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making, revised ed. (New York: Norton, 2002).

John W. Kingdon, Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies, 2nd ed. (New York: Longman, 2003).

Graham T. Allison and Philip Zelikow, Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis, 2nd ed. (New York: Addison Wesley Longman, 1999).

Allen Schick, with the assistance of Felix LoStracco, The Federal Budget: Politics, Policy, Process, revised ed. (Washington, DC: Brookings, 2000).

Jonathan Oberlander, The Political Life of Medicare (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

Derek Bok, The Trouble With Government (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).

Lawrence M. Mead, Government Matters: Welfare Reform in Wisconsin (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

In addition, for students with a limited background in federal institutions and policy processes, I recommend:

James E. Anderson, Public Policymaking: An Introduction, 5th ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2003).

In the course schedule below, required assignments come mostly from the above books. Some articles and selections are also assigned. These items will be on reserve at Bobst, and a copy of them may also be purchased at New University Copy and Graphics, 11 Waverly Place, phone 212-473-7369. The recommended items are not on reserve or on sale, but most of them can be found at Bobst.

Requirements

There will be a midterm and final examinations, which will each count 20 percent of the grade. There will also be a paper of about 20 pages, due at the end of the course, in which students work out a study design for an actual research project in public policy. The assignment will be distributed later. This paper will count 40 percent of the grade. The remaining 20 percent will be given for participation in class.

Schedule

The following are the dates of each session, with the subject and readings for each. Readings *must* be completed before class to profit from the discussion and contribute to it:

Sept. 7, Introduction: The Policy Approach: The development of the policy field. An approach to policy research stressing both policy analysis and political analysis. Contrast to other approaches:

Required:

Howlett and Ramesh, ch. 1.

Lawrence M. Mead, "Public Policy: Vision, Potential, Limits," Policy Currents (newsletter of the Public Policy Section of the APSA), February 1997: 1-4.

Dennis J. Palumbo, "Bucking the Tide: Policy Studies in Political Science, 1978-1988," in Policy Studies Review Annual, Volume 10: Advances in Policy Studies Since 1950, ed. William N. Dunn and Rita Mae Kelly (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1992), ch. 2

Recommended:

Paul Sabatier, "Political Science and Public Policy," PS, vol. 24, no. 2 (June 1991), pp. 144-7.

Yehezkel Dror, Public Policymaking Reexamined (Scranton, PA: Chandler, 1968), chs. 1-2, 14.

William T. Gormley, Jr., "Institutional Policy Analysis: A Critical Review," Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, vol. 6, no. 2 (Winter 1987), pp. 153-69.

Sept. 14, The Economic Paradigm 1: How economists understand the goals of government, and criticisms of this approach.

Required:

Howlett and Ramesh, Studying Public Policy, ch. 2.

Munger, Analyzing Policy, chs. 2-4, 8, 12.

Stone, Policy Paradox, chs. 1-5.

Recommended:

Charles W. Anderson, "The Place of Principles in Policy Analysis," American Political Science Review, vol. 73, no. 3 (September 1979), pp. 711-23.

Ronald Coase, "The Problem of Social Cost," Journal of Law and Economics, vol. 3, no. 1 (1960), pp. 1-44.

Richard O. Zerbe, Jr., and Howard E. McCurdy, "The Failure of Market Failure," Journal of Policy Analysis and Management 18, no. 4 (Fall 1999): 558-78.

Sept. 21, The Economic Paradigm 2: The economic approach to the optimization of policy, and criticisms of it:

Required:

Howlett and Ramesh, Studying Public Policy, chs. 4, 7.

Munger, Analyzing Policy, chs. 1, 9-11.

Stone, Policy Paradox, introduction, chs. 7-8, 10-14.

Recommended:

Amitai Etzioni, "Mixed Scanning: A 'Third' Approach to Decision-Making," Public Administration Review, vol. 27 (1967), pp. 385-92.

John Forester, "Bounded Rationality and the Politics of Muddling Through," Public Administration Review, vol. 44 (1984), pp. 23-30.

Charles E. Lindblom, "The Science of 'Muddling Through'," Public Administration Review, vol. 19, no. 2 (Spring 1959), pp. 79-88.

Aaron Wildavsky, Speaking Truth to Power: The Art and Craft of Policy Analysis (Boston: Little, Brown, 1979), pp. 1-25, 41-85.

Sept. 28, The Policy Process: The stage model of policymaking, and recent criticisms of it. The critical role of political appointees. Implementation and evaluation.

Required:

Howlett and Ramesh, Studying Public Policy, chs. 3, 5-6, 8-11.

Kingdon, Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policy, chs.1-2, 4-5, 7, 10.

Recommended

Malcolm Goggin, Ann O'M. Bowman, James P. Lester, and Laurence J. O'Toole, Jr., Implementation Theory and Practice: Toward a Third Generation (New York: HarperCollins, 1990), introduction, ch. 1.

Paul A. Sabatier, "The Need for Better Theories," in Theories of the Policy Process, ed. Paul A. Sabatier (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1999), chap. 1.

Oct. 5, Policy Advocacy: How policy entrepreneurs form and sell policy solutions, the most global form of policy analysis. Experts as entrepreneurs. The case of airline deregulation.

Required:

Munger, ch. 5.

Kingdon, Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies, chs. 3, 6, 8.

Paul A. Sabatier and Hank C. Jenkins-Smith, "The Advocacy Coalition Framework: An Assessment," in Theories of the Policy Process, ed. Paul A. Sabatier (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1999), ch. 6.

Stephen Breyer, Regulation and its Reform (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), ch. 16.

Recommended:

Hugh Heclo, "Issue Networks and the Executive Establishment," in The New American Political System, ed. Anthony King (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1978), ch. 3.

Richard R. Nelson, The Moon and the Ghetto, New York: Norton, 1977; chs. 1-3.

Oct. 12, The Politics of Policy: Lowi's types of policy and other approaches to understanding the politics aroused by policymaking. The question of how easily interests can mobilize:

Required:

Stone, Policy Paradox, ch. 9.

Theodore J. Lowi, "American Business, Public Policy, Case Studies, and Political Theory," World Politics, vol. 16 (July 1964), pp. 677-715.

James Q. Wilson and John J. DiIulio, Jr., American Government, 6th Ed. (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath, 1995), ch. 15.

Mancur Olson, The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), introduction, ch. 1.

James Q. Wilson, Political Organizations (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), pp. vii-xxiv.

Recommended

Theodore J. Lowi, "Four Systems of Policy, Politics, and Choice," Public Administration Review, vol. 32, no. 4 (July/Aug. 1972), pp. 298-310.

George D. Greenberg et al., "Developing Public Policy Theory: Perspectives from Empirical Research," American Political Science Review, vol. 71, no. 4 (Dec. 1977), pp. 1532-43.

Oct. 19, Bureaucracy: The powerful influence of organization on policymaking:

Required:

Allison and Zelikow, Essence of Decision, chs. 1-7.

Michael D. Cohen, James G. March, and Johan P. Olsen, "A Garbage Can Model of Organizational Choice," Administrative Science Quarterly, vol. 17 (March 1972), pp. 1-25.

Recommended:

Jonathan Bendor and Thomas H. Hammond, "Rethinking Allison's Models," American Political Science Review, vol. 86, no. 2 (June 1992), pp. 301-22.

James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, "The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in Political Life," American Political Science Review 78 (1984): 734-49.

Oct. 26, Midterm examination

Nov. 2, Budgeting: The evolution of the federal budget process. The federal deficit problem and the politics thereof. Recent developments.

Required:

Schick, Federal Budget, chs. 2-6, 9, 11.

Office of Management and Budget, "Budget System and Concepts," Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2005: Analytical Perspectives (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2004), pp. 375-94.

Recommended:

Anthony Downs, "Why the Government Budget is Too Small in a Democracy," World Politics, vol. 12 (1960), pp. 541-63.

V.O. Key, Jr., "The Lack of a Budgetary Theory," American Political Science Review, vol. 34, no. 6 (December 1940), pp. 1137-44.

Allan H. Meltzer and Scott F. Richard, "Why Government Grows (and Grows) in a Democracy," The Public Interest, no. 52 (Summer 1978), pp. 111-18.

Nov. 9, Medicare: The health policy dilemma and the struggle to reform the nation's most intractable entitlement.

Required:

Oberlander, Political Life of Medicare, chs. 2-3, 5-7.

Joseph R. Antos and Linda Bilheimer, "The Bumpy Road to Reform," in Medicare in the Twenty-first Century: Seeking Fair and Efficient Reform, ed. Robert B. Helms (Washington, DC: AEI Press, 1999), ch. 2.

Recommended:

Henry J. Aaron and Robert D. Reischauer, "The Medicare Reform Debate: What Is the Next Step?" Health Affairs 14, no. 4 (Winter 1995): 8-30.

Lawrence M. Mead, "Health Policy: The Need for Governance," Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 434 (November 1977): 39-57.

Nov. 16, Governmental Performance: How to improve the performance of the federal government in several areas of domestic policy.

Required:

Bok, The Trouble with Government, introduction, chs. 1, 3-7, 11-13.

Recommended:

Derek Bok, The State of the Nation: Government and the Quest for a Better Society, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996.

Harold L. Wilensky, Rich Democracies: Political Economy, Public Policy, and Performance (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

Nov. 23, Welfare Reform: The critical role of governmental capacity in the making of reform in Wisconsin and the nation. Methodological issues raised by this research.

Required:

Mead, Government Matters, chs. 1-3, 5-7, 9, 11.

Lawrence M. Mead, "Policy Research: The Field Dimension," paper presented at the conference of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL, April 15, 2004.

Recommended:

Lawrence M. Mead, ed., The New Paternalism: Supervisory Approaches to Poverty (Washington, DC: Brookings, 1997), chs. 1-2.

Jason DeParle, American Dream: Three Women, Ten Kids, and the Nation's Drive to End Welfare (New York: Viking, 2004).

Nov. 30, Student Presentations: members of the class will present summaries of their papers on the definition of public policy research topics.

Dec. 7, Student Presentations: members of the class will present summaries of their papers on the definition of public policy research topics.

Dec. 21, Final examination, 6:20-8:20 PM, 726 Broadway, room 700.

Papers due no later than the final exam.