MPP 507: 2nd Year Professional Seminar
Fall 2013: Wednesday 12:00-12:50

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Course Objectives

This course is designed to re-familiarize you with the full range of policy and theoretical frameworks for the development and implementation of appropriate policies in a variety of settings. Our focus will be on finding ways for each of you to apply a relevant policy or theoretical framework to your own work that is leading to the MPP essay. We will also be planning for your successful completion of the MPP program.

Learning Outcomes

As a result of fully participating in this course you will:

1. Be able to apply at least one theoretical framework to your own work to help you formulate appropriate recommendations resulting from your project. This will be assessed through a short paper and class discussion about your work and how you are applying a specific policy framework to the analysis.
2. Have the ability to communicate with others regarding policy in general and with your project's policy recommendations in particular. This will be assessed through your participation in class, review and critique of others' work, presentation of your own ideas, and a sample powerpoint slide.
3. Have fun. This will be assessed through the number of times you laugh and smile during the seminar!

Course Readings

We will be using to the text from PS 571; additional readings may be posted on Blackboard throughout the term.

- Sabatier, Paul, Editor. 2007. *Theories of the Policy Process*. Cambridge, MA: Westview Press.

Course Structure

We will begin by meeting with the first year students; be ready to share all the wisdom you've gained during your first year and be available to talk with, help, and guide these students as necessary during the year. When we come together the second week of the term, we will begin with a short conversation on thinking theoretically. This will be followed by a discussion and lab for developing graduation timelines and conceptual models. Week three we will have a short course on compelling presentations.

During the remaining sessions, we will focus on the application of theories and frameworks to your specific project. We will begin each class with a quick refresher on a specific framework, applying the framework to a few specific projects. If you have not already identified a topic for your essay, now is the time. Work closely with your major advisor and committee members this term to nail down the subject and scope of your essay. It is always possible (and very typical) to modify your essay as you move through the analysis – you'll find better or tighter questions, new ideas, etc. as you work through this term.

Course Requirements and Evaluation

Attendance is required for all classes. If you must miss a session, please check in with the instructor prior to class to determine a way to provide feedback to the presenters. No late assignments are accepted without ***prior*** permission from the instructor.

Completion Timeline (15%): Create a timeline for completing your MPP program, with a set of goals designed to have you defend your thesis and graduate at your desired time. It will be wise for you to discuss this timeline with your Major Advisor to ensure that it is feasible. You can use the provided format or develop one of your own.

Case study (25%): There are two roles for the case study assignment: presenter and participant. As a ***presenter***, you will describe to a small group how your assigned policy framework will guide the research of your proposed essay project (i.e., data collection and analysis, and interpretation of data). You will do only one presentation this term. Before your presentation, prepare a one-page description of how you propose applying the policy framework to your project; if appropriate, describe why this framework is totally inappropriate to your framework. You may take notes on this page as you discuss your project with the small group. As a ***participant***, you will provide oral and written ideas to the presenter about ways to improve application of the policy framework. You will be a participant for four or five case presentations (depending on the schedule). Assignments for case study framework assignments will be made prior to week 3. (A revised syllabus will be distributed with assignments at that time.) It is the responsibility of both presenters and participants to read the relevant chapter in Sabatier and any other relevant materials prior to each class session to ensure you are knowledgeable about the framework under discussion. See notes below for more details about the case studies.

You can earn up to 15 points as a presenter; this will be determined by your one-page description and comments provided by participants in your group.

You can earn up to 10 points as a participant, two points each time you provide feedback to a presenter. This will be determined by the comment sheets you turn in at the end of each class where a policy framework is discussed.

Presentation (25%): Create one slide that depicts your theoretical or policy framework as it is applied to your project. This should use all the tips we learn through the short course on presentations to make this as memorable and understandable as possible. The slide could depict a conceptual model, a metaphor, visuals of some kind, or whatever you think is the best possible presentation of your theoretical or policy framework. You will need some kind of format that can be handed in; for most formats this isn't difficult; but if you use a format that is problematic, please see me about how to provide a viewable format.

Proposed Abstract for your Essay (35%): Working with your major advisor, develop an abstract of your proposed project: statement of the problem, data collection and analysis methods, and theoretical framework you will use to analyze the data. ***This abstract must be signed by your major advisor and all committee members to be complete.***

Preparing your case study:

Briefly describe your proposed project – some background details, any ideas about methods, etc. Also, think about what kind of information is needed to use the assigned theoretical approach (e.g., network, advocacy coalition, etc.) and be able to provide some of that information as well. The presentation of the case will be oral to a small group of participants – no powerpoint slides – but be ready to answer lots of questions about your case. You don't have to be an expert in the assigned theoretical approach, just be thinking about how your case might be analyzed using the framework.

Analyzing the case studies:

We will begin with a quick review of the policy framework of the week and then begin on the first case. As we go through the review, begin jotting down ideas and questions that you think are critical in using the framework to analyze a policy issue. As you listen to each case, see if those questions can be answered with this case – what else might be needed to use the framework? Is the policy issue in the

right stage of maturity to benefit from the policy framework analysis? You will be providing written feedback to presenters on their cases and the use of the policy framework.

Schedule

Week/Date	Topic/Case Studies/Reading	Responsibility
1 10/02/13	Intro and welcome to first year MPP students	Meet in the Snell 1-06 with 1st year students. Brent Steel and Philipp Kneiss will meet with the larger group.
2 10/09/13	Thinking theoretically, creating conceptual models, and developing a timeline for completion	
3 10/16/13	Institutional Rational Choice (Chapter 2 in Sabatier)	Presenters: **Due: Conceptual model of proposed project**
4 10/23/13	Short course on compelling presentations	**Kirsten Winters**
5 10/30/13	Multiple Streams Framework (Chapter 3 in Sabatier)	**Due: Completion timeline** **Presenters:**
6 11/06/13	Social Construction and Policy Design (Chapter 4 in Sabatier; Schneider and Ingram article on Blackboard)	**Presenters:**
7 11/13/13	Advocacy Coalition Framework (Chapter 7 in Sabatier)	**Presenters:**
8 11/20/13	The Network Approach (Chapter 5 in Sabatier)	**Presenters:**
9 11/27/13	Thanksgiving Week No Class	
10 12/04/13	Presentations	**Due: Have your slide ready to display on jumpdrive or internet connection; turn in a printed copy of your slide** **Due: Signed abstract form**