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Master of Public Policy Program
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Class: Tuesday at 6:00 pm, 108 Gilkey Hall
Office Hours: TR 1100-1200 or before/after class [Gilkey Hall 311]

INTRODUCTION

This course examines approaches to the study of public policy rather than the content of public policy. Although there will be discussion of the content of policy, that content will be incidental to the discussion of public policy theory. Some policy courses examine public policy content, for example environmental or economic policy. Among other policy courses there are two basic approaches: One, not used here, is policy analysis, in which the intent is to provide tools to prepare students to formulate, implement, evaluate, or in other ways to be active participants in developing and conducting policy. The other, the focus of this course, examines public policy as an intellectual exercise, to study why and how policy is developed, applied, evaluated, and generally conducted as it is and how policies develop over time. The intent of this approach is to prepare students to be careful and creative observers of policy rather than participants in policy development, though it helps prepare students to participate.

Among the topics to be considered in this course are approaches to the study of the policy process; theoretical orientations toward such policy elements as policy tools (regulation and others, for example) and policy typologies; normative (value) and empirical issues of public policy; the role of information and values in the policy process; and others. As noted, this is not a course in policy analysis; that is, it does not teach such methods as cost-benefit analysis, though it does examine the role of such methods in the policy process. The course focuses primarily on the United States but it includes some examination of US policy in comparison to other advanced industrial nations.

This course is required for students in the Master of Public Policy (MPP) program, but also should be of interest to graduate students in other programs interested in the study of public policy.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: The course seeks to develop in students

- A sense of alternative approaches to the examination of public policy and of their respective strengths and limits
- Awareness of the role of interests, ideas, knowledge, uncertainties, and other factors in oneself and in others in relation to the development and consideration of public policy

- Awareness of factors that affect whether and how topics become problems and get on the agendas of government for consideration
- A sense of approaches toward and tools of policy formulation and policy enactment, including the importance of language and other political elements that affect public and elite perceptions and actions
- Recognition of the importance of policy application (implementation, and its sub-component, budgeting) and awareness of factors that affect the relative success of implementation of policy decisions
- Awareness of the complexity of policy evaluation in terms of mixes of values, interests, competing orientations, and other factors, and of the ubiquity and effect of the evaluation of policies
- A sense of overall trends in development of policy in advanced industrial nations, primarily the United States
- Conceptual clarity in evaluating overall policy development, drawing on various approaches that attempt to account for those developments
- The ability to synthesize all these to a specific area of public policy development
- Enhanced ability to explore policy issues and to present the results of those explorations clearly, concisely, and in compelling form in written and oral communication.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:

Seven Response Papers (75 points each), a policy theory paper (300 points), class participation (100 points), and class discussion leader (50 points) are required. The grade distribution will be as follows:

Letter Grade	Percent of points possible
A	[95-100%]
A-	[90-94%]
B+	[87-89%]
B	[83-86%]
B-	[80-82%]
C+	[77-79%]
C	[73-76%]
C-	[70-72%]
D+	[67-69%]
D	[63-66%]
D-	[60-62%]
F	[0-59%]

COURSE READING:

All books are available through the OSU Book Store. You also can purchase books from Amazon or Barnes & Noble, via the web (see below). Most of the course books are available in the OSU or public libraries. Some readings are required from various web sites.

- Birkland, An Introduction to the Policy Process (M. E. Sharpe, 2001); ISBN 0-7656-0418-3
- Gosling, Understanding, Informing, and Appraising Public Policy (Pearson Longman, 2004); ISBN 0-321-07845-4A
- Howlett and Ramesh, Studying Public Policy: Policy Cycles and Policy Subsystems (Oxford, 2003); ISBN 0-19-541794-1
- Stone, Policy Paradox: The Art of Policy Decisions Making, rev. 3rd ed. (Norton, 2002); ISBN 0-393-97625-4

COURSE TOPICS AND ORGANIZATION:

The main course topics and the overall course organization are:

- Issues and approaches in studying public policyWeek 1
- The context and participants of American public policyWeek 2
    - Levels of analysis
    - Social-economic, political, cultural-ideological, international, and historical contexts
    - Participants in public policy
- How and why some topics get on the government policy agenda and others do not (agenda setting)Week 3
- How policy is developed, applied, and evaluated (using policy process stages as an organizing framework)
    - Policy DevelopmentWeeks 4-6
    - Individual choicesWeeks 4-6
    - Choices in and by organizationsWeeks 4-6
    - Policy Implementation and BudgetingWeek 7
    - Policy EvaluationWeek 8
- Examining Long-Term Policy TrendsWeek 9
- How do we best account for these aspects of public policy: Policy ModelsWeeks 9-10
    - Individual choices
    - Societal choices

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

- On all graded assignments, do **not** write your *name*. Instead, in the upper right corner of the first page indicate your ID number, the assignment name, and the date you are submitting it.
- I prefer that you type **single-spaced**, with a line between paragraphs, with 1-inch margins on all sides.
- Do **not** use a **cover** (plastic or similar) on any written assignment.
- Guidelines for *paper length* are indicated below for response papers and policy theory paper. These are approximate and are estimates of what might be required to respond adequately to the elements of the assignment. Concise responses are graded more highly than longer, less clearly written responses.
- Each paper should be carefully written and proof read. I suggest that you use a spell *and* grammar checker.

- *Citations* to *course readings* should use simply the author and *page number(s)*, in parentheses after using that material (quotation, paraphrase, or any other use). You need not list these in any citations listing at the end.
- *Citations* of non-course material should be complete: Author, Title, edition if 2nd or later (City: Publisher, year) or complete address from web sites used, either using footnotes or parenthetical references and citations at end.
- Number the pages on all assignments, for ease in my commenting and to be sure pages are in correct order.

COURSE POLICY

- **Late assignments** will be penalized 5 points each day late. This policy will be **strictly** enforced. By definition, "late" means any assignment submitted after the scheduled class period.
- Extra credit will not be allowed in this course.
- All OSU academic regulations will be followed in this course. Academic regulations are available at: http://www.orst.edu/dept/clasked/acareg.htm . This includes the university policy concerning incompletes: "When a requirement of a course has not been completed for reasons acceptable to the instructor and the rest of the academic work is passing, a report of I may be made and additional time granted. The I is only granted at the discretion of the instructor.
- You are expected to do all required reading and participate in all course requirements.
- Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated in this course. Engaging in such behaviors will result in a failing course grade. You are to do **ALL** of your own work. Plagiarism is defined as representing (and using) another person's ideas, writings, and work as one's own. Appropriate citation must be used for all materials incorporated into your work.
- Proper spelling, grammar, and citation should be used in all assignments.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The following criteria will be used for evaluating written assignments and exams:
[1=Poor; 2=Average; 3=Good; 4=Excellent]

1. **COMMITMENT** -did you cover all relevant materials/questions?
2. **AMBITION** -did you take each issue to task?
3. **ENGAGEMENT** -did you make connections between issues?
4. **CLARITY** -was the work readable and well organized?
5. **READINGS/COURSE MATERIAL** S-did you use appropriate reading and other course materials in your work?
6. **COMPARISON** -in general, how did your work compare to the rest of the class?
7. **DIRECTIONS** -a "no brainer" here. Did you follow directions?

RESPONSE PAPERS

Seven response papers (RPs) are required (75 points each). Length expectations will be discussed in class, but a normal maximum would be 5 pages. Each response paper is to examine course materials since the previous RP and is to do the following:

1. Place the topic(s) of those readings in the overall context of policy theory, that is, what these readings are addressing in terms of overall policy theory.
2. Summarize the main points and conclusions of each reading (it probably will be easiest to summarize each assigned chapter separately, unless several chapters are closely related, e.g., in Stone).
3. If there are readings from multiple sources, compare and contrast the readings in terms of approaches, themes, conclusions, evidence, and overall similarities and differences.

State your evaluations of the strengths and limits of the readings and what you believe are remaining uncertainties or gaps.

POLICY THEORY PAPER

The major project in the course is a policy theory paper in which you apply course materials to a policy area, which could include the four topics below, OR a topic relevant to your own interests and degree track (e.g., ocean policy, forest policy, etc.). Length expectations will be discussed in class. The paper is worth a maximum of 300 points. You may select **one** of the four policy topics from Gosling, Understanding, Informing, and Appraising Public Policy, pp 122-134 (chapter 9 also will be useful for context in selecting among these; you may also select your own policy topic as well):

- President Bush tax cuts 2001 (also should examine his 2003 tax cuts, probably in less detail)
- No Child Left Behind education policy
- Clinton 1993-1994 comprehensive health care reform proposals
- Recent and on-going Social Security policy issues.

For the one you select apply the various components of the course to analysis of that policy. The first two were adopted and have been put into place, so your focus is examining the emergence, development, application, current evaluation, and possible directions of change of those proposals. The third Clinton health proposals were not adopted, so the main task is to examine the development and then non-adoption of the proposals and also to consider how the issues raised might again emerge and lead to new policy development. The fourth Social Security is an on-going issue, with several specific policy developments having occurred in the past, so the task is to analyze a topic that continues to develop and to analyze reasons for its development and likely directions of change.

Your analysis should include the following components. In each case it is essential that you draw on and cite relevant course and other materials:

- Introduce the topic and the issues raised: background, a quick overview of what has happened (e.g., on the agenda, passed, being implemented; or put on agenda but failed to pass), and what the current status is.
- Examine the emergence of that topic as an issue, that is, agenda setting, including relating it to interests and ideas of important political participants. In addition, consider groups, if any, who might logically have been participants but who appear not to have been involved and examine reasons for non-involvement.

- Policy development and adoption or non-adoption. Among the topics you should consider are the roles of various groups and individuals, the likely role of such analytic methods as cost-benefit-analysis and other methods discussed as part of policy development.
- Policy implementation—if the policy was adopted—and examination of implementation successes and limits. Obviously this can not be applied to policies that were not adopted.
- Policy evaluation, whether or not the policy was adopted. If adopted, what evaluations and adjustments; if not adopted, what evaluation of the continuing problems addressed by the proposals
- An overall analysis of that policy area in terms of the themes, issues, and approaches developed in the course. What approaches examined in the course best account for developments in that policy topic and why?

DISCUSSION LEADER

At least once during the quarter, beginning week 2, each student will lead or co-lead course discussion about core elements of the reading and other class material for that day. Depending on the number of students in the course, one student will present or two students will co-lead. The dates and topics for each student will be decided during the first class period. Discussion leader is a maximum of 50 course points.

Each discussion leader writes a 1-2 page abstract of the reading for that day. Turn it in to me sufficiently early that day so that I can make photocopies to distribute. The abstract should do the following: first, name the reading (author, title, etc.), identify the main point of the reading, suggest how it relates to course themes and orientations and why it fits the topic of the class for which it was assigned; second, summarize the core points of the author(s). The abstract might include as an extra page one or more tables or figures from the reading if it summarizes or in other ways is particularly important.

PARTICIPATION

Students are expected to participate regularly in the course, showing they have come prepared to discuss the topics of the day by having read and thought about the assigned materials. Course participation, including in-class writing, is a maximum of 100 points of the course grade. Because participation is central and requires, at minimum, attendance, attendance will be recorded, but participation in course discussion is the central criterion.

TOPIC AND READING SCHEDULE

This lists reading assignments and summarizes due dates for the various course requirements. The course books have different perspectives therefore different uses in the course:

- Gosling, *Understanding, Informing, and Appraising Public Policy:* This provides a quick overview of many core elements of the course and prepares for additional reading; for this reason, I usually list it as the first reading for particular topics. The book also provides the introduction to policy topics to be used for the policy theory paper.
- Stone, *Policy Paradox:* She develops some core topics, especially policy goals and tools, in more detail and with more illustrative material than other course books. Read for basic

concepts, not details. She includes one or two tables in most chapters as excellent summaries after you have read the chapter. I assign this in quite large chunks during weeks 4 and 5, so I have suggested spreading out reading during earlier weeks.

- Birkland, *An Introduction to the Policy Process:* This provides a useful introductory discussion of main elements of the course, including the various stages of policy.
- Howlett and Ramesh, *Studying Public Policy:* This book is the most sophisticated of the books. It emphasizes theoretical issues drawing on comparative (US and non-US) elements and provides more depth.

Issues and Approaches to the Study of Public Policy

WEEK 1:
Jan 4

- Stone, Policy Paradox, Preface, Introduction, and ch 1 (about 40 pages; begin reading Part II; as noted above, one or two tables in each chapter are excellent summaries; you might photocopy them and add notes)
- Birkland, Introduction to the Policy Process, Preface and ch 1
- Gosling, Understanding, Informing, and Appraising Public Policy, Preface and ch 1
- Howlett and Ramesh, Studying Public Policy, ch 1-2
- Handout, Classical Macro Models of Policy

The Context and Participants in American Public Policy

WEEK 2:
Jan 11

- Stone, Policy Paradox, begin reading Parts II and III (see classes 4 and 5)
- Birkland, Introduction to the Policy Process, ch 2-4 and Appendix and skim Glossary and References
- Gosling, Understanding, Informing, and Appraising Public Policy, ch 2 and 4; read ch 8 to select a policy topic
- Howlett and Ramesh, Studying Public Policy, ch 3

Due: Response Paper 1 (**this RP is required**)
Discussion leader: Eriks
Political Power and Agenda Setting

WEEK 3:
Jan 18

- Stone, Policy Paradox, continue reading Part III and begin Part IV to end (see classes 4 and 5)
- Birkland, Introduction to the Policy Process, ch 5 and 6
- Gosling, Understanding, Informing, and Appraising Public Policy, ch 3
- Howlett and Ramesh, Studying Public Policy, skim ch 4 and read ch 5

Due: Initial Policy Theory Paper statement
Discussion leader: David
Policy Development I: Participants and Goals

WEEK 4:
Jan 25

- Stone, Policy Paradox, Part II, ch 2-5 (about 100 pages)
- Gosling, Understanding, Informing, and Appraising Public Policy, ch 5

- Birkland, Introduction to the Policy Process, review ch 3 and 4
- Howlett and Ramesh, Studying Public Policy, ch 6

Discussion leader: Alex

Policy Development II: Problems and Solutions (Tools)

WEEK 5:
Feb 1

- Stone, Policy Paradox, Part III, ch 6-10 (about 100 pages) and Part IV-end, ch 11-end (about 155 pages)
- Birkland, Introduction to the Policy Process, ch 7
- Howlett and Ramesh, Studying Public Policy, re-read ch 4

***This will be a blackboard-based class (discussion) while Prof Steel is in Washington, DC. More info to come.
Discussion leader: Jay via Blackboard!

Policy Development III: Political Feasibility and Explaining Policy Development

WEEK 6:
Feb 8

- Gosling, Understanding, Informing, and Appraising Public Policy, ch 6
- Birkland, Introduction to the Policy Process, ch 9?
- Howlett and Ramesh, Studying Public Policy, ch 7
- Stone, Policy Paradox, review ch 10

Discussion leader: Cliff

Policy Implementation

WEEK 7:
Feb 15

- Gosling, Understanding, Informing, and Appraising Public Policy, ch 7
- Birkland, Introduction to the Policy Process, ch 8 and 9
- Howlett and Ramesh, Studying Public Policy, ch 9

Discussion leader: Melissa

Policy Evaluation and Adjustment

WEEK 8:
Feb 22

- Gosling, Understanding, Informing, and Appraising Public Policy, review ch 7
- Howlett and Ramesh, Studying Public Policy, ch 9
- Stone, Policy Paradox, review ch 2-5

Discussion leader: Samuel

Examining and Explaining Long-Term Policy Trends and Re-consideration of Policy Models and Approaches

WEEK 9:
March 1

- Gosling, Understanding, Informing, and Appraising Public Policy, ch 9 and review ch 6
- Birkland, Introduction to the Policy Process, ch 9

- Howlett and Ramesh, Studying Public Policy, ch 10 and 11

Discussion leader: Josie

WEEK 10: March 8	**Student Presentations** Presentations of Summary of Results of Policy Theory Papers **Last Day to Submit Rough Drafts of Policy Theory paper**
Finals Week	Due: Policy Theory PaperMarch 13 by MIDNIGHT via email attachment.

POLICY-RELATED WEB SITES

In doing policy theory paper and for general monitoring of public policy issues and developments, I encourage students to use the World Wide Web to supplement print media. Useful starting points for using the Web to locate policy-related materials, each containing links to other relevant sites, are (all addresses are preceded by: http://):

- OSU Political Science Department home page: http://oregonstate.edu/cla/polisci; also www.politicalindex.com
- Links to public policy and political science programs: www.movingideas.org/links/pollinks.html (this is part of an excellent set of links: www.movingideas.org/links/)
- Probably the best starting point for general searches: www.yahoo.com, especially government subdirectory; see also the excellent links to many web sites by the NY Times, www.nytimes.com/navigator
- Two extremely useful reference (data of many kinds and other useful materials) are www.refdesk.com/ and www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/stats.html, which provides a huge number of links to a wide variety of reference sources
- An excellent policy web site is Public Agenda Online, which is available at www.publicagenda.org/index.htm; I strongly recommend that you visit this site when doing your research
- Excellent starting points about current political developments: www.washingtonpost.com and also www.nytimes.com (the NYT site may not be accessible from all computers because of registration requirement [no charge]); also see also www.politicaljunkie.com and politicalwire.com/; the New York Times also has an excellent political web site link section, www.nytimes.com/ref/politics/POLI_NAVI.html
- A very good policy issue starting point: www.library.vanderbilt.edu/romans/pubpol.html
- An excellent media starting point is: www.newslink.org, with links to newspapers, magazines, radio-TV
- An excellent starting point for a broad range of views on current news is: fullcoverage.yahoo.com/fc
- Some specific media sites are: www.cnn.com; www.abcnews.com; www.cbs.com; and www.msnbc.com/news
- Two sites that contain many articles, possibly including some of those required for this course, are: web.lexis-nexis.com/universe and osu.orst.edu/dept/library/subject.htm at the OSU library, via the web

- Some ideological (conservative-liberal) policy-related sites are: www.movingideas.org (with numerous links to other organizations, not only liberal ones); the most influential conservative think tanks: www.aei.org and www.heritage.org; also conservative: www.nationalcenter.org.
- Excellent starting point for many kinds of data: www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/stats.html. Some specific sub-sections are listed below; this site is absolutely indispensable as a data starting point! Also a very good data starting point is dpls.dacc.wisc.edu/newcrossroads/index.asp
- Useful starting points for seeking US government data: www.firstgov.gov; www.fedstats.gov; and www.infoctr.edu/fwl
- Other useful data sources are: Statistical Abstract: www.census.gov/prod/www/statistical-abstract-02.html; guide to government data bases: Green Book (very important source about welfare and related topics): www.utdallas.edu/~jargo/green2000/contents.html; nearly all items from the 2003 Green Book are available at this web site: waysandmeans.house.gov/Documents.asp?section=813; other data sources are available at this site: www.execpc.com/~helberg/statistics.html; and www.columbia.edu/cu/libraries/indiv/dsc/stats/us.html
- Economics data: current: www.bls.gov/bls/other.htm; other data: www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/stecon.html; www.dismal.com/store/default.asp; netec.wustl.edu/; economics.about.com/library/weekly/bl-a-to-z.htm; epinet.org/datazone/dznational.html; economic indicators (published monthly, with the most recent economic data): www.access.gpo.gov/congress/eibrowse/broecind.html; Economic Report of the President (available for years 1995 to current), w3.access.gpo.gov/eop/; my site contains inflation-adjustment factors for years 1665 to estimated 2013 and other data in graphical form: www.orst.edu/Dept/pol_sci/fac/sahr/sahr.htm; other historical economic data are available at the Economic History web site, www.eh.net/; concerning taxes see www.taxpolicycenter.org/
- Budget data are available from the Congressional Budget Office, www.cbo.gov/ and from the Office of Management and Budget (President), www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/fy2005/
- Some useful think tanks: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities: www.cbpp.org; Brookings Institution: www.brook.edu; Joint Center for Poverty Research: www.jcpr.org/index.html; Citizens for Tax Justice www.ctj.org vs. Americans for Tax Reform www.atr.org; Cato Institute (libertarian): www.cato.org; Urban Institute: www.urban.org (some sites listed under economics data links above show other think tanks)
- Several sets of links to think tanks: www.nira.go.jp/linke/tt-link; www.csuchico.edu/~kcfount/thinktanks.html; a University of Michigan site: www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/psthink.html; a listing by types of policy concerns (advocacy): reinert.creighton.edu/advocacy; see also the Washington Post ideas industry web site, which contains interesting discussions: washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/politics/fedpage/columns/ideasindustry/index.html; the Yahoo links to think tanks are dir.yahoo.com/Social_Science/Political_Science/Public_Policy/Institutes/ and dir.yahoo.com/Social_Science/Political_Science/Public_Policy/Organizations/

- The official Paul Krugman web site is www.wws.princeton.edu/~pkrugman/; another site with links to Krugman materials is www.pkarchive.org/; a conservative anti-Krugman web site is www.nationalreview.com/nrof_luskin/luskin-archive.asp; see also (by the same author, Donald Luskin) www.poorandstupid.com/chronicle.asp
- A very good source of recent opinion data is Polling Report: www.pollingreport.com; also see Gallup Organization polls: www.gallup.com/ (parts require subscription, so are not accessible; if you need data, I have a subscription); Pew Center has excellent data about many public issues: Pew Research Center for the People and the Press: www.people-press.org
- The Washington Post not only maintains its own polling web site www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/polls/vault/vault.htm, but also includes links to numerous other poll web sites: www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/polls/datadir.htm. Also, its media analyst, Howard Kurtz, is useful to show conventional wisdom, at washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/politics/onlineextra/medianotes
- Probably the best starting point for public opinion information is: members.bellatlantic.net/~abelson/; also www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/stpolisc/html/#opinion, excellent on a range of topics
- Project Vote Smart (formerly headquartered in Corvallis; excellent on domestic politics): www.vote-smart.org
- Two web book companies, both of which have information and reviews of books relevant to this course: Amazon www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/subst/home/home.html and Barnes and Noble www.barnesandnoble.com

I encourage you to sample magazines of opinion, from several ideological perspectives. Among many openly ideological sites are: **Conservative:** Washington Times www.washtimes.com; National Review www.nationalreview.com, Fox News www.foxnews.com, and American Spectator amspec.org; **Liberal:** Mother Jones www.motherjones.com; The Nation www.thenation.com; Salon (sometimes liberal but contains a mix of views): www.salonmagazine.com; **Hard to classify though generally left:** www.consortiumnews.com and www.wsws.org/sections/category/news/govt-us.shtml. The Wall Street Journal editorial page is very conservative, though its news pages do not usually reflect this. The WSJ has a subscription web site but those who do not subscribe can access some items through the Political Wire page, politicalwire.com/. The Newslink web site listed above provides lists of other relevant publications.

Note: "Students with documented disabilities who may need accommodations, who have any emergency medical information the instructor should know, or who need special arrangements in the event of evacuation, should make an appointment with the instructor as early as possible (use email for this class), no later than the first week of the term. In order to arrange alternative testing the student should make the request at least one week in advance of the test. Students seeking accommodations should be registered with the Office of Services for Students with disabilities."