



Course Name: Public Policy Problems

Course Number: PS 371

Credits: 4

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Catalog Description

The content and the politics of adoption and application of such policy areas as defense, poverty and welfare, macroeconomics, and regulation

Course Description

Public Policy Problems is designed to give students an understanding of the policymaking process, the “values” that guide public policy, the importance of various political actors and institutions in the policymaking process, and the substantive content of key policy issues. The first third of the course explores what public policy is and includes an examination of the values underlying public policy, questions centering on the public interest, and a framework for analyzing and assessing public policy. The course then turns to a review and discussion of how these values have played out in American public policy decisions through a look at individual policy arenas. As part of this exploration students will write several short policy analysis papers analyzing public policy in various areas.

Communication

Please post all course-related questions in the Q&A Discussion Forum so that the whole class may benefit from our conversation. Please contact me privately for matters of a personal nature. I will reply to course-related questions within 24-48 hours. I will strive to return your assignments and grades for course activities to you within five days of the due date.

Course Credits

This course combines approximately 120 hours of instruction, online activities, and assignments for 4 credits.

Technical Assistance

If you experience any errors or problems while in your online course, contact 24-7 Canvas Support through the Help link within Canvas. If you experience computer difficulties, need help downloading a browser or plug-in, or need assistance logging into a course, contact the IS Service Desk for assistance. You can call (541) 737-8787 or visit the [IS Service Desk](#) online.

Learning Resources

Kraft, Michael E., and Scott R. Furlong. 2013. *Public Policy: Politics, Analysis, and Alternatives*. 6th edition. CQ Press. ISBN: 9781506358154

Additional readings will be made available at the PS 371 Canvas course website.

Note to prospective students: Please check with the OSU Bookstore for up-to-date information for the term you enroll ([OSU Bookstore Website](#) or 800-595-0357). If you purchase course materials from other sources, be very careful to obtain the correct ISBN.

Canvas

This course is delivered via Canvas, where you will interact with your classmates and your instructor. You will access the learning materials within the course site, such as the syllabus, class discussions, assignments, projects, and quizzes. To preview how an online course works, visit the [Ecampus Course Demo](#). For technical assistance, please visit [Ecampus Technical Help](#).

Measurable Student Learning Outcomes

PS 371 serves both as an elective course for the Political Science major and a required core course for the B.S. in Public Policy. Learning outcomes for the course are from both programs.

Public Policy Learning Outcomes:

1. Demonstrate the ability to apply written communication skills in written reports and documents.
2. Develop critical thinking about public policy issues and the ability to conduct professional analyses of social, political, and economic structures and bureaucratic processes.

Political Science Learning Outcomes:

3. Comprehend the basic structures and processes of government systems and/or theoretical underpinnings.
4. Analyze political problems, arguments, information, and/or theories.

Evaluation of Student Performance

This course has a series of assignments totaling 500 points in all. As usual, those assignments with a smaller point count mean less work, while those with more points means more. And as you will see, the final exam carries the most weight.

All readings are noted in weekly modules in Canvas, and additional readings (i.e., aside from the main text) are made available in Canvas. All assignments and their due dates are noted in the Assignments module in Canvas, and the grade weights and due dates for each assignment are

also noted within the My Grades on a column-by-column basis. To see the details of the actual assignments go to the "Assignments" link on Canvas.

EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Weekly Canvas Discussion

There are **10 graded discussion board** assignments worth **10 points each** (5 for the original entry and 5 for a comment). Original entries are due on **Thursday 11:59 pm** the week they are assigned. At least **one response** to other students' posts is due by **Sunday 11:59 pm**. Discussion board entries should strive to thoroughly address proposed questions, refer to class readings, and show student's critical thinking. The goal of this assignment is to critically assess provided reading/policy/current issue and to generate discussion among students. Due dates for each discussion post are indicated in the "Discussions" tab next to each assignment.

Policy Response Papers

Each student is responsible for submitting **FOUR** policy response papers. Each Policy Response (PR) paper should be a 5-6 page paper (1.5 spaced, 12 point, times new roman font, with normal borders) that distills the essential elements of the assigned readings, powerpoints and additional web-based materials. **The PR will be due on Saturday 11:59 PM of the week when they are required for submission.** For the purposes of this class, these essential elements are defined as:

1. **Introduction:** Each PR should have an introduction that provides an overview of the material covered by the assigned syllabus topics, and a statement of how you will organize and approach the topics and questions.
2. **Themes:** Each PR will have you identify major themes covered for the assigned syllabus topics. You should identify the key institutions and policies that individuals and groups might encounter and how individuals and groups maybe impacted.
3. **Practical Utility:** Speculate about how useful you the weekly topics are for citizens to engage in the policy process. What are the institutional and policy opportunities and barriers for effective participation?
4. **Brilliant Insights or Thoughts:** Category four is the only reason you should go over 5-6 pages. As to what you write here, well....hard to say: it should be brilliant though! (And no more than one additional page).
5. **Be sure to cite appropriately and include a reference page (this page will not be counted against your page limit).**

The PR papers are intended to accomplish two goals. The first goal is to meet the requirements of the Political Science and Public Policy Learning Outcomes. The second goal is to help students distill the intricate and complex political and policy processes of American government in order to encourage lifelong democratic participation and "engaged citizenship," which is a vital and significant precondition of democratic governance.

Assignment	Points	Learning Outcomes
Policy Response Papers	400 (4 X 100 points each)	1, 2, 3, 4
Discussion Blogs	100 (10 X 10 points each)	1, 2, 3, 4
	500 total points	

Letter Grade

The final grade distribution is shown below:

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 Content

Week	Topic	Reading Assignments	Learning Activities
1	Introduction to American Public Policy	Kraft and Furlong, Chapter 1 Powerpoint 1	Introductions and Discussion Board #1
2	Understanding Policy Actors and Public Policymaking	Kraft and Furlong, Chapters 2,3 Powerpoint 2	Discussion Board #2
3	Understanding & Assessing Policy Alternatives	Kraft and Furlong, Chapter 4,5 Powerpoint 3	Discussion Board #3 Policy Response 1
4	Key policy Areas: Economic & Budgetary Policy	Kraft and Furlong, Chapter 7 Powerpoint 4	Discussion Board #4
5	Key Policy Areas: Health Care Policy	Kraft and Furlong, Chapter 8 Powerpoint 5	Discussion Board #5 Policy Response 2
6	Key Policy Areas: Social Security & Welfare	Kraft and Furlong, Chapter 9 Powerpoint 6	Discussion Board #6
7	Key Policy Areas: Education Policy	Kraft and Furlong, Chapter 10	Discussion Board #7

Week	Topic	Reading Assignments	Learning Activities
		Powerpoint 7	
8	Key Policy Areas: Environmental and Energy Policy	Kraft and Furlong, Chapter 11 Powerpoint 8	Discussion Board #8 Policy Response 3
9	Key Policy Areas: Foreign & Homeland Security Policy	Kraft and Furlong, Chapter 12 Powerpoint 9	Discussion Board #9
10	Politics, Analysis & Policy Choice	Kraft and Furlong, Chapter 13 Powerpoint 10	Discussion Board #10
Finals			Policy Response 4

Course Policies

Late Assignments

Assignment due dates will be clearly specified in the Canvas site. There is no make-up and no graded late work on any assignments. Assignment due dates will be clearly specified in the Canvas site. Exceptions will be made only in the case of a medical emergency and **you must have documentation from a physician to confirm your condition.** READ THE FOLLOWING CAREFULLY: Family vacations, plane reservations for Spring break, Thanksgiving, or summer vacation, hangovers, forgetfulness, or mid-term or final exams for another class **do not qualify as medical emergencies!**

Discussion Participation

Class discussion will be a critical part of the learning experience through the use of current events. It is expected that all students will treat others with **respect, civility, and generosity** at all times. Always assume that a colleague making a statement has come to their conclusions honestly, no matter how much you might disagree with a particular statement or conclusion. We will recognize that we all are entitled to different opinions, but that it is also fair game for anyone to ask us to defend our opinions or statements/conclusions. It is never acceptable in this class to denigrate others or to call others by offensive names. Keep the conversation and debate above board at all times. Finally, recognize that this class is a free speech zone. We need to be able to explore some very contentious, contested policy topics in order to fully grasp all the different perspectives on public policies since that is the very basis for the course. This means you likely will hear students who think differently than you utter what may appear to you as insane or otherwise disagreeable things. Keep yourself in check (i.e., discipline yourself and your responses) so that we can have civil, constructive dialogues, and remember, our primary purpose is learning. In order to do that, we have to create a safe space for discussion so that all feel free to join in/contribute.

If you are uncomfortable with the topic or the direction that discussion is taking, you may leave the discussion board. Please do not make this a habit, however. If you would like to discuss your concerns about specific topics privately, please feel free to contact me by email or telephone.

Incompletes

Incomplete (I) grades will be granted only in emergency cases (usually only for a death in the family, major illness or injury, or birth of your child), and if the student has turned in 80% of the points possible (in other words, usually everything but the final paper). If you are having any difficulty that might prevent you completing the coursework, please don't wait until the end of the term; let me know right away.

Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities

Accommodations for students with disabilities are determined and approved by Disability Access Services (DAS). If you, as a student, believe you are eligible for accommodations but have not obtained approval, please contact DAS immediately at 541-737-4098 or at <http://ds.oregonstate.edu>. DAS notifies students and faculty members of approved academic accommodations and coordinates implementation of those accommodations. While not required, students and faculty members are encouraged to discuss details of the implementation of individual accommodations.

Accessibility of Course Materials

All materials used in this course are accessible with the exception of (list items that are not accessible). If you require accommodations please contact [Disability Access Services \(DAS\)](#).

Additionally, Canvas, the learning management system through which this course is offered, provides a [vendor statement](#) certifying how the platform is accessible to students with disabilities.

Expectations for Student Conduct

Student conduct is governed by the university's policies, as explained in the [Student Conduct Code](#). Students are expected to conduct themselves in the course (e.g., on discussion boards, email postings) in compliance with the university's regulations regarding civility.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to comply with all regulations pertaining to academic honesty. For further information, visit [Student Conduct and Community Standards](#), or contact the office of Student Conduct and Mediation at 541-737-3656.

OAR 576-015-0020 (2) Academic or Scholarly Dishonesty:

- a) Academic or Scholarly Dishonesty is defined as an act of deception in which a Student seeks to claim credit for the work or effort of another person, or uses unauthorized materials or fabricated information in any academic work or research, either through the Student's own efforts or the efforts of another.
- b) It includes:
 - i) CHEATING - use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information or study aids, or an act of deceit by which a Student attempts to misrepresent mastery of academic effort or information. This includes but is not limited to unauthorized copying or collaboration on a test or assignment, using prohibited materials and

- texts, any misuse of an electronic device, or using any deceptive means to gain academic credit.
- ii) FABRICATION - falsification or invention of any information including but not limited to falsifying research, inventing or exaggerating data, or listing incorrect or fictitious references.
 - iii) ASSISTING - helping another commit an act of academic dishonesty. This includes but is not limited to paying or bribing someone to acquire a test or assignment, changing someone's grades or academic records, taking a test/doing an assignment for someone else by any means, including misuse of an electronic device. It is a violation of Oregon state law to create and offer to sell part or all of an educational assignment to another person (ORS 165.114).
 - iv) TAMPERING - altering or interfering with evaluation instruments or documents.
 - v) PLAGIARISM - representing the words or ideas of another person or presenting someone else's words, ideas, artistry or data as one's own, or using one's own previously submitted work. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to copying another person's work (including unpublished material) without appropriate referencing, presenting someone else's opinions and theories as one's own, or working jointly on a project and then submitting it as one's own.
- c) Academic Dishonesty cases are handled initially by the academic units, following the process outlined in the University's Academic Dishonesty Report Form, and will also be referred to SCCS for action under these rules.

Tutoring and Writing Assistance

[NetTutor](#) is a leading provider of online tutoring and learner support services fully staffed by experienced, trained and monitored tutors. Students connect to live tutors from any computer that has Internet access. NetTutor provides a virtual whiteboard that allows tutors and students to work on problems in a real time environment. They also have an online writing lab where tutors critique and return essays within 24 to 48 hours. Access NetTutor from within your Canvas class by clicking on the Tools button in your course menu.

The Oregon State [Online Writing Lab \(OWL\)](#) is also available for students enrolled in Ecampus courses.

TurnItIn

Your instructor may ask you to submit one or more of your writings to Turnitin, a plagiarism prevention service. Your assignment content will be checked for potential plagiarism against Internet sources, academic journal articles, and the papers of other OSU students, for common or borrowed content. Turnitin generates a report that highlights any potentially unoriginal text in your paper. The report may be submitted directly to your instructor or your instructor may elect to have you submit initial drafts through Turnitin, and you will receive the report allowing you the opportunity to make adjustments and ensure that all source material has been properly cited. Papers you submit through Turnitin for this or any class will be added to the OSU Turnitin database and may be checked against other OSU paper submissions. You will retain all rights to your written work. For further information, visit [Academic Integrity for Students: Turnitin – What is it?](#)

Student Evaluation of Courses

The online Student Evaluation of Teaching system opens to students the Monday of dead week and closes the Monday following the end of finals. Students receive notification, instructions and the link through their ONID. They may also log into the system via Online Services. Course evaluation results are extremely important and used to help improve courses and the online learning experience for future students. Responses are anonymous (unless a student chooses to "sign" their comments, agreeing to relinquish anonymity) and unavailable to instructors until after grades have been posted. The results of scaled questions and signed comments go to both the instructor and their unit head/supervisor. Anonymous (unsigned) comments go to the instructor only.