I. Policy Analysis
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I. Course description, goals and objectives
In your professional life, you will probably be asked to propose improvements on government's existing response to a problem. To do a good job, you will have to be able to research and understand the technical aspects of the problem and also to anticipate and strategize around the political obstacles your approach will have to overcome. This course should strengthen your ability to do so.

"Analysis is imagination. Making believe the future has happened in the past, analysts try to examine events as if those actions already had occurred." – Aaron Wildavsky, The Art of Policy Analysis, 1979 (in Jay Shafritz, *Classics of Public Policy*, 2005, at page 416). To assist your imagination – to help you imagine and predict what obstacles your proposed solution to a policy problem must overcome – we will review four policy problems: the costs and inadequacies of mandatory minimum sentences as the core of New York's effort to attack the illegal drug trade; the weaknesses New York prosecutors suffered in prosecuting organized crime cases prior to 1987; the incentive structure that continues to reward unscrupulous participants in the handgun industry for making guns available to criminals and thus exacerbating the cost of gun violence; and the Soviet Union's belligerent installation of nuclear missiles in Cuba in 1962.

As your major assignment in the course, you will select a different (and current) problem, and design and present your proposal to improve on the policy now in place to address it. See "course requirements" below for more detail.

II. Required texts
Eugene Bardach's short book, ***A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis***, 3rd edition, 2009, will help you to analyze public policy problems in your professional life, as well as in this course.
Tales from the Sausage Factory: Making Laws in New York State, which I wrote with my co-author Gerald Benjamin, published in 2010, presents four case studies in the making of public policy at the state level, including the first two of the three we will address in this course, as noted above.
Graham Allison's ***Essence of Decision***, originally published in 1971, on the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, is another great classic. I suggest you get the original edition in paperback. The pages assigned for reading are those in the 1971 paperback edition. You will probably need to find a used copy, but I like it better than the 1999 2d edition, co-authored by Philip Zelikow (and it is much shorter).

III. Course Requirements and Grading

Process for the required policy paper: 1) define the problem (including "action-forcing event," if any); 2) literature review and bibliography (eight sources minimum); 3) provide historical background, include an issue timeline (10 bullet points), data proving problem exists, and relevant "governance failures"; 4) identify key players organizationally and individually; 5) utilize matrix to scan the environment; 6) interpret findings of scan; 7) define criteria for alternatives; 8) present three or four alternatives; 9) create matrix of alternatives and criteria; 10) examine matrix and make recommendation, identifying strengths and weaknesses, including legal and ethical concerns, if any; 11) draft two-page decision-making memorandum; 12) create PowerPoint display (ten slides maximum). For valuable guidance on steps 4 through 6, I suggest that you review http://www.jjconline.net/abxqrtln368/PAD771/media/771_environment_scan.mp4 , regarding the "environmental scan," developed by John Jay Professor Peter Mameli.

Requirements: The paper should be about twelve pages long, in memo format, double spaced, in 12 point font, and with APA-style citations, but can be a little longer if you need the space. Grammar, spelling and usage count. Use course readings for further guidance. You will be allotted fifteen minutes for your PowerPoint presentation.

Grades are based on the midterm examination (20%), both the written and the oral presentations of the policy analysis project (35%), the final examination (35%), and class participation (10%).

Regarding the project, please meet the deadlines set forth in the syllabus below, to enable me to give you feedback in time for you to refine and improve your presentation.

IV. Course Outline
   a) Introduction and Overview; illegal drug law reform (classes 1, 2, and 3)
   b) Techniques of policy analysis (classes 4-5)
   c) Case studies; midterm exam (classes 6-9)
   c) Sophisticated policy analysis: averting nuclear disaster (classes 10-12)
   d) Student presentations (classes 13-14)

V. Weekly topics, readings and assignments

1. Introduction to policy analysis and to one locus of policy-making: the New York State Legislature. Read Bardach, pages xv-xx, 127-135; Feldman and Benjamin, Chapters 2 and 3.

2. Tips on good research (read Bardach, pages 95-110); a policy memorandum from the RAND Corporation – mandatory minimum sentences for drug dealers (read Bardach, pages 111-125 and 145-151); an introduction to the nature of the legislative process in Albany (read Feldman and Benjamin, Chapter 4); and an analysis of drug abuse policy in New York under the Rockefeller drug laws (read Feldman and Benjamin, Chapter 6).

3. Class discussion will place the RAND paper in the context of the political obstacles to implementation from the 1980s through repeal of New York's Rockefeller drug laws in 2009. Review sample policy memorandum with strategy for repeal of New York's Rockefeller drug laws, using template to be used for class assignment. Read Feldman and Benjamin, Chapter 7 ("Reforming the Rockefeller Drug Laws").

4. Read Bardach pages 1-38 (Define the substantive problem; Assemble some evidence; Construct the alternatives; Select the criteria.)

5. Read Bardach pages 38-64 (Project the outcomes; Confront the trade-offs; Decide!; Tell your story.)

6. **Project proposal due.** How key players block or allow policy change to go forward. Read Feldman and Benjamin, Chapter 5 ("The Organized Crime Control Act").

7. Mid-term examination

8. **Draft analysis due.** Review mid-term examination.

9. Multiple decision points with different sets of key players at each. Read Feldman and Benjamin, Chapter 9 (Guns – The Struggle in the Legislature and Courts)

10. The rational actor model. Read Allison, 1-66.

11. The organizational process model. Read Allison, 67-143.

12. **Policy analysis paper due.** The bureaucratic politics model. Read Allison, 144-244.

13/14. Student presentations and discussion.

15. Final examination.