

## **I. Comparative Public Policy**

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### **I. Introduction**

The goal of this course is fourfold: 1) to learn about processes of public policy formation in the sectors of environmental and feminist policy in western post industrial democracies; 2) to learn how to analyze public policy formation in a comparative perspective in relation to the area of study called Comparative Public Policy; 3) to be introduced to comparative policy research in a group setting; and 4) to develop writing skills within the context of comparative policy analysis.

You will become acquainted with Comparative Public Policy as an area of study within political science by learning about the processes through which western post industrial democracies develop policies. In class, we will use a process-oriented framework, called the **Comparative Policy Formation Model**, to study similarities and differences in the politics of policy formation in two different sectors of public policy – environmental and feminist – in a selection of western post industrial democracies (the USA, Great Britain, Canada, Australia and Germany).

One third of in-class time and two-thirds of course assignments will be spent on designing, conducting research for, discussing, writing about, and presenting the results of a collaborative comparative policy research project. The last part of every Thursday session will be devoted to group work on the research projects. Students will spend the last part of the semester presenting their research at an in-class research conference. Country group presentations will first be made and the class will then conduct together an aggregate comparative policy analysis across the five countries and two policy sectors based on the research presented by the groups. Reading assignments are relatively light so that students can use class preparation time to work on research and writing projects as well as to master the materials covered in the assigned readings.

It is important to note that this is a writing and research-intensive class that will present most students with new challenges in terms of research, writing and applying your empirical analysis to larger theoretical questions. To be able to respond to these challenges, students will need to attend ALL classes, do assigned readings and work on research journals and research EVERY week. If you are unable to meet this level of commitment for this class, you will not be able to pass. It is also discouraged for first or second year students to take this class, unless they have significant background in political science; or for upper division students with no background in political science.

### **II. Required Readings**

Anderson covers the stages of the policy process and Desai and Mazur cover the two policy sectors, and provide key base references you will need to consult for your research projects.

Anderson, James E. 2006. Public Policymaking: An Introduction. Sixth Edition. Boston/ New York: Houghton Mifflin. Fifth edition may be bought as well.

Desai, Uday,ed. 2002. Environmental Politics and Policy in Industrialized Countries. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Mazur, Amy G. 2002. Theorizing Feminist Policy. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

### III. Requirements and Course Policies

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|---|-----|
| Research Journals (2 x 10%)               | 20% |
| Research Paper*                           | 20% |
| Individual Research Presentation          | 10% |
| Research Group Meetings (9)               | 20% |
| Comparative Policy Formation Model Essay* | 20% |
| Final Comparative Essay                   | 10% |
| *Guided Revision Assignments              |     |

- Detailed instructions for research-project related assignments will be distributed in class – research journals, research paper, weekly research meetings, and final comparative essay. Attendance that day will be required and will be counted in your weekly research group meeting grade.
- Instructions for the comparative policy process essay are at the end of this syllabus.
- Class handouts will only be brought to class on the day they are distributed. Missed class handouts will be available outside of Prof. Mazur's office.
- Late assignments will not be accepted, under normal circumstances. Assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class by the individuals who did them. If these rules are not respected, students will receive an automatic 0 for that assignment. Any foreseen problems with deadlines should be discussed in advance with the instructor.

### IV. Schedule

#### I. Introduction

1. *Course Introduction*

2. *Defining Comparative Public Policy*

READING: Anderson: Preface, Chapter 1

3. *Presentation of Research Project and Selection of Policy Issues*

**\*\*\* Attendance is Required\*\*\***

4. *Orientation of Research*

**\*\*\* RESEARCH JOURNAL WORK BEGINS\*\*\***

5. *Our Approach to Comparative Public Policy*

READING: Desai, Forward, Acknowledgements, Chapter 1; Anderson, Chapters 2 & 8

**\*\*\*WEEKLY THURSDAY RESEARCH MEETINGS BEGIN\*\*\***

#### II. Understanding Policy Formation in Post Industrial Democracies

6. *Defining Post Industrial Democracies and the Policy Formation Model*

READING: Mazur, Preface and Acknowledgements, Chapters 1 -3

7. *Pre-formulation/Adoption*

READING: Anderson, Chapter 3

8. *Formulation/Adoption*

READING: Anderson, Chapter 4

**\*\* Journal 1 Due in Beginning of Class on Tuesday February 17th\*\***

9. *Implementation*

READING: Anderson, Chapter 6

10. *Evaluation and Impact*

READING: Anderson, Chapter 7

**III. Cross-National Comparison of Policy Formation by Sector**

11. *Environmental Policy Sector*

READING: Desai, Chapters 1 (Reread) and 9, Skim Chapters in Desai on countries covered by class.

12. *Feminist Policy Sector*

READING: Mazur, Chapter 10 and skim policy cases on countries covered in class

**IV. Cross-National Policy Analysis: Comparative Policy Research**

13. Introduction to Cross-National Analysis/ Comparative Policy Research Conference

14. *Comparative Conclusions*

**V. Comparative Policy Formation Model Essay**

GOAL: To initially write and revise a coherent analytical essay that reflects a working understanding of the policy formation model as it is used to guide the analysis of public policy in a comparative perspective, based on the assigned readings and class lectures.

QUESTION: What is the comparative policy formation model and how is it used in this class to analyze public policy? Your essay should develop an **argument** about the model and not just describe it, and reflect a general understanding of how our model is used in the sub area of Comparative Public Policy as well as the different components of that model.

FORMAT: Essays should be typed, double-spaced in 12 CPI with reasonable margins. They should be no shorter than five and no longer than ten pages. A bibliography is required if direct references are made to class readings.

GRADE: Essays and revised essays will be evaluated on the following four components: 1) overall grasp of the policy process model; 2) overall grasp of Comparative Public Policy as an area of study and the underlying comparative approach of the model; 3) understanding of specific components of the policy process model as they are covered in class; 4) writing quality. Essays that

are strong in all four areas will receive an A; strong in three out of the four will receive a B; strong in two a C; strong in one a D and weak in all four an F. An automatic D will be given when instructions are not followed.

Students will be required to do two versions of the paper, which will both be evaluated according to the above criteria. Students will be given feedback on the first version and are required to hand-in a revision according to the comments on the first version. If students receive a better grade on the second version, this will be the final grade for the essay. If a revised essay is not handed in, students will receive a 0 for this assignment. If students fail to follow the instructions on the first version, specific suggestions for revision will not be given. Students may only submit one rewrite. If original drafts are not handed in with the final paper, no grade change will be made. Note that if there is evidence of plagiarism in the paper, students will receive an F for the course and will be reported.