

Policy Systems

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Welcome to PA 306: Policy Systems. In this introductory graduate-level seminar geared toward current and aspiring public administrators and policy analysts, students will learn about policy analysis frameworks and theories that aim at understanding and assessing the complex dynamics of change and continuity in policy systems. In particular, the emphasis is placed upon Institutional Analysis and Development Framework, the Multiple Streams Framework; Social Construction and Policy Design; the Network Approach; Punctuated Equilibrium Theory; the Advocacy Coalition Framework; Innovation and Diffusion Models, Large-N Comparative Models and Complex Systems. Further, students will apply these theories and frameworks to analyze a substantive public policy problem. These policy problems may span, or even cut across, a broad range of policy domains such as (included but not limited to) energy policy, economic policy, food policy, environmental policy, defense and foreign policy, space policy, homeland security, disaster and emergency management, social policy, transportation policy, land-use policy and health policy.

Course Objectives and Competency Learning Goals

At the completion of this course, students would be able to:

- Understand a wide range of public policy frameworks and theories for understanding and assessing the complex dynamics of change and continuity in policy systems;
- Engage in public policy analysis and evaluation, attaining higher competency in applying at least one policy system framework and theory;
- Critically analyze discourses surrounding public policy problems
- Develop and refine their research, writing, analytical, and problem-solving skills

This course extensively covers the following core Master of Public Administration (MPA) competencies:

- To lead and manage **public governance**
 - Public, private & non-profit sector collaboration and conflicts
 - Systems dynamics
- To participate in and contribute to the **policy process**
 - Political theory and practice
 - Policy streams, cycles and systems
 - Problem identification
 - Policy implementation
 - Policy analysis and evaluation
- To **analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions**
 - Program evaluation and action research
 - Organizational learning and development

- Policy making in complex systems

This course also exposes students to the following core MPA competencies:

- To articulate and apply a **public service perspective**
 - Authentic citizen participation and community
 - Social and economic equity
- To **communicate** and interact productively with a **diverse and changing workforce and citizenry**
 - Pluralism/multiculturalism/cultural diversity
 - Coalition and team building
 - Information systems and technology

A Graduate Seminar

This course is designed as a graduate-level seminar, so all students are expected to take an active leadership role in stimulating class discussions on readings, assignments and relevant policy discourses as well as design and implement a major policy analysis project with real-world public policy implications. Active participation by students in the seminar discussions and a collaborative project is also required to help them achieve the course objectives through an interactive learning experience. Each 3-hour seminar bloc is typically broken down as follows: (1) Instructor introduces the policy theory topic (60 minutes); (2) A designated student leads the discussion on the policy theory topic (60 minutes); (3) Instructor introduces the policy analysis topic (30 minutes); (4) Open discussion on questions that are generated prior to and during the seminar (30 minutes). In addition, students will engage in a semester-length policy analysis project to apply and refine the concepts, skills and tools discussed during the class.

At the beginning of each class, students will have an opportunity to ask questions pertaining to course expectations and assignments. If any student anticipates missing a class, please let me know.

Course Website

A course website is created on Blackboard, which can be accessed at <https://bb.uvm.edu>. All power point presentations, additional readings, and detailed assignments will be available at the Blackboard website.

Texts and Other Readings

Required: (1) Sabatier, Paul A. (Ed.) (2007) **Theories of the Policy Process** (Second Edition). Westview Press. ISBN: 0813343593

(2) Weimer, David and Aidan R. Vining (2011) **Policy Analysis: Concepts and Practice** (5th Edition). Longman. ISBN 978-0205781300

Additional readings that are included in the list of readings below (shown in *italics*) are available on the Blackboard website.

Calendar

Date	Topics and Readings
January 13	Topic: Overview of Public Policy Theories and Frameworks Background Readings (Optional): Sabatier 2007, Chapter 1 Weimer and Vining 2011, Chapters 2 and 3
January 20	<i>Martin Luther King Holiday</i>
January 27	Policy Theory Topic: Institutional Analysis and Development Framework Readings: (1) Sabatier 2007, Chapter 2; [Ostrom] (2) <i>Ostrom, E. (2009) Beyond Markets and States: Polycentric Governance of Complex Economic Systems. Nobel Price Lecture. Available at http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/economic-sciences/laureates/2009/ostrom_lecture.pdf</i> Policy Analysis Topic: Gathering Information for Policy Analysis Reading: Weimer and Vining 2011, Chapter 14
February 3	Policy Theory Topic: Multiple Streams Framework Readings: (1) Sabatier 2007, Chapter 3 [Zaharidadis] (2) <i>Bendor, Jonathan, Terry M. Moe, and Kenneth W. Shotts.(2001) "Recycling the garbage can: An assessment of the research program." American Political Science Review 95, 169-190.</i> (3) <i>Olsen, J. P. (2001). "Garbage cans, new institutionalism, and the study of politics." American Political Science Review, 95(1), 191-198.</i> Policy Analysis Topic: Landing on Your Feet: Organizing Your Policy Analysis Reading: Weimer and Vining 2011, Chapter 15

February 10	<p>Policy Theory Topic: Social Construction and Policy Design Readings: (1) Sabatier 2007, Chapter 4 [Ingram, Schneider and deLeon]</p> <p>Policy Analysis Topic: Cost-Benefit Analysis: Assessing Efficiency Reading: Weimer and Vining 2011, Chapters 16 and 17</p>
February 17	<p>Policy Theory Topic: The Network Approach Readings: (1) Sabatier 2007, Chapter 5 [Adam and Kriesi] (2) Rhodes, Rod A. W. (1990) "Policy Networks: A British Perspective." <i>Journal of Theoretical Politics</i> 2, 293-317.</p> <p>Policy Analysis Topic: Efficiency and the Idealized Competitive Model Reading: Weimer and Vining 2011, Chapter 4</p>
February 24	<i>Revised (President's Day Holiday) One Week Later</i>
March 3	<i>Spring Recess</i>
March 10	<p>Policy Theory Topic: The Punctuated Equilibrium Theory Readings: (1) Sabatier 2007, Chapter 6 [True, Jones and Baumgartner] (2) Jones, B. D., & Baumgartner, F. R. (2012). "From there to here: Punctuated equilibrium to the general punctuation thesis to a theory of government information processing." <i>Policy Studies Journal</i>, 40(1), 1-20.</p> <p>Policy Analysis Topic: Rationales for Public Policy: Market Failures Reading: Weimer and Vining 2011, Chapter 5</p>
March 17	<p>Policy Theory Topic: The Advocacy Coalition Framework Readings: (1) Sabatier 2007, Chapter 7 [Sabatier and Weible] (2) Weible, Christopher M., Paul A. Sabatier, and Kelly McQueen. (2009) "Themes and variations: Taking stock of the advocacy coalition framework." <i>Policy Studies Journal</i> 37, 121-140.</p> <p>Policy Analysis Topic: Rationales for Public Policy: Other Limitations of the Competitive Framework Reading: Weimer and Vining 2011, Chapter 6</p>
March 24	<p>Policy Theory Topic: Innovation and Diffusion Models Readings: (1) Sabatier 2007, Chapter 8 [Berry and Berry] (2) Mintrom, M. (1997) "Policy entrepreneurs and the diffusion of innovation." <i>American journal of political science</i>, 738-770.</p> <p>Policy Analysis Topic: Rationales for Public Policy: Distributional and Other Goals Reading: Weimer and Vining 2011, Chapter 7</p>

March 31	<p>Policy Theory Topic: Policy Process and Large-N Comparative Studies Readings: (1) Sabatier 2007, Chapter 9 [Blomquist]</p> <p>Policy Analysis Topic: Limits to Public Intervention: Government Failures Reading: Weimer and Vining 2011, Chapters 8 and 9</p>
April 7	<p>Policy Theory Topic: Complex Systems Framework Readings: (1) <i>OECD Global Science Forum (2009) "Applications of Complexity Science for Public Policy: New Tools for Finding Unanticipated Consequences and Unrealized Opportunities."</i> Available online at http://www.oecd.org/sti/sci-tech/43891980.pdf (2) Zia, A., Koliba, C. (2014) <i>The Emergence of Attractors Under Multi-level Institutional Designs: Agent Based Modeling of Intergovernmental Decision Making for Funding Transportation Projects. AI & Society: Knowledge, Culture and Communication</i></p> <p>Policy Analysis Topic: Correcting Market and Government Failures: Generic Policies Reading: Weimer and Vining 2011, Chapters 1 and 10</p>
April 14	<p>Policy Theory Topic: A Comparison of Frameworks, Theories and Models of Policy Processes Reading: Sabatier 2007, Chapter 10 [Schlager]</p> <p>Policy Analysis Topic: Adoption and Implementation Issues Reading: Weimer and Vining 2011, Chapters 11 and 12</p>
April 21	<p>Policy Theory Topic: Fostering the Development of Policy Theory Reading: Sabatier 2007, Chapter 11 [Schlager]</p> <p>Policy Analysis Topic: Government Supply: Drawing Organizational Boundaries Reading: Weimer and Vining 2011, Chapter 13</p>
April 28	<p>Class Presentations on Your Policy Analysis Project</p>

Assignments and Grading

Majority of the assignments are geared towards providing you hands-on experience in conducting public policy analysis and evaluation and applying theoretical models and frameworks discussed during the class in a real-world context of a policy analysis project. Here is an overview of the assignments. More detailed instructions for each of these assignments will be thoroughly discussed in the class and posted on the Blackboard.

Assignment 1: Policy Analysis Project (40%): Detailed instructions will be provided in the class on February 10th

Assignment 2: Group Policy Project (20%): Detailed instructions will be provided in the class on March 10th

Assignment 3: Critical Review of Weekly Readings (33%): You will provide a 500-750 word critical review of the readings assigned for each of the eleven weeks from January 27th onwards. Your critique could address theoretical, methodological and/or analytical issues and must clearly specify which readings are you criticizing. You must bring a printed copy of your review at the start of each class. No late submissions will be accepted.

Class Participation (7%)

Relevant Public Policy Journals

1. Advances in Economic Analysis & Policy
2. Agenda: A Journal of Policy Analysis & Reform
3. American Economic Journal: Economic Policy
4. American Foreign Policy Interests: The Journal of the National Committee on American Foreign Policy
5. The American Journal of Tax Policy
6. Analyses of social issues and public policy
7. Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy
8. Applied Health Economics and Health Policy
9. Applied Spatial Analysis and Policy
10. Asian American Policy Review
11. Asian Politics and Policy
12. Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice
13. Canadian-American Public Policy
14. Canadian Public Policy : Analyse de Politiques
15. Clean Technologies and Environmental Policy
16. Climate Policy
17. Colorado Journal of International Environmental Law and Policy
18. Communication Law and Policy
19. Comparative Labor Law & Policy Journal
20. Consumer Economic Policy
21. Contemporary Economic Policy
22. Cornell Journal of Law and Public Policy
23. Criminology & Public Policy
24. Critical Social Policy
25. Defense & Foreign Affairs' Strategic Policy
26. Development Policy Review
27. Drugs: Education, Prevention, & Policy
28. Duke Environmental Law and Policy Forum
29. Economic & Financial Policy Review

30. Economic Papers: A journal of applied economics and policy
31. Economic policy
32. Educational evaluation and policy analysis
33. Educational Policy
34. Educational research for policy and practice
35. Energy policy
36. Energy Sources, Part B: Economics, Planning and Policy
37. Environmental Economics and Policy Studies
38. Environmental Policy and Governance
39. Environmental Policy and Law
40. Environmental science & policy
41. European journal of housing policy
42. European Social Policy
43. Food policy
44. Foreign policy
45. Foreign policy analysis
46. Forest policy and economics
47. Genomics, society and policy
48. Global Environmental Change: Human and Policy Dimensions
49. Global Social Policy
50. Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy
51. Harvard journal of law and public policy
52. Health Economics, Policy and Law
53. Health policy
54. Health policy and planning
55. Health Research Policy and Systems
56. Higher Education Management and Policy
57. Housing policy debate
58. Information economics and policy
59. Information Infrastructure and Policy
60. Innovation: Management, Policy & Practice
61. International Economics and Economic Policy
62. International Journal of Cultural Policy
63. International Journal of Drug Policy
64. International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy
65. Journal for critical education policy studies
66. Journal of accounting and public policy
67. Journal of Business Administration and Policy Analysis
- 68. Journal of comparative policy analysis**
69. Journal of Consumer Policy
70. Journal of Disability Policy Studies
71. Journal of Economic Policy Reform
72. Journal of Education Policy
73. Journal of Educational Administration and Policy Studies
74. Journal of Environmental Assessment Policy and Management
75. Journal of Environmental Policy and Planning

76. Journal of European public policy
77. Journal of European Social Policy
78. Journal of Health Politics, Policy & Law
79. Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management
80. Journal of International Wildlife Law & Policy
81. Journal of Natural Resources Policy Research
- 82. Journal of Policy Analysis & Management**
83. Journal of Policy History
- 84. Journal of policy modeling**
- 85. Journal of Public Administration and Policy Research**
86. Journal of public health policy
- 87. Journal of Public Policy**
88. Journal of Public Policy & Marketing
89. Journal of social policy
90. Journal of Transport Economics and Policy
91. Journal of Transportation Law, Logistics, and Policy
92. Knowledge and Policy
93. Knowledge, Technology & Policy
94. Land use policy
95. Language Policy
96. Latin American Policy
97. Law & policy
98. Marine policy
99. Maritime Policy & Management
100. Middle East policy
101. OECD journal of competition law and policy
102. Outlook on Science Policy
103. Perspectives: Policy and Practice in Higher Education
104. Philosophy & Public Policy Quarterly
- 105. Policy: A Journal of Public Policy and Ideas**
- 106. Policy & Practice**
- 107. Policy and Society**
108. Policy, Politics, & Nursing Practice
- 109. Policy Review**
- 110. Policy Sciences**
- 111. Policy Studies Journal**
- 112. Policy studies : the journal of the Policy Studies Institute**
113. Politics & policy
114. Population research and policy review
- 115. Public policy and administration**
- 116. Public policy research**
117. Public Works Management & Policy
118. Regional Science Policy & Practice
119. Research policy
120. Review of environmental economics and policy
- 121. Review of Policy Research**

122. Science and Public Policy
123. Sexuality Research and Social Policy
124. Social Issues and Policy Review
125. Social Philosophy and Policy
126. Social Policy
127. Social Policy & Administration
128. Social Policy and Society
129. Space Policy
130. Sustainability : science, practice, & policy
131. Transport policy
132. Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice
133. Urban Policy and Research
134. Utilities policy
135. World policy journal