PS185 Policy Analysis

Seminar Leader: Agatha Siwale
Course Times: Monday, 3:45 pm – 5:15pm; Wednesday, 3:45 pm – 5:15pm
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Office Hours: Tuesday, 11am – 1pm.

Course Description

This course will introduce students to how policy problems are defined, how alternative solutions to problems are identified and how assessments and eventual selections are made between competing policy alternatives. Students are exposed to various sources of evidence upon which assessment of alternatives is carried out and considerations of policy impact. Through case studies, presentations and reviews of policy analyses undertaken by others, students will receive a first-hand exposure to both the basic steps of policy analysis and will have an opportunity to critique policy decisions of others. Cases for analysis will include government policies for aging populations and social policies relating to housing and community development. The course will involve both individual and team work.

Learning Outcomes for Students:
1. Acquire background knowledge and understanding of what public policies are and how they are analysed.
2. Be introduced to theories and methods of engaging with policy problems and deciding on policy solutions.
3. Gain communication (both written and verbal) and analytical skills that allow for effective articulation of policy positions and recommendations.

Requirements

1. Contributions to discussion and peer feedback: 10%
2. Critical Review: 30%
3. Final Policy Paper: 40%
4. Presentation: 20%

1. Contributions to discussion and peer feedback/ Participation (10%)

You are all expected to do the assigned readings *before* each class and to actively participate in discussions. The highest grades for participation will be awarded to those who make valuable contributions to discussions and demonstrate an effective engagement with and application of readings (up to A/A+). Good faith attempts at participation will attract an average grade (up to B/B+) while attendance without participation will attract a C/C+. The goal, however, is not to aim at saying something (or anything) each time we meet but to develop the art of analyzing ideas expressed by others and contributing to them as well as expressing your own stand-point.

It is expected (and encouraged) that debates and opposing view-points shall arise during the class discussions. However, we are all expected to be courteous and respectful of each other's views. Personal attacks during the class will, therefore, not be tolerated. Participation will also include occasional short quizzes based on readings and previous sessions

2. Critical Review (30%)
You will write a short paper of **1000 - 1200 words** that offers a critical review of the methods, evidence and arguments raised in a peer reviewed journal article *OR* policy document used as the basis of a policy decision or change. For the review of an academic journal article, you are encouraged to use the style adopted for published reviews of academic journals. For reviews of a policy document, you are encouraged to adopt the style of an extended op-ed. Further details on the format on the review and aspects to focus on will be given during the introductory class.
Due Date: 1st October, 2018

3. Final Policy Analysis Memo (40%)

The goal of this assignment is to allow you to deeply engage with a policy problem/issue of your choice and analyse its various dimensions. For the assignment, imagine you are a staff member of a research services unit in parliament. A parliamentarian requests your assistance in coming up with a policy position on a specific issue and in identifying various policy alternatives that could be used to address the problem/issue. The issue should be narrowed to a specific area such as recruitment of high school students into terrorist groups, violation of environmental rules by businesses, etc. rather than broad areas such as education policy. Alternatively, the memo could focus on reform of specific legislation or policy that has attracted public uproar or has failed. Justify your selection of your preferred course of action through a critique of the strengths and limitations of the alternatives. Your paper will consist of four main sections:

i) **Identification of an issue:** What is the specific issue or problem that you seek to resolve? What are the consequences or implications of the problem that make it important or urgent to resolve at this time? What is the background to the problem?

ii) **Policy Alternatives:** What previous attempts have been made at solving the problem? What are the current alternatives for resolving the problem? What are the pros and cons of the available policy alternatives?

iii) **Recommendation:** What is the best possible solution? On what basis is it selected as the preferred option? What policy goals will it meet and what negative elements will be minimized?

iv) **Brief Reflection:** Your paper should include a brief section in which reflect on the process and information you used to reach your conclusions, the limitations of your method and how findings could be strengthened in future.

Submission Deadlines for the Memo:

1. Topic proposal and paper outline: To help you think about the final essay from early on, you will submit a proposed topic (1 paragraph) and outline for how you will address your specific issue (bullet points of key areas and potential sources of data). You will then receive feedback on this outline to help you in your write-up of the final paper.
Due Date: 15th October, 2018

2. **Final Policy Memo Submission**: The policy analysis memo should be between **4000 and 4500** words in length. **Due date: 19th of December, 2018.**

4. Presentation (15%)
You will each have the opportunity to present the findings from your policy analysis to the class (15 minutes presentation). Fellow students will them provide feedback, ask questions and give comments based on your presentation. You will then respond to comments and defend your position (10minutes discussion time). **Presentations will be done between December 3rd and December, 17th.** An online google sign-up sheet will be set up at the beginning of the term on which you can select a date for presenting.

Policy on Late Submission of Papers
Late submission of essays by up to 24 hours late will result in a downgrade by one full grade (e.g. from B+ to C+). Essays that are more than 24 hours late maybe rejected for grading, particularly where the explanation given is not satisfactory. Where a late essay is accepted for grading, it must be submitted within one week of the deadline and cannot receive a grade of higher than C. Thereafter, you will receive a failing grade for the assignment.

Academic Integrity
Bard College Berlin upholds the highest regard for academic integrity and expects good academic practice from students in their studies. Cases of academic misconduct including cheating and plagiarism will be dealt with in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct, Section III Academic Misconduct.

Attendance
You must attend ALL classes and participate actively in sessions. Absence from two sessions of 90 minutes in a semester will attract deductions from your participation grade unless permission is sought in advance in accordance with the Student Handbook's regulations on illness or leaves of absence.

Reading Material:

The key textbook for this class is:
  - Kraft, M. E., & Furlong, S. R. (2018). Public policy: Politics, analysis, and alternatives. 7th edition. Sage and CQ Press.

You are advised to purchase a copy of the textbook for reference throughout the course. Other book chapters, articles and additional readings will be posted on the online platform.

Schedule

Please note that this schedule is subject to change depending on emerging class needs during the term. I will inform students in advance of any changes and the online platform will also be used give advance notices of changes.

	Topics	Readings and Assignments
Week 1 Mon, 3 Sept	*Course Introduction:* - Key Concepts and definitions in Public Policy	- Kraft, M. E., & Furlong, S. R. (2018). Public policy: Politics, analysis, and alternatives. 7th edition. Sage and CQ Press. Chapter 1, (pp. 2-14).
Wed, 5 Sept	- What is the context of policy analysis? -What are the sources of information	- Kraft, M. E., & Furlong, S. R. (2018). Public policy: Politics, analysis, and alternatives. 7th edition. Sage and CQ Press. Chapter 1, (pp.15-27).
Week 2 Mon, 10 Sept	Introducing Policy Analysis: Its uses and application	- Kraft, M. E., & Furlong, S. R. (2018). Public policy: Politics, analysis, and alternatives. 7th edition. Sage and CQ Press. Chapter 1, (pp.27-34).
Wed,12 Sept	Key Actors in Policy Processes: State Institutions	- Kraft, M. E., & Furlong, S. R. (2018). Public policy: Politics, analysis, and alternatives. 7th edition. Sage and CQ Press. Chapter 2, (pp. 36-61). - Birkland, T. A. (2011). An introduction to the policy process: Theories, concepts and models of public policy making. Third edition. Routledge. Chapter 4
Week 3 Mon, 17 Sept	Non-state Policy Actors	- Birkland, T. A. (2011). An introduction to the policy process: Theories, concepts and models of public policy making. Third edition. Routledge. Chapter 5 - Anderson, James E. (2010). *Public policymaking.* 7th ed. Cengage. Chapter 2, 'Nongovernmental participants' (pp. 59-68)
Wed,19 Sept	Theories in Public Policy (1): Elite and Group theory	Kraft, M. E., & Furlong, S. R. (2018). Public policy: Politics, analysis, and alternatives. 7th edition. Sage and CQ Press. Chapter 3 (pp. 78-85 on elite and group theory).
Week 4	Theories in Public Policy	Kraft, M. E., & Furlong, S. R. (2018). Public

Mon, 24 Sept	(2): Institutional, Rational choice and systems theory.	policy: Politics, analysis, and alternatives. 7th edition. Sage and CQ Press. Chapter 3 (pp. 85-89).
Wed, 26 Sept	The Policy Process Model: Problem Definition, Agenda setting and policy formulation	- Anderson, Chapter 3 – Policy Problems (pp. 83-107) - Hupe, P. L. and Hill, M. J. (2006). The Three Action Levels of Governance: Re-framing the Policy Process Beyond the Stages Model. In Peters, G. B. and Pierre, J. (Eds.). *Handbook of Public Policy* (pp. 201 - 216). London, England: Sage Publications. Further Readings: - Stone, Deborah A. (1989). Casual stories and the formation of policy agendas. Political Science Quarterly, 104, 2 (Summer): 281-300. - Kingdon, J., Agendas, alternatives and public policies, London: Longman, 1995. Chapter 1.
Week 5 Mon, 1 Oct	Policy Legitimation, Implementation and Evaluation	- Kraft, M. E., & Furlong, S. R. (2018). Public policy: Politics, analysis, and alternatives. 7th edition. Sage and CQ Press. Chapter 3 (pp. 100-105 on policy legitimation to evaluation). *Due Date: Critical Review Paper*
3 Oct	Public Holiday: Day of German Unity	
Week 6 Mon, 8 Oct	Policy Typologies	- Kraft, M. E., & Furlong, S. R. (2018). Public policy: Politics, analysis, and alternatives. 7th edition. Sage and CQ Press. Chapter 3 (pp. 111-113 on policy typologies).
Wed, 10 Oct	How are policies analysed?	- Kraft, M. E., & Furlong, S. R. (2018). Public policy: Politics, analysis, and alternatives. 7th edition. Sage and CQ Press. Chapter 4 (pp.118-131 Steps in Policy Analysis). - Walker, W., E. (2000). Policy Analysis: A Systematic Approach to Supporting Policymaking in the Public Sector. Journal of Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis, 9, 11–27. Further Reading: - Weimer, D. L., & Vining, A. R. (2017). Policy analysis: Concepts and practice. Sixth edition. Routledge.
Week 7	How do you write a Policy	- Weimer, D. L., & Vining, A. R. (2017). Policy

Mon, 15 Oct	Memo? What are the information sources needed?	analysis: Concepts and practice. Sixth edition. Routledge. Chapter 1 'Preview' (pp. 1-30); Chapter 14 *Due Date: Proposal and Outline for Final Memo*
Wed, 17 Oct	What are the types of policy analysis?	- Kraft, M. E., & Furlong, S. R. (2018). Public policy: Politics, analysis, and alternatives. 7th edition. Sage and CQ Press. Chapter 4 (pp.131-142 on Types of Policy Analysis and the kind of analysis needed).
Week 8 Mon, 22 Oct	Problem analysis to policy action	- Kraft, M. E., & Furlong, S. R. (2018). Public policy: Politics, analysis, and alternatives. 7th edition. Sage and CQ Press. Chapter 5 - Anderson, Chapter 7 – Policy Impact, Evaluation and Change (pp. 290-316)
Wed, 24 Oct	Assessing policy alternatives: what criteria do we use?	- Kraft, M. E., & Furlong, S. R. (2018). Public policy: Politics, analysis, and alternatives. 7th edition. Sage and CQ Press. Chapter 6 (pp. 178-192)
Week 9	*FALL BREAK (October 29th – November, 2nd)*	
Week 10 Mon, 5 Nov	Methods of Policy Analysis	- Kraft, M. E., & Furlong, S. R. (2018). Public policy: Politics, analysis, and alternatives. 7th edition. Sage and CQ Press. Chapter 6 (pp. 192-215)
Wed, 7 Nov	Why do policies fail?	- Birkland, T. A. (2011). An introduction to the policy process: Theories, concepts and models of public policy making. Third edition. Routledge. Chapter 9 - Dunleavy, P. (1995) 'Policy Disasters: Explaining the UK's Record', Public Policy and Administration, 10 (2): pp. 52 - 70. <u>Further Reading:</u> - McConnel, A. (2010). Policy Success, Policy Failure and Grey Areas In-Between. Journal of Public Policy, 30(03), 345–362. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0143814X10000152 - Quiggin, J. (2006). Economic constraints in public policy. In R.E. Goodin, (ed.) The Oxford Handbook of Public Policy. Oxford, (pp. 529-543).
Week 11 Mon, 12 Nov	How and why do policies change?	- Lindblom, Charles. 1959. "The Science of Muddling Throu *Administration Review* 19 (2).

		- Kingdon, John W. (1995). Agendas, alternatives, and public policies. 2nd edition. New York: Longman. Chapters 4 and 9.
Wed, 14 Nov	Welfare and Social Security Policy	- Fawcett, H. (2006). Social Policy: Pensions. In Peters, G. B. and Pierre, J. (Eds.). *Handbook of Public Policy* (pp.187-200). London, England: Sage Publications. - Wilensky, H. L. (2006). Social Policy: Is there a crisis of the welfare state? Peters, G. B. and Pierre, J. (Eds.). Handbook of Public Policy (pp. 201 - 216). London, England: Sage Publications.
Week 12 Mon, 19 Nov	Education Policy	- Marton, S. (2006). Education Policy. Peters, G. B. and Pierre, J. (Eds.). Handbook of Public Policy (231-248). London, England: Sage Publications.
Wed, 21 Nov	Health Policy	- Moran, M. (2006). Health Policy. Peters, G. B. and Pierre, J. (Eds.). Handbook of Public Policy (219-230). London, England: Sage Publications.
Week 13 Mon, 26 Nov	Holiday: Repentance Day	
Wed, 28 Nov	Cultural Policy	- Mulcahy, K.V. (2006). Cultural Policy. Peters, G. B. and Pierre, J. (Eds.). Handbook of Public Policy (219-230). London, England: Sage Publications.
Week 14 Mon, 3 Dec	Criminal Justice Policy	- Newburn, T. (2006). Criminal Justice Policy. Peters, G. B. and Pierre, J. (Eds.). Handbook of Public Policy (365-380). London, England: Sage Publications.
Wed, 5 Dec	*Policy Memo Presentations*	
Week 15 Mon, 10 Dec	*Policy Memo Presentations*	
Wed, 12 Dec	*Policy Memo Presentations*	
Week 16 Mon, 17 Dec	*Policy Memo Presentations*	
December 19th	*Policy Memo Presentations*	
	Wrapping up	*Submission of final policy memo*