

# Pubpol 201: Introduction to Public Policy and Governance

Winter 2017

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:30 a.m. – 12:50 p.m.

Bagley Hall, Room 131

## **Instructors**

Benjamin M. Brunjes (Ben)  
209C Parrington Hall  
[brunjes@uw.edu](mailto:brunjes@uw.edu)

Elizabeth Richardson Vigdor  
329 Parrington Hall  
[evigdor@uw.edu](mailto:evigdor@uw.edu)

Office hours: By appointment, or  
Tuesday, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Wednesday, 12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Office hours: Thursday 1:00-2:00pm,  
Wednesday 10:00-11:30am, or  
by appointment

## **Teaching assistants:**

Amy Beck Harris (Wednesday sections)  
[abeck07@uw.edu](mailto:abeck07@uw.edu)  
Office hours: Monday 10:00-11:00am  
124E Parrington Hall

Rebeca de Buen (Friday sections)  
[rdebuen@uw.edu](mailto:rdebuen@uw.edu)  
Office hours: Wednesday 9:00-10:00am  
124D Parrington Hall

## **Course Description**

The recent U.S. presidential election highlighted many important policy issues, such as immigration, health care, economic policy, and climate change. These discussions may have you wondering about some of the policy choices we face: Should we repeal Obamacare? What would happen if we built a wall along the Mexican border? Should tuition be free at public colleges and universities?

Many individuals are passionate about these and other issues, and have the best intentions in trying to advocate for reform or implement policy change. But translating good intentions into good decisions is not always as easy as it seems. Public policy in the United States is the result of decision-making that is constrained by complex interactions between political preferences, embedded institutions, and limited resources. For many policy choices the correct course of action is unclear. In certain instances, the choices themselves may be hard to identify. Effective policy making requires the ability to analyze situations systematically, deal with uncertainty, make tradeoffs among conflicting interests, account for other values and institutional characteristics, and develop a strategy for working with other parties to achieve the chosen objective.

This course is intended to bring some clarity to the policy process in the United States. Why do we even need public policy? What is the context in which policy decisions are made? How are policies developed, chosen, implemented, and evaluated? Students will learn the basics of

decision-making in the policy process, discover many of the institutional and values-based constraints that affect policy outcomes, and become more familiar with strategies to influence all phases of the policy process. Throughout the quarter we will draw on relevant policy topics to illustrate these points.

### **Course Objectives**

This course will help you develop an understanding of policy decision-making and management in the public sector. Specifically, this course will provide practical skills and knowledge related to:

- Understanding why public policy might be needed
- Decision-making in the public sector
- Assessing the expected and actual impacts of public policy choices
- Using data to evaluate policy effectiveness
- Balancing competing or conflicting interests among policy partners
- Assessing and responding to elements of the environment surrounding the formulation and implementation of public policies
- Identifying stakeholders, assessing their preferences, and mapping the policy context
- Working with partners and understanding the interplay of public values and public policy
- Leading and managing policy initiatives from all levels of an organization

### **Teaching Assistant and Discussion Sections**

Our teaching assistants this quarter are Amy Beck and Rebeca de Buen. They will each facilitate two discussion sections that will provide opportunities to explore concepts from lecture in greater detail. For this course, sections meet on Wednesdays and Fridays. Often, sections will be used for group work or learning activities. You will turn in your homework in section, and graded assignments will be returned and discussed. Your TA is also available as an additional point of contact for students in need of assistance or information pertaining to the course. Attendance in sections is mandatory, so please show up prepared and ready to participate.

### **Grading and Course Assignments**

There will be four homework assignments, a midterm exam and a final exam. A student's course grade will be determined as follows:

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Contribution to Final Grade</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Participation	10%	Ongoing (section)
Homework Assignments	20%	Ongoing (section)
Midterm Exam	35%	February 7 <sup>th</sup>
Final Exam	35%	March 15 <sup>th</sup>

### **Participation**

Participation in section discussions is expected and comprises a significant percentage of students' final grade. Section attendance alone (which is mandatory) does not contribute your

participation grade – the vast majority is determined by how active you are when discussing course materials during section.

While in class and in section students are expected to behave in a professional manner. Inappropriate behavior in classes will not be tolerated. Specifically, please arrive on time, be respectful of your fellow students and instructor, and refrain from distracting activities such as side conversations, updating social media, or misusing computers. Also, **make sure that all mobile phones are silenced or turned off.** We will be addressing some sensitive issues this quarter. Some people may feel uncomfortable at times. Try to be aware of how your actions affect others in the class. This does not mean that you cannot voice your opinion – just do not attack others or behave in an overly aggressive or disrespectful manner. Everyone comes to this class with their own set of values and preconceptions, and these may or may not align with yours. Part of being a successful in the policy process is the ability to bridge ideological or value-based divides to either find common ground or shared understanding.

### **Attendance: Missing Class**

You should not miss class. That said, people get sick and have lives outside of school. Should you need to miss a class or discussion section, notify both the professor and teaching assistant well ahead of time. Depending on the nature of the notification and the absence, absences may be excused, though some work will likely be assigned to compensate for the lost class time and ensure that the concepts covered are understood.

### **Homework**

Throughout the quarter, students will be assigned homework that is to be completed outside of class and turned in during discussion section. Assignments will also be returned and discussed in section. These homework assignments will vary, and will include microeconomic analyses, assessments of policy proposals using data, and written work that summarizes policy problems and recommends solutions.

Homework assignments are to be submitted via Canvas by midnight on the day they are due. It is your responsibility to make sure that the assignments are successfully uploaded in time. **Late homework assignments will not be accepted.** Homework assignments will be posted on Canvas at least 5 days before they are due. Due dates for the assignments are: January 17, January 31, February 21 and March 7.

### **Academic Integrity**

Students are responsible for abiding by the University of Washington's and the Evans School's academic conduct policies. All academic work must meet the standards contained in UW's Student Conduct Code (<http://www.washington.edu/admin/rules/policies/WAC/478-120TOC.html>) and the Evans School's Policy on Academic Integrity (<https://evans.uw.edu/sites/default/files/public/Evans%20School%20Policy%20on%20Academic%20Integrity.pdf>). Students are responsible for knowing, understanding, and adhering to these policies before performing (and submitting) and academic work.

For this class, the biggest concerns are the following:

**Using other people's ideas:** In academics, it is inevitable that students will often need to rely on the ideas of other people. When using an idea that someone else had, regardless of the source, acknowledge the originator of the idea in the appropriate fashion. This is usually a citation in written work.

**Using other people's responses:** Do not do this. Claiming someone else's work as your own is academic fraud. Do not search for other people's responses to case studies. Do not copy and paste portions of other people's responses into your work. Doing so is (a) against the academic honor code, (b) a poor use of your time and money spent on this degree, and (c) disrespectful to professor, teaching assistant, and other students in our class, all of whom will be working hard all quarter to generate original ideas.

**Cheating on tests:** This means copying answers, bringing in outside materials, using phones or other tools to illegally access materials during tests, and any other dishonest activity. Don't do this. It is expected that your work will be your own.

### **Academic Accommodations**

At the Evans School, we are committed to ensuring access to classes, course material, and learning opportunities for students with disabilities. If you would like to request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact Disability Resources for Students at <http://www.washington.edu/admin/dso/>. If you have a letter from the office of Disability Resources for Students indicating you have a disability that requires academic accommodations, please present the letter to me so we can discuss the accommodations you might need for this class.

### **Readings and Course Materials**

Course readings include academic articles and book chapters, cases, and journal articles written by some of leading scholars and practitioners in the field of public policy. All course materials are available as a link from the syllabus or on the Canvas website (<http://canvas.uw.edu>) under the Readings folder in the Files tab. There is no assigned textbook for this course.

Please complete all readings prior to coming to class. While in class, it is wise to have access to the readings, either in print or electronic form. Professors Brunjes and Vigdor may occasionally make changes to the assigned readings or other course materials. Should this occur, you will be notified in class and over email. A changed syllabus and the new reading(s) will be uploaded to Canvas.

**Cases.** We will review two cases this quarter, which will allow students to discuss course topics in a practical, applied context. All case materials will be posted to the course Canvas site. Cases are intended to improve your ability to think about a complex scenario and develop concise analyses of the situation. A good way to get to the heart of a case is to try to summarize the story in case in one sentence. Most good teaching cases have no obvious right answers. Rather, there are many possible answers, each with its advantages and disadvantages, and about which reasonable people may disagree. Case discussions will generally focus on the actions or problems of leadership or management in the case as they are caused or influenced by contextual (structural or institutional) factors. You may be asked, "What would you do (and why)?" You may be asked to play the roles of actors in the case, and there may be brief, spontaneous, in-class "role plays."

## **Course Schedule:**

### **What is Public Policy?**

January 3: Introduction: What is Public Policy and Policy Analysis?

- Munger, Michael C. (2000) “*Analyzing Policy: Choices, Conflicts and Practices.*” London and New York: W. W. Norton & Company. Chapter 1, pp. 3-8, 14-24; and Chapter 2.

January 5: Defining a Policy Problem: The Case of Global Warming

- Global Warming 101, Natural Resources Defense Council  
<https://www.nrdc.org/stories/global-warming-101>
- Explore <http://climate.nasa.gov/>, which has facts and lots of links to articles and resources (see links on upper right of page.)

### **Why We Need Public Policy**

January 10: Individual Interests and Collective Action I: Strategic Interaction

- Schelling, Thomas C.(1984) “Chapter 10: What is Game Theory?” in “*Choice and Consequence.*” Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press.
- Colman, Andrew M. (1982) “*Game Theory and Experimental Games: The Study of Strategic Interaction.*” Pergamon Press. Chapter 6, pp. 93-106.
- New York Times, April 29, 2005, "[Rock, Paper, Payoff: Child's Play Wins Auction House an Art Sale](#)" by Carol Vogel.

January 12: Individual Interests and Collective Action II: Markets versus Government

- Stone, Deborah. (2002).” *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making.*” London and New York, NY: WW Norton and Company. Chapters 1 and 3.
- Munger, Michael C. (2000) “Case 1: A Prison Camp Economy” in *Analyzing Policy: Choices, Conflicts and Practices.* London and New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

Optional for anyone who wants more on markets and market failures:

- Munger, Michael C. (2000) “*Analyzing Policy: Choices, Conflicts and Practices.*” London and New York: W. W. Norton & Company. Chapter 3, and Chapter 4, pp. 106-108 and 113-126.

January 17: Collective Action Failure and Public Policy

- Hardin, Russell . (1982) *Collective Action*; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins/Resources for the Future; Chapters 1 & 2, pp. 6-35.
- Dawes, Robyn M., Richard H. Thaler. (1988) "Cooperation." *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Vol. 2(3):187-197.  
[http://www.jstor.org.offcampus.lib.washington.edu/stable/1942822?seq=1#page\\_scan\\_tab\\_contents](http://www.jstor.org.offcampus.lib.washington.edu/stable/1942822?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents)
- Ostrom, Elinor. (2008) “A Behavioral Approach to the Rational Choice Theory of Collective Action: Presidential Address, American Political Science Association, 1997.”

The American Political Science Review, Vol. 92(1): 1-22  
<http://www.jstor.org.offcampus.lib.washington.edu/stable/pdf/2585925.pdf>

### **Due: Homework Assignment #1**

#### **Values and Public Policy**

January 19: American Political Culture and Values

- Excerpts from the U.S. Constitution, Declaration of Independence, and De Tocqueville
- Friedrich and Finer Debate

January 24: Equity and Representativeness in Public Policy

- Frederickson, H. G. (1990). Public Administration and Social Equity. *Public Administration Review*, 50(2), 228-37.
- Excerpts from Stone, D. (2002). Policy paradox: The art of political decision making, revised edition. *London and New York, NY: WW Norton and Company*.

#### **Agenda Setting and Policy Formulation**

January 26: Agenda Setting

- Birkland, T. A. (2014). Agenda setting, power, and interest groups, in *An Introduction to the Policy Process: Theories, Concepts and Models of Public Policy Making*, Routledge. 168-201.
- Scheufele, D. A., & Tewksbury, D. (2007). Framing, agenda setting, and priming: The evolution of three media effects models. *Journal of communication*, 57(1), 9-20.

### **Due: Homework Assignment #2**

January 31: Policy Formulation

- John, P. (2003). Is there life after policy streams, advocacy coalitions, and punctuations: using evolutionary theory to explain policy change?. *Policy Studies Journal*, 31(4), 481-498.
- Wolfe, M., Jones, B. D., & Baumgartner, F. R. (2013). A failure to communicate: Agenda setting in media and policy studies. *Political Communication*, 30(2), 175-192.

February 2: Case Study: Immigration Reform

- Watch “Immigration Battle,” a 2 hour documentary on the politics of immigration reform from PBS Frontline.
  - <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/immigration-battle/>

February 7: Midterm

#### **Policy Context and Implementation**

February 9: Managing public organizations

- Fernandez, S., & Rainey, H. G. (2006). Managing successful organizational change in the public sector. *Public administration review*, 66(2), 168-176.
- Light, P. C. (2008). A government ill executed: The depletion of the federal service. *Public Administration Review*, 68(3), 413-419.
- Rainey, H. G., & Bozeman, B. (2000). Comparing public and private organizations: Empirical research and the power of the a priori. *Journal of public administration research and theory*, 10(2), 447-470.

#### February 14: The External Context of Public Policy

- Rosenbloom, D. H. (1983). Public administrative theory and the separation of powers. *Public Administration Review*, 219-227.
- Svava, J. H. (2001). The myth of the dichotomy: Complementarity of politics and administration in the past and future of public administration. *Public administration review*, 61(2), 176-183.

#### February 16: Implementing Public Policy (I)

- Hupe, P., & Hill, M. (2007). Street-Level bureaucracy and public accountability. *Public administration*, 85(2), 279-299.
- Kettl, D. F. (2015). Implementation, in *Politics of the Administrative Process*, Sage CQ Press, 332-360.
- Sandfort, J. and Moulton, S. (2015) Front lines, in *Effective Implementation in Practice: Integrating Public Policy and Management*. Jossey-Bass. 35-65.

#### February 21: Implementing Public Policy (II)

- Agranoff, R. (2006). Inside collaborative networks: Ten lessons for public managers. *Public administration review*, 66(s1), 56-65.
- Milward, H. B., & Provan, K. G. (2000). Governing the hollow state. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 10(2), 359-380.
- O'Toole Jr, L. J. (1997). Treating networks seriously: Practical and research-based agendas in public administration. *Public administration review*, 45-52.

### **Due: Homework Assignment #3**

#### **Policy Evaluation and Reform**

##### February 23: What is the Public Interest?

- Bonner, John. (1986) "Social Welfare." from *Introduction to the Theory of Social Choice*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Harvey Rosen. (1992) "Income Distribution: Conceptual Issues." from *Public Finance*, pp. 157-169.
- Trotta, Daniel. (2011) "US Safer 10 Years After 9/11, But at What Cost?" Reuters News Service, September 7, 2011.  
[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/09/07/us-safer-10-years-after\\_n\\_951543.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/09/07/us-safer-10-years-after_n_951543.html)

## February 28: Benefit Cost Analysis

- Office of Management and Budget. (2003) "*Circular A4: Regulatory Analysis*". Read A, B,C,D through the "Benefit-Cost Analysis" section. Skim E-H.  
[http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars\\_a004\\_a-4](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_a004_a-4)
- Kelman, Steven. (1981) "Cost-Benefit Analysis: an Ethical Critique" *Regulation* Jan/Feb 1981: 33-40 and De Long, James et al. "Defending Cost-Benefit Analysis: Replies to Kelman (1981)" *Regulation* Mar/Apr 1981: 39-43.

## March 2: Valuing Life, Health and Other Intangibles

- Viscusi, W. Kip. (2010). "[The Heterogeneity of the Value of Statistical Life: Introduction and Overview.](#)" *Journal of Risk and Uncertainty* 40(1): 1-13.
- Cameron, Trudy A. (2010) "[Euthanizing the Value of a Statistical Life.](#)" *Rev Env Econ and Policy* 4(2): 161-178.
- Applebaum, Binyamin. (2011) "As U.S. Agencies Put More Value on a Life, Businesses Fret." *New York Times*, February 16, 2011.  
[http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/17/business/economy/17regulation.html?\\_r=1&pagewanted=all&](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/17/business/economy/17regulation.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all&)
- Radiolab. (2014) "Worth" *Radiolab* Season 13, Episode 3, first segment: "How Much Would You Pay for a Year of Life." December 23, 2014.  
<http://www.radiolab.org/story/worth/>

## March 7: Measuring Performance and Outcomes Using Data

- Wheelan, Charles. (2010) *Introduction to Public Policy* Chapter 9, Gathering and Measuring Information and Chapter 13, Program Evaluation. W.W. Norton and Co.

### **Due: Homework Assignment #4**

## March 9: Wrap-up and Case Study: The Affordable Care Act and Health Reform

- White, Chapin. (2010) "The Health Care Reform Legislation: An Overview," *The Economists' Voice*: Vol. 7 : Iss. 5, Article 1. (See below for link.)
- Duggan, Mark G. and Kocher, Robert. (2010) "The Economics, Opportunities, and Challenges of Health Insurance Exchanges," *The Economists' Voice*: Vol. 7 : Iss. 5, Article 3. (See below for link.)
- Cutler, David M. (2010) "The Simple Economics of Health Reform," *The Economists' Voice*: Vol. 7 : Iss. 5, Article 2. (See below for link.)

Previous 3 articles are available at:

<http://www.degruyter.com.offcampus.lib.washington.edu/view/j/ev.2010.7.5/issue-files/ev.2010.7.issue-5.xml>

- McDonough, John E. and Eli Y. Adashi. "Realizing the Promise of the Affordable Care Act—January 1, 2014." *JAMA* 2014;311(6):569-70  
<http://jama.jamanetwork.com.offcampus.lib.washington.edu/article.aspx?articleid=1810356>

## March 15 (Wednesday): Final Exam, 4:30-6:20pm