

TOPICS IN PUBLIC HISTORY - U.S. HISTORY AND PUBLIC POLICY:
THE USES (AND ABUSES) OF HISTORY FOR DECISION MAKERS
(HIST. 368 / HIST. 668)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course focuses on the role of historians as policy makers, advisors, and analysts. Through directed readings, research and writing assignments, and through the analysis of case studies, participants will examine the development of policies in the federal legislative, agency, and private sector spheres. The course will focus on a variety of issues of interest to historians including generic policy matters such as legislation, agency rule making, as well as specific policy issues relating to historic preservation, cultural resource management, archives, and international and domestic affairs.

The course will also focus on federal laws and regulations that affect all scholars but public historians in particular. Enhancing each participants knowledge of various federal laws and regulations that impact the writing of history (i.e. Freedom of Information, Presidential Records and Antiquities Acts) and enhancing research skills (i.e. preparation of a legislative histories etc...) will be emphasized.

In addition to becoming familiar with the classic literature relating to the historian's role in policy development, participants will gain a number of practical skills: They will be able to prepare draft legislation, craft and present expert testimony, and they will acquire the requisite knowledge to prepare a policy background paper as well as to compile a legislative history. Participants also will learn to analyze federal rules and regulations in order to prepare meaningful comments for agency officials. Each participant will also be able to write an Op-Ed for popular consumption. Emphasis will be on problem solving, decision making, and skill development.

COURSE METHODOLOGY:

Policy making is a proactive not a passive enterprise. Therefore, while there will be formal lectures, several guest lecturers, the screening of a movie, and traditional reading assignments there also will be much "learning by doing." Creative and analytical thinking, developing research and narrative skills and clarity in writing targeted to a professional and non-academic audience will all be emphasized.

Each class will include one or more short lectures (lectures will complement and supplement the core readings; they will not duplicate them). Participant discussions will then focus on case studies, readings, or a writing assignments. Participants are expected to have completed the assigned reading and/or written assignment prior to each class. The instructor's role will largely be that of facilitator of discussion. Guest speakers will occasionally address the group as well.

A note on readings and class participation: During class you will find that the instructor relies heavily on the Socratic method (questioning strategies) and as a consequence participants must be familiar with the assigned readings before class begins. The objective of the reading assignments is not to memorize detailed information in the material, but to draw on what we read to develop ideas, analyses, and

interpretations.

Each week, a number of participants will be called upon to briefly summarize each article and comment on or critique the author's arguments. At times, the instructor will provide 'thought questions' in advance which can be used as a framework to prepare for the class discussion. When you come to class, be prepared to discuss the author's thesis as well as your thoughts, ideas, and reactions to the concepts presented in the readings.

In all likelihood you will find yourself called upon at least four times during the course of the semester to summarize an article or book reading assignment. A full 20% of the grade in this class (that can mean the difference between an "A" and a "B" or a "B" and a "C") is based on class participation. If you are called upon and are not prepared to discuss the readings, it could mean a zero for the class participation portion of your grade. Please come prepared!

Finally, the instructor assumes that all participants are responsible adults and will make every effort to attend all class meetings and actively participate in class discussions when of sound mind and body. Missed class sessions can put you significantly behind as what is learned during class is built upon what was learned the previous week. If you are not going to make a class, be sure to get someone to take notes for you and look them over prior to the next class meeting.

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Eric Redman and Richard Neustadt, *The Dance of Legislation* (University of Washington Press, 2000)
- George E. Shambaugh and Paul J. Weinstein Jr. *The Art of Policy Making: Tools, Techniques and Processes in the Modern Executive Branch* (Longman Publishers, 2003)
- Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May, *Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision Makers* (The Free Press, 1988)
- Craig, R. Bruce *Treasonable Doubt: The Harry Dexter White Spy Case* (University Press of Kansas, 2004)
- Reader Compiled by the instructor (A collection of published and unpublished articles, government reports, excerpts of books and policy background papers)

In addition, graduate students will prepare a book review by an author who was a participant in decision making. (Details of the assignment will be distributed separately.)

FORMAL REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:

Participants will be evaluated based on the following assignments:

- Short Writing Assignments 20 %
- Development of Policy White Paper 20 %
- Midterm Exam 20 %
- Final Exam 20 %
- Class Participation 20 %

Class 1: (August 30) Course Introduction
Review of course syllabus; instructor and participant introductions
Lecture: The Historian as Policy Maker: History is Looked at Backward,
But Lived
Forward (Policy Makers v. Policy Advisors: What is the Role of the
Historian?)
Discussion: "In the White House, a Sense of What History Can Teach"
(handout)
Lecture: Resources in Public Policy: (Periodicals/Journals,
Institutions, and the Internet)
Class Exercise: The Congressional Record
Readings: After class, review the "resources" listed under Class #1 in
the course reader.
Research Assignment #1: DUE SEPTEMBER 13 -- Public Interest
Declassification Board

LABOR DAY (August 6) -- No Class

Class 2 (September 13) The Policy Paper
Lecture: Research Methods in Policy Analysis -- The Traditional
Approach
Lecture/Discussion: The Historian and Public Policy (review of readings
of the classics)
Discussion: Results of PIDB Research Assignment #1
Lecture/Discussion and Exercise: The Policy Paper: Essential Elements
of
an Effective Policy Paper
Readings: The Art of Policy Making (Shambaugh) chapters 1-3;
Course reader: "On the Inscrutability of History" (Schlesinger);
"Uses and Misuses of History: Roles in Policymaking" (Graham);
"The Historian and Public Policy" (Franklin);
"Applying History: A Proposal for a New Direction for Historians
(Effland);
For next week, read Redman's The Dance of Legislation and outline the
legislative process from beginning to end for "The National Health
Service
Corps" legislation. Also, as you read, identify at least five
opportunities where
historians could have contributed to the legislative process.

Class 3 (September 20) Historians and the Legislative Process
Lecture: History Advocates: A Primer on How the Hill Works -- Theory
and Reality
Lecture/Discussion: How a Bill Becomes Law; A Personal Perspective
Class Discussion: Discussion of the Redman book and course reader
articles
Readings: Redman, The Dance of Legislation. Course reader: "How a Bill
Becomes
Law" and related handouts; "Battlefield Preservation in Virginia" (pay
particular
attention to the section, "The Fight over Manassas: A Case Study").

Class 4 (September 27) Legislative Histories
Lecture: Assembling a Legislative History
Research Assignment #2: DUE OCT 4 - Compile a legislative history of

P.L. 91-623

Lecture: History of Public Policy: Its Distinctive Characteristics and Methods

Readings: Course reader: "A Reflection on Historians and Policy Makers" (Trask);

"The History of Public Policy: Does It Have a Distinctive Character and Method?" (Kelley); "Forecasting the Future" (Sterns); "The Stunted Career of

Policy History: A Critique and an Agenda" (Graham); "A Prognosis of Policy

History: Stunted or Deceivably Vital? A Brief Reply to Hugh Davis Graham"

(Critchlow)

Also look over the materials on compiling a legislative history.

Class 5 (October 4) Case Studies in Public Policy :

Class Discussion: Review of the Legislative History Assignment

Lecture: Thinking In Time: Policy Determines Politics or Politics Determines Policy

Class Discussion: Thinking in Time

Lecture: The Presidential Records Act (PRA): A Case Study in Abuse of Power?

Readings: Richard E. Newstadt and Ernest R. May, Thinking in Time: The Uses of

History for Decision Makers, pp 17-272; pay particularly close attention to

chapters 13 and 14; also read "Using and Misusing History" (Graham).

For the case study on the PRA, in the course reader the selected materials on the PRA. From THOMAS, download and print a copy of H.R. 4187

and visit and review the contents of web page:

<http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/executiveorder13233.html>

Take Home Exam Distributed

FALL BREAK (October 11) -- No Class

Class 6 (October 18) Selling Policies to the People

TAKE HOME EXAM DUE (In class, review answers to mid-term)

Lecture: Persuasion: How to Write an Effective Op-Ed; Speech-writing Basics

Guest Speaker: Dr. James Banner (History News Service): "Taking History to the Public" Research Assignment #3: DUE OCT 25: Take a position pro/con the PRA E.O. (Or other topic of interest) and write a 500-750 word Op-Ed expressing your viewpoint.

[You will be evaluated on the basis of your ability to advance a point of view and

persuade readers, effective use of historical examples, clarity, and conciseness.]

Readings: The Art of Policy Making (Shambaugh) chapters 7-8

Selections from the reader on History News Service and visit the web site:

<http://www2.h-net.msu.edu/~hns>

Class 7 (October 25) Historic Preservation: Policy Making in Federal Agencies

Op-Ed Due!

Guest Lecturer: John Berresford (Federal Communications Commission):
"How to

Prepare Thoughtful Comments on Agency Rules: The Lessons of History in
Federal Communications Law"

Lecture: Preservation Policy: An Overview of Cultural Resource
Management in

America: The Antiquities and Historic Preservation Acts and the
National

Historic Landmark Program (Case Study)

Readings: The Art of Policy Making (Shambaugh) chapter 4

From the course reader, "Politics in the Pumpkin Patch" (Craig) and the
case

opinion for *Bonnichsen v. United States*.

Visit the website <http://www.achp.gov/nhpp.html> and familiarize
yourself

with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended; visit
<http://www.cr.nps.gov/nhl/> and familiarize yourself with the National
Historic

Landmarks Program.

Class 8 (November 1) Government Secrecy: The Freedom of Information Act

Lecture: The Freedom of Information/Privacy Act: What the Historian
Needs to Know

Guest Lecturer: Rebecca Daugherty (Reporters Committee) "FOIA: A
Personal

Perspective"

Class Discussion: Access, Evidence, and Standards of Proof : A Case
Study - The Harry

Dexter White Spy Case

Readings: R. Bruce Craig . Treasonable Doubt: The Harry Dexter White
Spy Case Visit and become familiar with

http://www.usdoj.gov/04foia/04_7.html .

Research Assignment #4: DUE NEXT WEEK. In Reserve Reading Room, review
the

FBI file for "Subject: Flora Lewis" You have been asked to prepare
for the FBI Director a summary memorandum assessing the Lewis case.

Write a

summary (NTE 1 page) assessing the "evidence" relating to the alleged
subversive. Was Ms. Lewis a security threat?

Class 9 (November 8) Historians and Policy Making in a Crisis: Cuban
Crisis Case Study

Class Discussion: "Subject Flora Lewis"

Screening of movie, "13 Days in October"

Readings: Richard E. Newstadt and Ernest R. May, Thinking in Time: The
Uses of

History for Decision Makers, pp xi-16; Course reader: "Turning History
on Its

Head" (Brenner) and visit web sites: <http://www.thirteen-days.com> ; and
http://www.movies.go.com/movies/T/thirteendays_2000/index.html

Class 10 (November 15) The Historian as a Foreign Policy

Analyst/Advisor

Lecture and Class Discussion: "13 Days in October" and American Foreign
Relations: A Primer

Research Assignment #5: DUE DEC. 6 -- Policy White Paper
*America's National Security Policy: Preemption - A New Grand Strategy?
Readings: The Art of Policy Making (Shambaugh) chapter 11 -- (for class discussion of "13 Days" please be prepared to compare and contrast JFK and Bush I's approaches to addressing a crisis situation)
In reader, "The Historian as Foreign Policy Analyst: The Challenge of the CIA" (Benson);
Tap into: <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/nsc68/nsc68-1.htm> ;
copy, read, and be prepared to discuss NSC-68 as a policy white paper; review
select topic files in Research Reading Room.

Class 11 (November 22) The Historian as an Expert Witness
Lecture: The Congressional Hearing: Preparing and Delivering Legislative Testimony
Discussion: Presentation of Graduate Student Book Reviews
Readings: In reader: "Historians as Expert Witnesses: The View From the Bench" (Neuenschwander); "Should Medical Historians Be Working for the Tobacco Industry?"; select materials on H.R. 107 (Cold War Theme Study).

Class 12 (November 29) The Historian as a Policy Advisor
Discussion: Presentation of Graduate Student Book Reviews
Guest Lecturer: Richard V. Allen (Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; during the Administration of Ronald Reagan Formulate teams for policy debate next week

Class 13 (December 6)
Discussion: Presentation of Graduate Student Book Reviews
Policy White Papers Due
Discussion and Class Debate: America's National Security Policy - Preemption: A New Grand Strategy?
Final Review

Study Day - (No class on December 13)

Class 14 (December 20) FINAL EXAM
Final Exam

ASSIGNMENTS:

Research Assignment #1: DUE SEPT 3

You are a staffer to Senator Hogbind A. Whitewash (Indp-VT) who is concerned about the lack of openness in the federal government. The Senator is considering introducing legislation to insure that documents that are classified by federal agencies actually deserve to be classified rather than released to the public. He has asked you to find out what you can about an advisory board he thinks was created several Congresses ago that promotes declassification of documents in the realm of national security. He cannot recall whether a bill was introduced or a public law enacted, but it was something called the

Public Interest Declassification Board (PIDB). He thinks former Senator Daniel P. Moynihan (D-NY) had something to do with it. Also, he thinks that it is possible that one of his Senate colleagues has more recently introduced legislation (and possibly a companion bill was also introduced in the House of Representatives) similar to the PIDB but he is just not sure.

In your capacity as Hogbind's legislative assistant, prepare a one-page briefing paper on the status of the current declassification effort in Congress. Include in your briefing paper whatever information you think would be of interest to the Senator in terms of policy history/background, and the current status of the measure. If a bill was introduced or if it became public law, please obtain a copy of it.

Research Assignment #2: DUE OCT 4
Compile a legislative history of P.L. 91-623.

Research Assignment #3: DUE OCT 25
Take a position pro or con the Presidential Records Act (PRA) Bush executive order and write a 500-750 word Op-Ed expressing your viewpoint. You will be evaluated on the basis of your ability to advance a point of view and persuade readers, to make effective use of historical examples, and deliver your thoughts with clarity and conciseness.

Research Assignment #4: DUE NOV 8
In the Reserve Reading Room, review the FBI file for "Subject: Flora Lewis." You have been asked to prepare for the FBI Director a summary memorandum assessing the Lewis case. Write a summary (NTE 1 page) assessing the "evidence" relating to the alleged subversive. Was Ms. Lewis a security threat?

Research Assignment #5: DUE DEC 6
On September 11, 2001, the surprise attack on the United States shattered American assumptions about national security and served as the catalyst for re-shaping America's foreign policy grand strategy. The "Bush Doctrine" rejected the Cold War notion of "containment" (though not necessarily the concept of "preponderant power") and in its place advanced several innovative if not (to some at least) "dangerous" policies, chief of which is a new attitude toward "first strikes" on potential enemies. The strategy of "preemption" was specifically designed to deal with what is perceived by many as a major new foreign policy threat - global terrorism. Preemption served (at least in part) as the philosophical justification for the invasion of Iraq and the toppling of the regime of Saddam Hussein.

The upcoming presidential election provides an opportunity to critically examine and assess this foreign policy strategy. For the Republicans, one of the nation's pre-eminent historians - John Lewis Gaddis, in his book *Surprise, Security, and The American Experience* (Harvard University Press, 2004), has provided the Republicans with the

historical justification for continuing that policy in the second term of the Bush administration.

You, however, have been hired by the Blue-Red Party to prepare a detailed historical analysis of the doctrine of preemption and based on America's historical experience, make a policy recommendation to Party officials: Should the United States continue to embrace the doctrine of preemption, modify it (and if so how), or abandon it?

In a thoughtful and well documented ten-page policy white paper, assess the history of "preemption" in American foreign policy following the generalized format discussed in class. As part of that paper you may want to critically examine Gaddis's historical examples and either challenge their validity and/or come up with other historical examples to support your thesis. Make an action recommendation and justify your position.

On December 6 you will present your recommendations to Party officials. Recognizing that there will be disagreement and that there are at least two sides to this issue, be prepared to persuasively argue your position.

Graduate Student Book Review Assignment:

During Classes 11, 12, and 13 graduate students will make brief book review presentations based on their reading of a book written by a participant decision maker. In a 3-5 page review demonstrating your best narrative skills, please address the following questions:

Who was the participant and what was the role he/she played in an historical event?

How did the individual make the appeal to use or draw upon history in decision making? What went right, what went wrong?

How did he/she use/misuse historical analogy?

What is the individual's attitude toward history?

Using the assessment formula discussed in Neustadt and May Thinking in Time, in your opinion, what did the participant do right or wrong in the process of formulating decisions?

The following are a few reading suggestions. Please note that all readings need to be approved by the instructor by the mid-term exam.

Any autobiography or reflective work on his/her life and times by a recent President or key assistant (i.e. Richard Nixon, Henry Kissinger) will probably do.

Henry Adams, The Education of Henry Adams

Robert C Byrd, Losing America: Confronting A Reckless and Arrogant Presidency

Whittaker Chambers, Witness

Ulysses S. Grant, Memoirs

Harold Nicolson, Peacemaking 1919

Adolph Hitler, Mein Kampf

Khrushchev, Khrushchev Remembers

Robert Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins

Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., Roosevelt and the Russians: The Yalta
Conference
George E Kennan, Memoirs
Arthur Schlesinger, A Thousand Days or The Bitter Heritage
George Marshall, Recollections
Harry Truman, Year of Decision or Years of Trial and Hope
Cyrus Vance, Hard Choices

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