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**PUAD 603:001 Policy Process**  
**American University -School of Public Affairs**  
**Department of Public Administration and Policy**  
**Spring 2015**

**Instructor: Dr. Meredith Anderson**

Meeting Time/Location: Monday, 5:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m., Ward 104  
Office Hours: Wednesday 2-4:30pm, Thursday 4:30- 6pm, Adjunct Office-  
Ward Circle Building

Email: [mblwalker@american.edu](mailto:mblwalker@american.edu)

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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

In order to adequately analyze public policies, it is important to understand the foundations of the policy process. In this course you will obtain a broad understanding of the policy environment, major actors, and salient institutions involved in this complex process. This course will focus heavily on the stages model of the policy process, namely, agenda setting, policy formation, decision-making, policy implementation and policy evaluation. We will also cover the major theories in the field. At the end of the course, we will assess substantive issues such as education, health, and criminal justice. Understanding the policy process is key to examining policy problems and formulating appropriate solutions.

### **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

*By taking this course, students will:*

- Understand and critically examine fundamental concepts of the public policy process
- Learn how to critically examine the policy process literature
- Cultivate research skills through the development of an original research design
- Analyze public policies from the perspective of the policy process
- Demonstrate command of policy process through presentation of final policy analysis
- Understand the major theoretical approaches in the policy process by course readings, class discussion, and talking points

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

(1) Participation	10 pts
(2) Research Design	30 pts
(3) Policy Process Analysis Paper	40 pts
(4) Policy Process Presentation	15 pts
(5) Brief Quiz	5 pts

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100 Points

## COURSE TEXTS

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- Howlett, Michael, M. Ramesh, Anthony Perl. 2009. *Studying Public Policy: Policy Cycles and Policy Subsystems*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kingdon, John W. 2011. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*. Updated 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. New York: Longman.
- All book chapters will be uploaded on Blackboard under “Content” or the “E-reserves” folder. You can access Blackboard via <http://my.american.edu> or directly via <http://blackbaord.american.edu>. The book chapters are labeled “[Content Folder]” or “[Blackboard ERESERVES]” for each week in the course schedule below.
- **All journal articles listed can be found online. You may access articles at <http://www.american.edu/library> or through a simple search on <http://scholar.google.com>.**

## ASSIGNMENTS

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### **Participation (10 points)**

Participation will be based upon in-class discussion (5pts) and talking points (5 points). Students will prepare one discussion question or point every other week on the assigned readings. Students will sign up for an odd or even week to submit talking points on the first day of class. In total, each student will submit 5 talking points for the semester. Talking points may provide extensions of the weeks’ readings, suggestions, questions, critiques regarding the methods and other pertinent issues. The talking point should be in paragraph form, and no more than 160 words. The talking point should not be a mere summary of the readings, but rather a thoughtful critique. Talking points are **due by 7pm Sunday** and should be uploaded on Blackboard under “the “Content Tab”. You will submit your point in their EVEN or ODD folder. Please copy and paste talking point into the assignment box. Do not attach a Word document. Students should be prepared to briefly discuss their point as well as other topics from the readings in class.

In -class discussion is **VERY** important and students are expected to participate **every** class period. Students will be graded on the quality of participation and contribution throughout the semester. Students should provide insightful dialogue based on the readings. Students may discuss personal experiences as it relates to the readings, however, the majority of the discussion should be grounded in the text. We will also draw upon current events as it relates to the class. Students are expected to take a proactive stance with respect to class contribution. While the instructor may sometimes use cold calling, students should not expect this to be sufficient for opportunities to make substantive contributions. Students will receive an in-class participation grade ranging from 0 (lowest score) to 5 (highest score) at the end of the semester. The talking points will be graded throughout the semester and can be checked via the grade book on Blackboard.

### **Research Designs (30 Points)**

A critical element of the policy process, especially the policy agenda, policy formation, and evaluation stages is policy research. Individuals must be able to convince decision makers and administrators why a particular problem is important and warrants attention. Additionally, policymakers are interested policy evaluations. Students will be expected to prepare one research

design for their designated week. Students will sign-up on the first class session. The design should include a description of students': (1) research question(s), (2) theoretical framework (3) hypotheses, (4) the data one would use to test the hypotheses and, (5) a conclusion on why this research would be significant for the study of public policy. In this conclusion, discuss the broader implications of your study and why the study is relevant. Use headings in your paper based on the 5 main components. This exercise is important because in the policy process, public administrators, private sector managers, analysts, and academics should be able to thoroughly assess pertinent policy issues based on empirical work. This research design may be used as a stepping-stone for future research, advocacy and/or conference presentations. **Be prepared to briefly discuss the main points of your design in class on your assigned day. You will not prepare a PowerPoint presentation for this discussion, but provide an overview of the key points. Other students will be expected to provide feedback and/or ask questions about the proposed research design.**

*Research Design Page Length: 4- 5 pages, double-spaced, Time New Romans 12pt font, 1-inch margins*

*Research Designs are due at the beginning of class of the designated week. Please print and bring a hard copy to class.*

### **Policy Process Analysis Paper (40 points)**

Students will be required to trace the five stages of the policy process for a particular policy. This should be a policy area that is **not directly related to the research design assignment**. Students should provide a brief overview and describe the problem that the policy sought to address. For each of the 5 stages (agenda setting, formulation, decision making, implementation, evaluation), the student should describe the context and relevant actors involved. Students will thoroughly critique the process and provide practical recommendations. These recommendations can be in any stage of the process. The bibliography for this project should include a minimum of 10 sources. Students may use academic journal articles, books, newspaper articles, TV news reports, GAO reports and analysis, non-profit reports and other evaluation reports. In addition to the ten sources, you must also cite course material in a meaningful way. This project will require a great deal of research, therefore it is important to start early.

*Paper Length: 10-12 pages (excluding references and cover page), double-spaced, Time New Romans 12pt font, 1 inch margins. Include headings for each section of the paper. I will provide a handout with further instructions later in the semester.*

*Note: To ensure timely completion of the policy paper, inform me of your policy area via email by **March 16th**.*

*Due Date: **May 1st** on Blackboard under "Content"- Final Paper folder.*

### **Policy Process Analysis Presentation (15 Points)**

Students will be required to present their policy process analysis project to the class. In the presentation students should trace the policy through each cycle along with the critiques and recommendations. There is also an option to include a short 1-3 minute video/audio clip that depicts how this policy was constructed in the media. Please submit video/audio clip to me at least a day before the presentation. There will also be a very brief question and answer session at the end of the presentation. **Please practice your presentation. There will be point deductions for exceeding or going significantly below the time limit.** Students are expected to attend each session even if not presenting.

*Presentation Length: 12-15 minutes, Power Point Slide Presentation should be submitted to me by 2pm the day of the presentation. Sign-up for presentation slots: **March 16th**.*

### **Brief Quiz (5 pts.)**

One brief quiz will be given on the course content throughout the semester. I will inform you of the quiz date a week before it will be administered. The quiz will be given in-class.

**Grading Scale:**

100 -95	A
94-90	A-
89-87	B+
86-83	B
82-80	B-
79-76	C+
75-73	C
72-70	C-
60-69	D
59 and below	F

## CLASS POLICIES

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***Course content and schedule:*** In this course I will use a multitude of teaching methods, including lecture, discussion, videos, and group exercises. The schedule may change depending upon the pace of the course. In addition, I may subtract some readings if necessary. I will notify you of any changes in class or through e-mail or in class.

***Attendance***

All students are expected to be on time and attend every class. It is in your best interest to attend class so you may really grasp the course material and participate in class discussion. It is your responsibility to make all the necessary provisions in relation to missed classes. Please e-mail me before class if you will not be able to attend.

***Handouts***

The handouts used in this course are copyrighted. By “handouts,” I mean all materials generated for this class, which include but are not limited to syllabi, in-class materials and review sheets. Because these are copyrighted, you do not have the right to copy the handouts, unless I grant permission.

***Academic Integrity Code***

By registering for this course, you have acknowledged your awareness of the standards of conduct as set forth in the Academic Integrity Code. Under the Code, you must not present material from another source as if it were your own. Violations of the Code are treated very seriously by the University and are subject to disciplinary action.

Plagiarism consists of passing off as one's own the words, ideas, writing, etc., which belong to another. Plagiarism is committed if you copy the work of another individual and present it as your own. Plagiarism is one of the most serious academic offenses. **All work for this course should be done individually.**

***Campus Support and Students with Disabilities***

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact: Disability Support Services: 202-885-3315, Mary Graydon Center, Room 206, [dss@american.edu](mailto:dss@american.edu).

**Counseling Center** (<http://www.american.edu/ocl/counseling/>)

Academic Support Center (<http://www.american.edu/ocl/asc/index.cfm>)

### *Course Expectations*

- Attend class and be prepared by having completed assignments and readings.
- Engage in respectful dialogue.
- Pay attention and engage with the class activities, which means, as professionals, not engaging in **texting, email, non-class internet use**, or related activities during class.
- Participate in group discussions, ask and answer questions.
- Think critically about the readings and offer insightful commentary during discussion.
- Complete assignments on time.
- Share experiences, knowledge, and opinions when it adds value.
- Do not turn in late work. Please adhere to the deadlines.

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### *Class Overview*

**Note: The professor reserves the right to make modifications to the syllabus. Students will be informed of any changes.**

Week 1, January 12: Expectations, Review of Syllabus, Research Design Sign-up, Talking Point Sign-up

**Week 2, January 19<sup>th</sup>: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day- No Class**

Week 3, January 26: What is Public Policy?

*\*\*\*\* Talking Points begin for ODD Weeks-due Sunday before class\*\*\*\**

Week 4, February 2: Policy Environment, Policy Actors

*\*\*\* Talking Points begin for EVEN Weeks-due Sunday before class\*\*\**

Week 5, February 9: Public Policy and Identity

*\*\*\*Research Designs Begin\*\*\**

Week 6, February 16: Agenda Setting, Problem Definition

Week 7, February 23: Policy Formation

Week 8, March 2: Decision Making

**Week 9, March 9th: Spring Break- No Class**

Week 10, March 16th: Policy Implementation

*\*\*\* Deadline to email topic for final paper\*\*\**

*\*\*\*Sign-up for presentation slots\*\*\**

Week 11, March 23<sup>rd</sup>: Policy Evaluation, Policy Learning

Week 12, March 30th: Education

Week 13: April 6th: Health and Criminal Justice

Week 14, April 13th: Student Presentations

Week 15, April 20th: Student Presentations

Week 16, April 27<sup>th</sup>: Student Presentation (FINAL CLASS)

**Week 17, May 1st: Final Paper Due by midnight, via Blackboard**

### Class Schedule

**Week 1, January 12: Expectations, Review of Syllabus, Sign-Ups, Student Questionnaire**

**Week 2, January 19th: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day- No Class**

**Week 3, January 26th: What is Public Policy?**

- Chapter 1: Howlett, Ramesh and Perl
- Chapter 1: Anderson [**Blackboard ERESERVES**]
- Chapter 1: *The Public Policy Theory Primer* 2013. Smith and Larimer [**CONTENT FOLDER**]
- Chapter 1: Kingdon 2011. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*
- “A Need for Better Theories” pp. 3-12 Sabatier [**CONTENT FOLDER**]

**Week 4, February 2nd: Policy Environment, Policy Actors**

- Chapter 3: Howlett, Ramesh and Perl
- Chapter 2: Kingdon 2011. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*
- Chapter 3: Kingdon 2011. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*
- Hicklin, Alisa and Erik Godwin. 2009. “Agents of Change: The Role of Public Managers in Public Policy.” *The Policy Studies Journal* (37)1: 13-20

**Week 5, February 9th: Public Policy and Identity**

\*\*\*Research Designs Begin\*\*\*

- Schneider, Anne & Helen Ingram. 1993. Social Construction of Target Populations: Implications for Politics and Policy. *The American Political Science Review* 87(2): 334-347.
- Bearfield, Dominic. 2009. “Equity at the Intersection: Public Administration and the Study of Gender” *Public Administration Review* 69(3): 383-386.
- Gorham, Bradley. 2004. "Consideration of Media Effects: The Social Psychology of Stereotypes" in Rebecca Ann Lind (Eds) *Race/Gender/Media: Considering Diversity Across Audiences*. Boston: Pearson Education Inc.
- Markus and Moya pp 1-16 & 59-62 only [**CONTENT FOLDER**]

## **Week 6, February 16: Agenda Setting, Problem Definition**

- Chapter 5: Kingdon 2011. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*
- Chapter 4: Howlett, Ramesh and Perl
- Chapter 4: *The Public Policy Theory Primer* 2013. Smith and Larimer pp. 73-97 **[CONTENT FOLDER]**
- Case Study in Agenda Setting-“Coal Mine Safety” pp. 102-105 Anderson. **[Blackboard ERESERVES]**

## **Week 7, February 23: Policy Formation**

- Chapter 5: Howlett, Ramesh and Perl
- Chapter 4 Kingdon 2011. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*
- Chapter 6: Kingdon. 2011. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*
- Case Study in Policy Formation-“The Family and Medical Leave Act” pp. 114-118 Anderson **[Blackboard]**

## **Week 8, March 2nd: Decision Making**

- Chapter 6: Howlett, Ramesh and Perl
- Chapter 3: *The Public Policy Theory Primer* 2013. Smith and Larimer **[CONTENT FOLDER]**
- Chapter 7: Kingdon 2011. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*
- Chapter 8: Kingdon 2011. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies* **[CONTENT FOLDER]**
- Anderson pp. 144-152 only “Styles of Decision Making” **[Blackboard ERESERVES]**
- **(SKIM)** --Chapter 9: Kingdon 2011. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies* **[CONTENT FOLDER]**

## **Week 9, March 9th: NO CLASS- SPRING BREAK**

## **Week 10, March 16<sup>th</sup>: Policy Implementation**

- Chapter 7: Howlett, Ramesh and Perl
- Meier, Kenneth. 1993. “Representative Bureaucracy: A Theoretical and Empirical Exposition,” in James Perry, *Research in Public Administration* Volume II. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1993, 1-36. **[CONTENT FOLDER]**
- Bohte, John and Kenneth Meier. 2000. “Goal Displacement: Assessing the Motivation for Organizational Cheating?” *Public Administration Review* 60(2): 173-182.
- Hudson, Bob. 1989. “Michael Lipsky and Street Level Bureaucracy: A Neglected Perspective” in *Disability and Dependency* Len Barton (ed). **[CONTENT FOLDER]**

### **Week 11, March 23rd: Policy Evaluation, Policy Learning**

**\*\*\*\*Sign-up for presentation slots\*\*\*\***

- Chapter 8: Howlett, Ramesh and Perl
- Chapter 9: Howlett, Ramesh and Perl
- “Interim Evaluation of the Pilot Program of the Truancy Case Management Partnership Intervention in the District of Columbia” Urban Institute Report, July 19, 2012.
- Pitts, David. 2011. “A Little Less Conversation a Little More Action” *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 21:i77-82.
- Case Study on Policy Evaluation-“The Politics of Evaluation: Head Start” pp. 297-301 **[Blackboard ERESERVES]**

### **Week 12, March 30th: Education**

- Chapter 13: Peters **[Blackboard ERESERVES]**
- Hammond, Linda-Darling. 2010. “Structured for Failure: Race, Resources, and Student Achievement” In Moya, Paula M and Hazel Rose Markus (Eds.) *Doing Race: 21 Essays for the 21st Century*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company Inc., pp.295-321 **[CONTENT FOLDER]**
- “The Widget Effect: Our National Failure to Acknowledge and Act on Differences in Teacher Effectiveness.” 2009. The New Teacher Project
- Reddick, Richard J; Welton, Anjalé D; Alsandor, Danielle J; Denyszyn, Jodi L; Platt, C Spencer. 2011. “Stories of Success: High Minority, High Poverty Public School Graduate Narratives on Accessing Higher Education.” *Journal of Advanced Academics* 22: (4) 594-618.

### **Week 13, April 6th: Health and Criminal Justice**

- Corburn, Jason, Jeffery Osleeb and Michael Porter. 2006. “Urban Asthma and The Neighbourhood Environment In New York City.” *Health and Place* 12(2): 167-179.
- Mental Health: A Surgeon General Report. 1999- Chapter One **[CONTENT FOLDER]**
- Theobald, and Haider-Markel. 2009. “Race, Bureaucracy, and Symbolic Representation: Interactions Between Citizens and Police.” *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 19(2): 409-426.
- Peters: pp. 412-422 **[Blackboard ERESERVES]**

### **Week 14, April 13th: Student Presentations**

### **Week 15, April 20th: Student Presentations**

### **Week 16, April 27<sup>th</sup>: Student Presentations (FINAL CLASS)**

### **Week 17: May 1st: Final Paper Due by midnight, via Blackboard (NO CLASS)**