

## **Revised Syllabus 1**

### **PUAD 688 Policy Practicum**

Ward 305  
Fall 2011  
Tuesdays  
5:30 pm

*Beryl A. Radin*  
*Scholar in Residence*  
*202 885-3258*

*Always available by email: [radin@american.edu](mailto:radin@american.edu)*

This course fulfills the Graduate School's requirement that all graduate programs have an exit experience in which students are tested on their ability to integrate and apply materials from their core curriculum. Thus this course is designed to provide several related experiences to students that provide a transition to the world of policy analysis work. The major element in the course is organized around a policy analysis project that is defined and structured with a real client, is done as a group experience, and focuses on the early definitional stages of the policy analysis process.

This class is designed as a transition for participants to the role of a practicing policy analyst and away from the traditional student perspective. This means that the structure of the class calls on students to work with one another and draw on each other's experience and expertise. This mirrors the world that policy analysts confront. In addition, the course focuses on the relationship between the analyst and decisionmakers and emphasizes the importance of focusing on the decisionmaker as the client of the work. As a result, the course structure does not utilize the traditional faculty role.

There are three "deliverables" in the class. First, a paper on a policy analysis organization that gives students an opportunity to think about the various job possibilities and roles that are associated with the policy analysis field. It includes attention to the range of career paths available in the field and the diverse roles associated with those career paths. Students will be asked to choose a policy analysis organization that they might like to work for and write a paper about its approach, staffing patterns, its role in the policy process, its clients and accountability relationships. This assignment coincides with the end of the MPP program and is an opportunity for students to focus on their post-graduation career plans.

Second is the 48 hour project. Each student will be asked to develop an issue paper for a decisionmaker client about a topic that is not familiar to the student. Each student will randomly pick a topic from a list of topics developed by the instructor and will have 48

hours to complete the task. This schedule is the sort of time pressure that is normal in professional policy work.

And third, the course asks each student to develop a policy analysis as part of a small group around an issue that is chosen because of student interests. The subjects for this assignment will be devised to respond to specific interests of class members and will be developed collaboratively with a client for the work. This policy analysis will provide the substantive focus throughout much of the semester and each project team will be expected to do the following:

- define the policy problem
- stipulate the person or organization that will serve as the client for the analysis
- develop a policy map of the issues and actors involved
- clarify the information, analytic tools and data collection to be used
- define alternatives for dealing with the problem and
- specify the criteria that will be used to make a recommendation

The analysis that results from this approach should provide each student with a way of integrating skills learned in other classes. This paper should be something that will provide evidence of the student's ability to conceptualize his or her role as an effective policy analyst. Students will be expected to answer specific questions on their subject related to each topic (the questions are included in this syllabus)..

There will be a variety of readings assigned for the class. Two books will be assigned:

Eugene Bardach, A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: The Eight-fold Path to More Effective Problem Solving, CQ Press.

Beryl A. Radin, Beyond Machiavelli: Policy Analysis Comes of Age, Georgetown University Press.<sup>1</sup>

In addition various chapters and articles will be available on Blackboard and will be assigned for specific class sessions. Some of these readings were included in earlier classes but they are used here as background materials for the assignments. Students will take responsibility for leading the discussion on the assigned readings.

### **Course requirements**

1. The 48 hour project
2. The final policy analysis paper
3. A paper on a policy analysis organization

Because this is a seminar, students are expected to attend class sessions. If they are unable to be present, they are expected to let the faculty member know of this.

### **Grading:**

- Paper on a policy analysis organization – 20%
- 48 hour project – 25%
- Final policy analysis paper – 40%
- Class participation – 15%

---

<sup>1</sup> I am in the midst of developing a new edition of this book and will share those changes with the class members.

### **Academic Integrity Code:**

“Standards of academic conduct are set forth in the University Academic Code. By registering, you have acknowledged your awareness of the Academic Integrity Code, and are obligated to become familiar with your rights and responsibilities as defined by the code. Violations of the Academic Integrity Code will not be treated lightly, and disciplinary action will be taken should such violations occur.”

### **Preliminary Schedule**

September 6: Introductions, review of class expectations

Preliminary discussion of final policy analysis paper topics

#### The development of the policy analysis field

Required readings: Radin, Chapters 1 and 2

Heineman, et al, Chapters 1 and 2

Bardach, Introduction

Suggested readings: Government Research Service, Think Tank Explosion

Diane Stone, “Market Principles, Philanthropic Ideals, and Public Service Values in International Public Policy Programs”

September 13: The range of career options (Mackenrood Lacour)

Readings: Radin, Chapter 3

JPAM exchange, “Reflections on Careers in Policy Analysis”, Spring 2003

Guest speaker: Iris Lav, Center for Budget and Policy Priorities

September 20: Meet clients

September 27: 48 Hour Project

Readings: Bardach book

Background material and instructions for this project will be provided.

September 29: Pick up topics, 5 pm (alternative times to be determined)

October 1: Papers due on line 5 pm

October 4: Discussion of 48 hour projects

October 11: Defining the policy problem, (Melissa Knaya, Rachel Urban)

Readings: Kingdon, Chapter 5

Dery, Chapter 2 and 3

Bardach, Chapter 1

Weimer and Vining, part of Chapter 8

*Questions:* What do you assume are the causes of the problem?  
How did the problem come to your attention?  
What is the behavioral evidence that suggests this is a problem?  
What is the policy context for the problem (e.g. past activity)?

October 18: Dealing with the client (Nichele Waller, Paulo Lopes)

*Readings:* Meltsner, Chapter 6  
Mintrom, Chapter 1

*Questions:* Who is the client?  
Why does the client want you to do an analysis?  
What external events, forces contributed to the client's interest in the topic?  
What assumptions, values, interests does the client bring to the issue?  
Is there an externally determined time frame for your assignment?  
Does the client have some preconceived notions of what your analysis will include?  
Do you think that the client may be asking the wrong questions?  
What would be your optimal relationship with your client?  
Does the client have particular views about analytical approaches or methodologies?

October 25: Developing a policy map (Christine Castell, Brad Sargent)

*Readings:* Radin, Chapter 4  
Mapping article on Blackboard

*Questions:* What issues are the most important to your client?  
Which actors should you consider? Do they agree with you, oppose you, or are they neutral?  
What are the venues that you would choose for your next step?

November 1: Data collection (Salimah Shabazz, Ella Hale)

*Readings:* Bardach, Part II  
Radin, Chapter 6

*Questions:* What information do you need to do an analysis?  
Will you have difficulty obtaining that information?  
Is the information available inside the organization or outside of it?  
Are there other sources of data that might substitute for your preferred information?

November 8: Analytic approaches (Natalie Rea, April Fuller)

Readings: Radin, Chapter 5  
Musso et al  
Bardach, Part III

Questions: What analytic approaches did you consider?  
Which did you choose and why?

November 15: Developing policy alternatives and criteria

Readings: review Bardach

Questions: What alternatives or options did you consider?  
What criteria would you use to choose between the options?  
What criteria are the most important and which did you decide to ignore?

November 22: No class

November 29: Presentations of projects

December 6

December 9: Project papers due

December 13: Policy analysis organization projects

Each student will choose a policy analysis organization for this paper. Students are encouraged to select an organization in which they would like to work. Papers should be approximately 7 pages long.

December 16: Turn in policy analysis organization papers on line

### **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

In the event of a declared pandemic (influenza or other communicable disease), American University will implement a plan for meeting the needs of all members of the university community. Should the university be required to close for a period of time, we are committed to ensuring that all aspects of our educational programs will be delivered to our students. These may include altering and extending the duration of the traditional term schedule to complete essential instruction in the traditional format and/or use of distance instructional methods. Specific strategies will vary from class to class, depending on the format of the course and the timing of the emergency. Faculty will communicate class-specific information to students via AU e-mail and Blackboard, while students must inform their faculty immediately of any absence due to illness. Students are responsible for checking their AU e-mail

regularly and keeping themselves informed of emergencies. In the event of a declared pandemic or other emergency, students should refer to the AU Web site ([www.prepared.american.edu](http://www.prepared.american.edu)) and the AU information line at (202) 885-1100 for general university-wide information, as well as contact their faculty and/or respective dean's office for course and school/ college-specific information.