**PPOL-G 611-01 Public Policy Processes | Fall 2022**

**Instructor Information**

Amit Patel, PhD McCormack Hall 3-425 Amit.Patel@umb.edu +1-718-866-5757

Office Hours: Mondays, 3:30 to 5:00 pm in-person OR by appointment (via Zoom)

**Course Information**

**Title:** Public Policy Processes: Environments, Power, and Outcomes **Credit Hours:** 3

**Online Course:** No **Time:** 1:25 – 3:55 PM on Mondays

**Classroom:** M03-0440 (PPOL/PAF Conference Room) **Web:** <https://umb.umassonline.net> (Blackboard)

**Course Overview**

This course is an inquiry into theories of public policy, highlighting the intellectual development of the interdisciplinary field of public policy. The course will focus on social, economic, and political environments of policy systems, with a special emphasis on the policy making processes.

Main purpose of this course is to familiarize participants with social, political, and economic ideas that form the foundations of contemporary public policy processes. Throughout the course, we will discuss several public policy issues as concrete examples and illustrations of theories at work. The course will primarily focus on the Western ideas about politics and economics and the political economy of the United States. Nonetheless, comparative perspectives on public policy are increasingly important and hence we will also review some comparative scholarship from international context as part of this course.

The course will be conducted in a graduate seminar format, and thus the quality of classroom discussions will be critical to the success of this course. All participants will be expected to complete assigned readings before each class and participate actively in discussions. Participation includes an active engagement with the text, participants, and the instructor in evaluating the reasoning, arguments, and evidence presented in the scholarship under discussion.

This is the first term of a two-semester core sequence. The course aims to prepare you for the advanced sequel, but most importantly, serve as a gateway into doctoral program in public policy.

**Learning Outcomes**

After successful completion and engaging participation in the course, you should be able to:

* Identify major developments in contemporary public policy theory and practice
* Compare and contrast major ideas concerning scholarship in the field of public policy
* Analyze contemporary public policy issues and write about them from a scholarly perspective

In terms of skills for your doctoral dissertation and academia in general, you should be able to:

* Read scholarly works better and faster
* Cultivate habit of regular scholarly writing
* Critically read policy literature and synthesize major viewpoints in a scholarly manner
* Sharpen analytical abilities and develop critically engaging arguments
* Develop oral presentation and persuasion skills
* Develop scientific writing skills
* Improve skills to provide constructive criticism and engage in scholarly peer-review process
* Master the art of rewriting: there is no such thing as good writing, there is only good rewriting.

**Course Materials**

**Required Text:**

1. Bardach, Eugene and Patashnik, Eric (2020). *A practical guide for policy analysis: The eightfold path to more effective problem solving,* 6th edition. Washington, DC: CQ Press. ISBN: 9781506368887
2. Stone, Deborah. (2011). *Policy paradox: The art of political decision making*. (3rd Ed) New York: W.W. Norton & Co. ISBN: 978-0-393-91272-2
3. Kingdon, John W (1995). *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*, 2nd Edition. HarperCollins College Publishers. ISBN: 978-0-205-00086-9.
4. Schneider, Larason Anne and Ingram, Helen (1997). *Policy Design for Democracy*. University Press of Kansas. ISBN 978-0-7006-0844-7.
5. Schön, Donald A and Rein, Martin (1994). *Frame Reflection: Toward the Resolution of Intractable Policy Controversies*. New York: Basic Books. ISBN: 9780465025121
6. Braybrooke, David and Lindblom Charles (1963). *A Strategy of Decision.* New York: The Free Press. ISBN: 978-0-029-04610-4.
7. Rudder, Catherine E., Fritschler Lee A., and Choi Yon Jung (2016), *Policy Making by Private Organizations.* Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press. ISBN: 978-0-8157-2898-6. [Available for online reading via Healey Library – **purchasing is not necessary**]

In addition to the chapters from these books, assigned readings for each week include resources that may be accessed on-line, on course website, or from the library.

**Recommended Text:**

1. Theodoulou, Stella Z. and Matthew A. Cahn. (Eds.) (2012). *Public Policy: The Essential Readings*. 2nd Edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. ISBN: 9780205856336

While I will not assign readings from this book, it is a handy reference for a quick glance at many of the classical theories from various fields that are relevant to public policy. In my opinion, they are short summaries of original works that might make more sense after you have read the original works presented in this book. You might agree with this opinion by checking out some of the pieces that appear in this handbook with the originals that you will read in entirety in this course (e.g., Kingdon). This book’s usefulness is in having all the prominent public policy theories in one place rather than explaining individual theories in great detail.

**Schedule**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Session** | **Date** | **Topic** | **Assignment Due** | **Discussion Leader** | **Policy in Press** |
| 1 | 09/12 | Immersion |  |  |  |
| 2 | 09/19 | What is Public Policy? |  |  |  |
| 3 | 09/26 | Orderly Rationality | Memo |  |  |
| 4 | 10/03 | Rationality Project Continued | Memo, Term-paper: Policy Research Proposal |  |  |
| **\*\*\* 10/10: Indigenous People’s Day (No Class) \*\*\*** |
| 5 | 10/17 | Rationality Project Punctuated | Memo |  |  |
| 6 | 10/24 | Chaotic Political Economy | Memo, Term-paper: Annotated Bibliography |  |  |
| 7 | 10/31 | Theory of Salience | Memo, Book Critique |  |  |
| 8 | 11/07 | Policy Prescriptions | Memo, Term-paper: Synthesis |  |  |
| 9 | 11/14 | Resolving Policy Stalemates | Memo |  |  |
| 10 | 11/21 | Essence of Decisions | Memo, Term-paper: Analysis |  |  |
| 11 | 11/28 | Organizations and Bureaucracy | Memo, Term-paper: First Draft |  |  |
| 12 | 12/05 | Diffusion of Policy Innovations | Memo, Term-paper: Peer-review |  |  |
| 13 | 12/12 | Policy Conference | Term-paper Presentations |
| 14 | 12/19 | **\*\*\* Term-paper due \*\*\* (Class does NOT meet)** |

**Grading Policy**

Book Critique 10%

Weekly Memo and Comments 10%

Class Participation in Synchronous Sessions 10%

Discussion Leadership 15%

Policies in Press 15%

Term-paper Presentation 05%

Term-paper Peer Review 05%

Term-paper 30%

The final weighted score of assignments will be converted to a letter grade as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Letter Grade** | **Percentage** | **Quality Points** |
| A | 93-100% | 4.00 |
| A- | 90-92% | 3.75 |
| B+ | 87-89% | 3.25 |
| B | 83-86% | 3.00 |
| B- | 80-82% | 2.75 |
| C+ | 77-79% | 2.25 |
| C | 73-76% | 2.00 |
| F | 0-72% | 0.0 |
| **INC** | A grade of Incomplete (INC) is not automatically awarded when a student fails to complete a course. Incompletes are given at the discretion of the instructor. They are awarded when satisfactory work has been accomplished in the majority of the course work, but the student is unable to complete course requirements as a result of circumstances beyond his/her control. The student must negotiate with and receive the approval of the course instructor in order to receive a grade of incomplete. I will consider this grade only for medical and family emergencies. | N/A |
| IF | Received for failure to comply with contracted completion terms. | N/A |
| W | Received if withdrawal occurs before the withdrawal deadline. | N/A |
| AU | Audit (only by permission)  | N/A |
| NA | Not Attending (student appeared on roster, but never attended class. Student is still responsible for tuition and fee charges unless withdrawal form is submitted before deadline. NA has no effect on cumulative GPA.) | N/A |

**Teaching Style**

Each class will start with a participant presenting Policies in Press (more information below).

Each week (starting from 3rd week and up to 14th week), we will have a participant providing discussion leadership (more information below). Discussion leaders are expected to provide structure to the class by presenting summaries of readings and asking key questions that could generate debate and discussion. Instructor’s lecturing will be minimal. Consequently, the success of this course will heavily rely on your participation in the synchronous sessions.

**Assignments**

An important feature of this course is that we will learn about carrying out an independent research project. Therefore, we will engage in activities in the form of assignments that will develop scholarship skills that are required to carry out a large research project of your own (yes, we are talking about your doctoral dissertation). The assignments are designed to prepare you for scholarship in two distinct ways: first, to strengthen your abilities to link theories and abstract concepts to the practice of policymaking in the real word and in the process, identify limitations of existing theories; and second, to prepare you for carrying out empirical policy research that could help you to develop your own theory. Assignments are also designed to provide you ample opportunities to activities that policy researchers routinely engage in: i) developing and presenting your thesis in scholarly manner in written and oral form; and ii) providing constructive criticism and scholarly review to your peers.

**Book Critique**

Write 5 to 6 pages (double-spaced, 12-point font, Times New Roman, regular margins) critique of Bardach and Patashnik’s “*A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis”*. For this essay, briefly describe the authors’ approach and their major insights for conducting policy analysis. Then critically analyze the effectiveness of their approach, using alternative theories presented in this course as well as any “real-world” examples of public policy development. Skills acquired in this assignment will be extremely helpful when you engage in literature review for your dissertation. Reviewing a book for a journal will help you to get noticed in your field in early career especially in academia (besides getting a free desk copy of book and a legitimate chance to initiate a conversation with the book author).

**Policies in Press**

Every week, one participant will present Policies in Press. As a part of this exercise, you will prepare a PowerPoint or Prezi and provide a structured discussion on policy relevant news. While Google News is a great source, I strongly encourage you to visit online editions of the major newspapers such as New York Times, Washington Post, Boston Globe, Guardian, Financial Times, and magazines like the Economist, and Time. While it is important to present current affairs, if you do not see anything important happening in one fine boring week in the world of policies, please feel free to pick up a significant issue from the recent past. Most importantly, this is not a usual news reader’s job. You will apply some of the theories and frameworks learned in this course to make better sense of news reports. This assignment will help you form a habit of staying up to date with current affairs in the world of politics and policy. In a field such as public policy, it is very important to be aware of the recent developments at least in area of your interest. Current affairs are helpful for small talks at professional conferences, in elevator rides with your peers, and in your job interviews. Do not underestimate the power of small talk. Good news is that those who read newspaper regularly are active voters, a study reports; bad news is that this study was carried out by the Newspaper Association of America Foundation who may have active interest in selling news to us.

**Weekly Memo**

Each of the weekly memos, 500-800 words in length, should comment on and raise questions arising from the readings, and should be submitted **by 1:00 PM the day before class meeting**. Discussion leader or I will often draw on these memos in class, calling on you to share and discuss points made therein. Once you have submitted your memo, you will then read any ONE of your colleague’s memo and comment on it on course website any time before the class meeting. Your first memo is due on 19th September 2022 (in preparation for Session 3) and last memo is due on 5th December 2022 (in preparation for Session 14). Times New Roman, 12 points, double-spaced, electronically submitted on course website under Discussion Board titled Weekly Memo [Session Number].

When you are presenting either policies in press or conducting discussion leadership, you (just you) are exempt from submitting a memo and commenting on your colleague’s memo. Instead, you will use that time to prepare for your presentation on that day. In addition, all of you can skip writing a memo (and commenting on your colleague’s memo) for any ONE week of your choice. Yay, everybody likes a flash sale even if most of them are busts!

**Discussion Leadership**

Every week, one of the participants will take a leadership role for class discussions. You will prepare a PowerPoint or Prezi to provide a very short summary of readings (which works as a great strategy for making others to take one step further and think more critically and not merely repeat what is in the readings), followed by a structured discussion. Generating a structured discussion requires that you have prepared interesting questions and counterarguments in anticipation. It will be helpful to read your colleagues’ memos (that is one reason why they are due 24 hours before class). Generating a structured discussion also requires that you are able to think on your feet (do not worry – that happens automatically **when you have thoroughly understood and researched the topic under discussion ahead of time**). Generating a structured discussion also requires that you add additional information on the topic from your own observations, experiences, and prior reading. Your discussion leadership will only succeed if you can make your colleagues participate and contribute to ongoing discussion. Remember, your goal is not to present your viewpoint but instead, get as many viewpoints presented as possible from your fellow participants. Note to everybody else: features of good debate and discussion include holding opinions, respecting others’ opinions, active listening, and thoughtful presentation of your own arguments. We are all learning together; we want an open, free‑flow of information, and a learning environment that is inclusive and considers multiple perspectives with a possibility of agreeing to respectfully disagree.

**Term-Paper**

You will work on a term-paper in policy area of your interest. The final outputs will be in a form of a journal style policy paper and a conference style presentation. Both the presentation and paper should cover the key elements of a scholarly policy research.

Your paper is expected to be approximately 20 pages (double spaced, regular margins, normal font size and margins). For examples of policy papers, I encourage you to read articles from leading journals in the field of public policy (such as Journal of Policy Analysis and Management). The purpose of such review is threefold: first, to get model papers to help you structure your own paper, second, to stay updated with the field of public policy as you embark on your doctoral journey, and finally, you will have a list of journals where you could publish your own work in near future.

Your term paper presentation is expected to follow a professional conference format. Each participant will present within the 15-minute time limit. As a thumb rule, it takes 1 minute to present 1 PowerPoint slide (so prepare maximum of 15 slides in total). A professional presentation is always coherent and complete, and transition between slides is absolutely seamless and smooth. If you practice your presentation in front of your friends, family, or a good old mirror, you should be prepared to have a totally mesmerized audience when you present your final product.

It is very important to cite all the papers that you review, source of the datasets and material used in the analysis (including software packages) – See Code of Conduct and Academic Integrity section below. You are expected to submit an electronic form of your presentation file (pptx format or link to Prezi). You are also expected to submit an electronic form of the paper (docx format).

After the semester has concluded, I strongly encourage you to consider professional outlets for publishing your work such as conferences and scholarly journals in your field.

**Class Preparation**

This class is a graduate seminar and takes the form of a structured discussion of the assigned readings. There are two distinct and required forms of this structured discussion: weekly memos and synchronous session discussion. Weekly memos will prepare you for expressing your ideas and critical arguments in a written form and in asynchronous communication setting. Synchronous session discussions will prepare you for presenting your arguments verbally and in synchronous communication setting. In both forms, you will be discussing with people who may or may not agree with you. Both of these activities are weekly assignments and carries significant weight on your final grade.

It is essential that you complete your assigned readings for each week, prepare a weekly memo, and submit it on time. Weekly memos will help you to organize your thoughts and discussion points before the class. Written communication is as important as oral communication in the profession of public policy. The only way to learn technical and scientific writing is to practice, so you will be required to submit a weekly memo based on each week’s assigned readings. While I encourage you to discuss the readings in study groups, you will submit your own memo.

Your participation in class encompasses questions and comments that demonstrate knowledge of – though not necessarily agreement with – assigned course readings or other information that sheds light on a topic relevant to the course. Remember, professionals in public policy must be able to speak effectively in small groups, to make presentations of their work and, to think on their feet. Participants are expected to contribute to discussions and will be required to present summaries of each week’s assigned readings. Class participation is critical to success in this course.

**Logistics**

Each participant will sign-up for presenting Policies in Press for any ONE week and for Discussion Leadership for another ONE week of your choice. To provide you quality time for each of these exercises, you will NOT pick the same week for both Policies in Press and Discussion Leadership, so two weeks to pick in total.

When it is your turn to present Policies in Press, you will prepare a 20-minute (maximum) presentation covering important news items concerning politics and policy followed by 10-minute discussion. You will be exempted from submitting the individual memo that week (Yay!).

When it is your turn to conduct Discussion Leadership, you will prepare questions and discussion points to provide structure in that session. You will present your summaries of the reading and be exempted from submitting the individual memo that week (Yay, again!).

**As a guiding principle, for EACH hour you spend in the classroom, please set aside TWO additional hours in your weekly schedule for reading and brainstorming about the ideas presented in your readings. In the week, you are presenting either Policies in Press or conducting Discussion Leadership, set aside THREE additional hours in your weekly schedule for EACH hour you spend in the classroom.**

**Code of Conduct and Academic Integrity**

It is the expressed policy of the University that every aspect of academic life – not only formal coursework situations, but all relationships and interactions connected to the educational process – shall be conducted in an absolutely and uncompromisingly honest manner. The University presupposes that any submission of work for academic credit is the student’s own and is in compliance with University policies, including its policies on appropriate citation and plagiarism. These policies are spelled out in the Code of Student Conduct here: <https://www.umb.edu/life_on_campus/policies/community/code>. Students are required to adhere to the code of Student Conduct, including requirements for academic honesty, as delineated in the University of Massachusetts Graduate Catalogue and relevant program student handbook(s).

**Accommodations**

The University of Massachusetts Boston is committed to providing reasonable academic accommodations for all students with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate format upon request. If you have a disability and feel you will need accommodations in this course, please contact the Ross Center for Disability Services, Campus Center, Upper Level, Room 211 at 617.287.7430. http://www.umb.edu/academics/vpass/disability/ After registration with the Ross Center, a student can request accommodations at any time; Ross Center recommends that students inform the professor of the need for accommodations by the end of the Drop/Add period to ensure that accommodations are available for the entirety of the course.

**Anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policies**

The University of Massachusetts Boston’s Office of Civil Rights and Title IX fosters a community committed to dignity and respect for all our members. For information about UMB’s anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policies and procedures, please visit <http://umb.edu/crtix>. If you would like information about support resources, please visit <http://umb.edu/titleix/resources>.

**Detailed Schedule**

**Session 1, Sep 12: Immersion**

Introductions and Policy Simulation

**Session 2, Sep 19: What is Public Policy?**

*Policies in Press:*

*Discussion Leader:*

*Readings* Gupta, D (2011), Analyzing Public Policy: Concepts, Tools and Techniques, Washington DC: CQ Press. Chapter 1: Introduction, pp. 1 – 9.

 McCool, D (1995), Public Policy Theories, Models, and Concepts, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall. Chapter 1: Theoretical Foundation of Policy Studies, pp. 1 – 27.

 Cochran, C. and Malone, E (1999), Public Policy: Perspectives and Choices, 2nd Edition, Boston: McGraw-Hill College. Chapter 1: Basic Concepts in Public Policy, pp. 1 – 24.

 Moran, M., Rein, M., Goodin, R. (2006), The Oxford Handbook of Public Policy, Oxford: Oxford University Press, Chapter 1: The Public and Its Policies, pp. 3 – 35.

 Smith, K. and Larimer, C. (2013), The Public Policy Theory Primer, 2nd Edition, Boulder: Westview Press. Chapter 1: Public Policy as a Concept and a Field (or Fields) of Study, pp. 1 – 25.

 Weimer, D., Vining A., (2011), Policy Analysis: 5th Edition, Boston: Pearson. Chapter 2: What is Policy Analysis, pp. 23-39.

 Theodoulou, S. and Cahn, M. (1995), Public Policy: The Essential Readings, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall. Chapter 1: The Contemporary Language of Public Policy: A Starting Point, pp. 1 – 9.

 Theodoulou, S. and Cahn, M. (1995), Public Policy: The Essential Readings, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall. Chapter 2: Political Science and Public Policy, pp. 10 – 15.

**Session 3, Sep 26: Orderly Rationality**

*Policies in Press:*

*Discussion Leader:*

*Readings:* Bardach and Patashnik (All)

**Session 4, Oct 03: Rationality Project Continued**

*Policies in Press:*

*Discussion Leader:*

*Readings:* Braybrooke & Lindblom (All)

**Due Today: Policy Research Proposal (Term-paper)**

**Session 5, Oct 17: Rationality Project Punctuated**

*Policies in Press:*

*Discussion Leader:*

*Readings:*  True, J. L., Jones, B. D., & Baumgartner, F. R. (2019). Punctuated-equilibrium theory: explaining stability and change in public policymaking. In *Theories of the policy process* (pp. 155-187). Routledge.

(Likely more readings will be added)

**Session 6, Oct 24: Chaotic Political Economy**

*Policies in Press*

*Discussion Leader*

*Readings:* Stone (All)

**Due Today: Annotated Bibliography (Term-paper)**

**Session 7, Oct 31: Theory of Salience**

*Policies in Press*

*Discussion Leader*

*Readings:* Kingdon (All)

**Due Today: Book Critique**

**Session 8, Nov 07: Policy Prescriptions**

*Policies in Press*

*Discussion Leader*

*Readings:* Schneider and Ingram (All)

**Due Today: Synthesis (Term-paper)**

**Session 9, Nov 14: Resolving Policy Stalemates**

*Policies in Press*

*Discussion Leader*

*Readings:* Schön and Rein (All)

**Session 10, Nov 21: Essence of Decisions**

*Policies in Press*

*Discussion Leader*

*Readings:* Irving Janis, “Groupthink among Policy Makers,” from *Sanctions for Evil*, edited by Nevitt Sanford and Craig Comstock (SF: Jossey-Bass, 1971), pp. 71-89.

Graham Allison, “Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis,” *American Political Science Review* Vol. 16, No. 3 (September 1969), pp. 689-718).

Alexander George, “The case for multiple advocacy in making foreign policy,” *American Political Science Review* Vol. 66, No. 3 (1972), pp. 751-785.

Horst W.J. Rittel and Melvin M. Webber, “Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning,” *Policy Sciences*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (June 1973), pp. 155-169. [“wicked problems”]

**Due Today: Analysis (Term-paper)**

**Session 11, Nov 28: Organizations and Bureaucracy**

*Policies in Press*

*Discussion Leader*

*Readings*: Rudder, Catherine E., Fritschler Lee A., and Choi Yon Jung (2016), *Policy Making by Private Organizations.* Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.

William G. Ouchi, “Markets, Bureaucracies, and Clans,”

 *Administrative Science Quarterly* Vol. 25, No. 1(March 1980), pp. 129-141.

R.H. Coase, “The Problem of Social Cost,” *Journal of Law and Economics*

 Vol. III (October 1960).

D.H. Regan, “The Problem of Social Cost Revisited,” *Journal of Law and Economics,* Vol. 15 No. 2 (October 1972), pp. 427-437.

Steven Kerr, “On the folly of Rewarding A, while hoping for B,” *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 18 (1975), pp. 769-783.

Amy Zegart, “Agency Design and Evolution,” *Oxford Handbook on American Bureaucracy.* (NY: Oxford, 2010), Ch. 9, pp. 207-230.

H. George Frederickson and Edmund C. Stazyk, “Myths, Markets, and the Visible Hand of American Bureaucracy”, in *Oxford Handbook on American Bureaucracy.* (NY: Oxford, 2010).

**Due Today: First Draft (Term-paper)**

**Session 12, Dec 05: Diffusion of Policy Innovations**

*Policies in Press*

*Discussion Leader*

*Readings*: Braun, D., & Gilardi, F. (2006). Taking ‘Galton's problem’seriously: Towards a theory of policy diffusion. *Journal of theoretical politics*, *18*(3), 298-322.

Marsh, D., & Sharman, J. C. (2009). Policy diffusion and policy transfer. *Policy studies*, *30*(3), 269-288.

(Likely more readings will be added)

**Due Today: Term-paper Peer-review**

**Session 13, Dec 12: Policy Conference**

**Due Today Presentation in person and presentation slides**

**Session 14, Dec 19: Term-paper due (No Exceptions) \*\*\*(Class does not meet)\*\*\***