Public policies are not produced in a vacuum, nor can they be studied in a vacuum. Rather they are shaped by social, economic, organizational and political conditions, and they unavoidably reflect embedded value and ideological systems. Likewise, policy analysis is often times conducted for an audience with expectations and wishes under a set of circumstances that may be beyond the control of policy analysts. How can we then make sense of competing information and arrive at effective recommendations?

This course provides a general introduction to policy analysis, so that by the end of the course, you will be able to critique policy analysis and effectively communicate your recommendations to clients. The following is a list of skills you can expect to learn and develop in this course:

### Production-Side Skills:
- Define and frame public problems.
- Identify and assess policy solutions.
- Make informed recommendations to clients.
- Convey complex policy issues clearly in writing and verbally.
- Understand the strengths and limitations of your analysis.

### Consumer-Side Skills:
- Assess the quality of policy-relevant information presented by others.
- Identify the value and ideological systems underlying each information product.
- Identify the external factors impacting suggested policy solutions.
- Identify the strengths and limitations of information presented by others.

### Required Readings:
- All other readings are available on Blackboard (blackboard.gwu.edu).
**Credit Hour Guidelines:**

- In accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 34 CFR 602.24(f) and the requirements of Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 3-credit lecture-based course expects students to spend a total of 112.5 semester hours. This course is designed so that 112.5 hr = (2 hr \times 14 lectures) + (3 hr \times 14 class preparations) + (42.5 hr on assignments) = 28 hr + 42 hr + 42.5 hr.

**Assignments:**

- Please check Blackboard for complete details of each assignment and assessment.

1) **Class Participation, Engagement and Reading Summaries:** Your participation grade will be assessed based on preparedness, classroom etiquette and engagement. Policy analysts often work collectively and collaboratively in a multi-disciplinary team setting. Henceforth, the ability to contribute to class discussions and encourage critical thinking is an essential skill for you to have.

   \[ 20\% \times 1 \]

2) **Problem Definition Memo:** You will prepare a 500 to 750 words memo introducing a policy issue you plan to analyze for your final project. You are required to identify a national client and succinctly explain why the problem needs to be addressed. You are encouraged to reuse this memo as part of your final policy analysis memo.

   \[ 10\% \times 1 \]

3) **Problem Sets:** You will submit a total of four problem sets to demonstrate an understanding of core concepts underlying policy analysis. Each written response should be no longer than 500 words.

   \[ 10\% \times 4 \]

4) **Group Presentation:** Each group will conduct and present a policy analysis following Bardach’s Eightfold Path. Each group should meet at least twice outside of class to choose a topic, come up with a policy definition, strategize, work out the division of labor, and prepare for the presentation. On the day of the presentation, each group is required to submit a hardcopy of presentation slides to the instructor, present for 15 minutes, and lead a substantive class discussion of the presentation for an additional 15 minutes.

   \[ 15\% \times 1 \]

5) **Final Policy Analysis:** You will prepare a 3,500 words memo analyzing any policy issue of your interest for a national client who possesses some power to address the issue. You are required to use both evidence and logic to demonstrate why the problem needs to be addressed, and are expected to provide four credible policy alternatives for your client to consider, in addition to a “status quo” alternative. You will describe the evaluation criteria that should guide the alternative policy selection process and project the performance of alternatives. You will assess the tradeoffs among alternatives and recommend an alternative.

   \[ 15\% \times 1 \]

**Total:** 100 %
Grading:

• No late homework or final project will be accepted 5 days after the original deadline and late assignments will result in a 10% per day penalty.
• Whether your absence is excused or unexcused, you are responsible for meeting all of the requirements listed on this syllabus. Therefore, permission to miss class does not mean you can turn in your assignments late.

Overall Course Grades Reflect the Following Philosophy:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Excellent: Exceptional work for a graduate student. Work at this level is unusually thorough, well reasoned, creative, methodologically sophisticated, and well written. Work is of exceptional, professional quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A−</td>
<td>Very Good: Very strong work for a graduate student. Shows signs of creativity and a strong understanding of appropriate analytical approaches, is thorough and well reasoned, and meets professional standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>Good: Sound work for a graduate student; well reasoned and thorough, without serious analytical shortcomings. This grade indicates the student has fully accomplished the basic objectives of this graduate course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Adequate: Competent work for a graduate student with some evident weaknesses. Demonstrates competency in the key course objectives but the understanding or application of some important issues is less than complete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B−</td>
<td>Borderline: Weak work for a graduate student but meets minimal expectations in the course. Understanding of key issues is incomplete. (A &quot;B−&quot; average in all courses is not sufficient to sustain graduate status in 'good standing'.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>Deficient: Inadequate work for a graduate student; rarely meets minimal expectations for the course. Work is poorly developed or flawed by numerous errors and misunderstandings of important issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Unacceptable: Work fails to meet minimal expectations or course credit for a graduate student. Performance has consistently failed to meet minimum course requirements. Weaknesses and limitations are pervasive.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Writing Resources:

• Although the course guides you through the process of formulating and understanding difficult set of ideas, it does not teach you how to write better. If you need help with your writing, you should make an appointment with a writing consultant at the Writing Center (202-994-3765).
Course Expectations:
• You are expected to attend class regularly. If you must miss a class, you are expected to notify me in advance and arrange to submit assignments in a timely manner.
• You are expected to complete required readings before each session and should be ready to participate in class discussions.
• You are expected to use your laptops only for the purpose of taking notes.
• You can expect me to respond to your e-mails promptly during the weekdays between 8am to 8pm.
• You can expect me to treat you with respect and compassion, irrespective of my ideology, values, or identity.

Classroom Civility:
• “Higher education works best when it becomes a vigorous and lively marketplace of ideas in which all points of view are heard. Free expression in the classroom is an integral part of this process. At the same time, higher education works best when all of us approach the enterprise with empathy and respect for others, irrespective of their ideology, political views, or identity. We value civility because that is the kind of community we want, and we care for it because civility permits intellectual exploration and growth.”

Academic Integrity:
• “All students – undergraduate, graduate, professional full time, part time, law, etc. – must be familiar with and abide by the provisions of the Code of Academic Integrity.”
• I expect that you meet the minimum standards for academic student conduct set forth by the Code of Academic Integrity and understand that your failure to uphold academic integrity in your coursework results in academic disciplinary sanctions.

Religious Holidays:
• In accordance with University policy, please notify me during the first week of the semester if you plan to be absent from class to observe a religious holiday. You will be allowed to make up missed assignments without penalty.

Disability Accommodations:
• Students who qualify for access to disability accommodations should contact the Disability Support Services (DSS) at 202-994-8250, so that I can provide effective and appropriate accommodations to meet the needs of students with disabilities.
• The accommodation procedure involves three steps: (1) complete a registration form, (2) document your disability, and (3) request letters to professors.
• For more information, visit their office in Rome Hall, Suite 102.

Mental and Psychological Wellness:
• If you or your peers are experiencing emotional distress, please contact the Mental Health Services at the Colonial Health Center at 202-994-5300 (available 24/7).

Safety and Security:
• In the case of an emergency, if at all possible, the class should shelter in place. If the building that the class is in is affected, follow the evacuation procedures for the building. After evacuation, seek shelter at a predetermined rendezvous location.
Course Schedule and Readings:

08/28  Week 1: What Is Policy Analysis?
1) Bardach & Patashnik: Introduction
5) Shapiro, Stuart. 2016. “When Do Policymakers Listen to Policy Analysis, and When Do They Ignore It?” THE HILL.

09/03  Reading Summaries for Week 1 Due at Midnight
NOTE: Details of the assignment and the grading rubric are posted on Blackboard!

09/04  Week 2: Labor Day
NOTE: Please schedule a brief introductory meeting with your assigned group to choose a topic and come up with a policy definition by early October.

09/11  Week 3: Policy Analysis in a Post-Truth World?!
- Reflecting on these readings, what would you say is the most important skill you would need in order to become an effective policy analyst? Be ready to share your response in class.

PPPA6006 – Fall 2017 (Strader): 5
09/18 Week 4: Defining Policy Problems
1) Campbell: Prologue, Trying to Make It in America.
2) Bardach & Patashnik: Part I, Step 1 – Define the Problem, Step 2 – Assemble Some Evidence.

Review Sample Problem Definitions:
• Visit the U.S. Government Accountability Office website and download at least two reports that look interesting to you.
• Skim through each highlight, and then review the problem definition section that immediately follows the background section.
  ‣ Do you agree or disagree with each of the problem definitions? Please briefly explain your answers and be ready to share your response in class.

09/24 Problem Definition Memo Due at Midnight
NOTE: Details of the assignment and the grading rubric are posted on Blackboard!

09/25 Week 5: Theories of Policy Making
1) Campbell: The Place of the Poor in the American Welfare State.

For In-Class Discussion (Read 1 of the articles listed below):

10/02 Week 6: Specifying Policy Alternatives
1) Campbell: Down the Rabbit Hole.
2) Bardach & Patashnik: Part I, Step 3 – Construct the Alternatives, Appendix B – Things Governments Do.

Review Sample Reports:
• CBO. 2013. The Army’s Ground Combat Vehicle Program and Alternatives.
• CBO. 2014. Transitioning to Alternative Structures for Housing Finance.
  ‣ Please read the summary and review summary tables 1 and 2 carefully in both reports. Be ready to discuss in class what purpose each table serves.

10/08 Group Presentation Preparation Worksheet Due at Midnight
10/09 Week 7: Fall Break

10/16 Week 8: Implementation and Policy Design
1) Bardach & Patashnik: Part III, Handling a Design Problem.
2) Campbell: How Mean-sTested Programs keep People Poor.

Sample Logic Models (Please review all of them before coming to the class):
• CDC. 2009. Logic Model for the Prevention Research Centers Program.
• United Way. 2015. West End After School Program (scroll all the way to the end).
• WHO. 2016. WHO/CDC Logic Model for Micronutrient Interventions in Public Health.

10/22 Problem Set #1 Due at Midnight

10/23 Week 9: Developing Evaluation Criteria
1) Bardach & Patashnik: Part I, Step 4 – Select the Criteria.

For In-Class Exercise:
  • Be ready to discuss what criteria should be used to evaluate proposed reforms to the immigration and naturalization laws.

10/30 Week 10: Projecting Outcomes Based on Models of Human Behavior
2) Bardach & Patashnik: Part I, Step 5 – Project the Outcomes.
4) Knowledge@Wharton. 2015. Why an Open Mind Is Key to Making Better Predictions (a 26-minute video).

Sample Simulations (Please review/skim both):
• OPTIONAL: Hall, Keith. 2017. Congressional Budget Office Director Remarks at Retirement Research Conference. C-SPAN. *In this presentation, CBO director Keith Hall details how his office estimates spending for legislation.

11/05 Problem Set #2 Due at Midnight
11/06  Week 11: Projecting Outcomes Using Evidence and Experience
1) Bardach & Patashnik: Part IV – Smart (Best) Practices.
3) RAND. 2017. The RAND Health Insurance Experiment (video, 16 min).

For In-Class Discussion (Please watch both videos):
  • You do not have to read the article, but please watch this short video of him explaining about his experiment and the results.
  • Again, you do not have to read the article, but please watch this short video summarizing the experiment and his findings.

11/13  Week 12: Making Policy Tradeoffs
1) Bardach & Patashnik: Part I, Step 6 – Confront the Tradeoffs, Step 7 – Stop/Focus/Narrow/Deepen/Decide!
3) Campbell: The Fifty Different Worlds of Social Assistance.

Sample Materials (Please review/skim both):
• Legislative Analyst’s Office. 2016. Options for Modifying the State Child Care Tax Credit.

11/19  Problem Set #3 Due at Midnight

11/20  Week 13: Tell Your Story

Sample Stories (Please watch a video of your choice):
• Coyote, Ivan. 2015. Why We Need Gender-Neutral Bathrooms. TED.
• Rosling, Hans. 2015. Don’t Panic: End Poverty. BBC TWO.
• Bregman, Rutger. 2017. Poverty Isn’t A Lack of Character: It’s A Lack of Cash. TED.
  • Please come to class prepared to share your thoughts about the talk you watched (pay attention to their storytelling techniques!).
11/27  Week 14: Politics & Policy Analysis
1) Bardach & Patashnik: Appendix D – Strategic Advice on the Dynamics of Political Support.

For In-Class Discussion:
  • Should policy analysts do political analysis?

12/03  Problem Set #4 Due at Midnight

12/04  Week 15: Group Presentations

12/11  Week 16: Group Presentations and Wrap-Up

12/18  Final Policy Analysis Due
NOTE: Details of the assignment and the grading rubric are posted on Blackboard!

<<< DISCLAIMER: I reserve the right to revise this syllabus if the need arises. >>>