PPPA 6049 - Urban and Regional Policy Analysis  
Summer, 2014  
SYLLABUS (May 15, 2014)

Nancy Y. Augustine, PhD  nya@gwu.edu  MPA 601C

Office Hours:  Thursdays, 5:00 – 5:45 and by appointment  
Online office hours: Mondays, 12:00pm – 1:00pm

Class meeting:  Thursdays, 6:10 – 8:45pm  MPA 305  
May 19 - July 27


Course Description:
This course examines urban and regional policy problems and responses. We will talk about how policy principles can be influenced by social, political, environmental, technological, and economic contexts. We will cover the logic of urban policy analysis (i.e., how to analyze urban problems and policies), urban trends, conditions, and processes, city-suburban policy interactions, and the role of the city in the regional and national economies. The latter part of the course will focus on specific urban problems and policies.

Student Learning Objectives
By the end of the term, students will be able to:

- Conduct quick, basic policy analysis of urban and regional issues.
- Identify sources of information and assemble evidence regarding urban problems and solutions.
- Distinguish the roles and actions taken by public, private, and non-profit organizations in the development of solution to the problems discussed.
- Analyze and evaluate proposed solutions to understand the tradeoffs among the positive, negative, and unintended consequences of proposals.
- Recognize when and how public management professionals can work to help solve the problems faced by today’s cities.
- Communicate effectively in writing and verbally.
Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course, but I assume that you have a basic understanding of U.S. political institutions and the policymaking process. Check Blackboard for supplementary readings designed to give you the needed foundation.

Method of Instruction and Classroom Policies

I see my role as a combination lecturer and facilitator. I will spend part of class time conveying information to you. But deeper learning takes places when students themselves make the connections, apply concepts, discuss implications, ask questions, and consider options. I use a variety of techniques to make that happen.

I see your role as an active contributor to the learning process. You will have opportunities to participate through in-class discussions and group activities. Read the assigned materials before class, each week, take notes, and be prepared to discuss. The required readings will be a launching point for lectures and discussions, not a substitute.

Attendance in class is required, but I realize that this might not always be possible. Contact me as soon as you know that you will be out. I will deduct 1 point from your overall score for unexcused absences.

I use Blackboard extensively. Please check it regularly. I will use the Announcements and the discussion board for non-time sensitive notices, new materials, and discussion. An area of the course home page is supposed to alert you to new content, upcoming due dates, and posting of grades.

I have set up a discussion board for your questions and comments about class. Help me keep class email straight by asking questions or making comments through the discussion board on Blackboard. Bonus, everyone gets to benefit from the answer. Feel free to start a new thread or add to somebody else’s. Email me directly about an upcoming absence or other personal matters.

Most days of the week, I am in my office on campus. You are welcome to stop by any time that my door is open. I am also available for appointments or you can come during office hours.

Laptops and similar devices are allowed, with conditions. I want you to be able to consult the textbook during class (if you have an electronic version) and take notes, and from time to time our discussions warrant looking something up on the internet. At the same time, technology can be a distraction to you, to the students around you, and to me. When you are engaged with your device, you create a dead zone in the class. Therefore, I invite you to use such devices, but only for activities that contribute to your or others’ learning experience in the class. By using your device, you are tacitly promising to me that you are using it for class-related purposes. If you are not able to make such a commitment, do not use these devices in class.

Grading and Assignments

Assignments are designed to give students a broad background in policy analysis and research design, obtain knowledge of commonly used analytical techniques and their theoretical underpinnings, and develop the ability to think critically about assumptions and approaches used in analyzing public policies.
ASSIGNMENT: Individual contributions to all students' learning (20 points)
Participate through attendance, group work, and class discussion; throughout the term
a) Attendance is required.
b) Group work assignments will be provided in class and will generally not require work outside of class.
c) Class discussions will center on readings, lectures, and presentations

ASSIGNMENT: Urban policy issue in the news (20 points)
On two different dates that you request, present a current urban policy issue in the news. Post a brief synopsis of the news items and a link to the story on the class blog (on Blackboard). Orally, present the key points, provide necessary context, and discuss how it relates to topics that we have discussed in class. Due dates throughout the term. Submit your preferred dates to present by Friday, May 23 at noon: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/6SCG9GT.

ASSIGNMENT: Policy analysis (60 points)
Research and analyze an urban public policy issue facing a specific metropolitan locality. You will submit portions of the analysis throughout the term. I reserve the prerogative to ask you to revise and resubmit to address major shortcomings.

Your submissions will be in the form of a series of memos. The audience is a local decision-maker, such as a city manager, mayor or the council. Each memo should be comprehensive but succinct, covering the most important points that are critical for the decision-maker to know. Due dates throughout the semester:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Memo Title</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 6</td>
<td>Define the policy problem and the local context.</td>
<td>10 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 13</td>
<td>Present ten relevant goals.</td>
<td>5 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 3</td>
<td>Propose three policy options.</td>
<td>25 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 18</td>
<td>Analyze strengths and weaknesses.</td>
<td>10 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 24</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td>10 points</td>
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</tbody>
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Letter grading will be based on percentage of points earned:

92.5+ A: Excellent and 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.

90.0 – 92.4 A-: 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.

88.0 - 89.9 B+: 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.

86.0 - 87.9 B: 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.

84.0 - 85.9 B-: Borderline: Weak work for a graduate student but meets minimal expectations in the course. Understanding of key issues is incomplete. (A B- average in all courses is not sufficient to sustain graduate status in good standing.)

82.0 - 83.9 C+: 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.

80.0 - 81.9 C: Deficient – see above

78.0 - 79.9 C-: Deficient – see above

Less than 78.0 F: 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.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Schedule overview</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Th, May 22</td>
<td>1. Introduction – urban policy, regional policy, policy analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Th, May 29</td>
<td>2. Urban overview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th, June 5</td>
<td>3. Urban political structure and policymaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F, June 6</td>
<td><strong>DUE</strong> by 11:59pm: Policy problem</td>
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<tr>
<td>Th, June 12</td>
<td>4. Decision-making and finances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F, June 13</td>
<td><strong>DUE</strong> by 11:59pm: Goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Th, June 19</td>
<td>5. Human capital: education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Th, June 26</td>
<td>6. Human capital: labor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Th, July 3</td>
<td>7. No class; work on your policy analysis. <strong>DUE</strong> by 11:59pm: Policy options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th, July 10</td>
<td>8. Neighborhoods: Poverty and Race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F, July 18</td>
<td><strong>DUE</strong> by 11:59pm: Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th, July 24</td>
<td>10. Course evaluation and final presentation <strong>DUE</strong> by noon: your Powerpoint presentation</td>
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DETAILED CLASS SCHEDULE

1. Introduction – urban policy, regional policy, policy analysis (May 22)
I assume that you have a basic understanding of U.S. political institutions and the policymaking process. At a minimum, you should skim the materials on the basics of state and local government arrangements.
   - Basics of state and local government arrangements: Cities 101 (National League of Cities)
   - About America – How the United States Is Governed (U.S. State Department)

Readings:
   - Bardach, Introduction, Step One: Define the Problem, and Step Two: Assemble Some Evidence (p xv – 15)

2. Urban overview (May 29)

Readings:
   - Bardach, Part II. Assembling Evidence (p79-108)
   - England, chapter 1 (Managing American Cities in the Twenty-first Century)

3. Urban political structure and policymaking (June 5)

Readings:
   - England, chapter 2 (Cities and the System of Intergovernmental Relations)
   - England, chapter 4 (Urban Policymaking)

Due by 11:59pm (June 6): Policy problem

4. Decision-making and finances (June 12)

Readings:
   - England, chapter 6 (Decision Making and Analysis)
   - England, chapter 10 (Finance and Budget)

Due by 11:59pm (June 13): Goals
5. **Human Capital: Education (June 19)**

Readings:
- Bardach, Step Three: Construct the Alternatives (p 16-30)
- Downs, Anthony, "Policy Strategies for Large Cities," chapter 6 in *New Visions for Metropolitan America*
- Brookings, Metro America Report, chapters 6: Educational Attainment

6. **Human Capital: Labor (June 26)**

Readings:
- Brookings, Metro America Report, chapter 7: Work
- Bartik, The Case for Labor Demand Policies (chapter 1 of *Jobs for the Poor*)

7. **No class (July 3)**

Due by 11:59pm (June 13): Goals

8. **Neighborhoods: Poverty and Race (July 10)**

Readings:
- Brookings, Metro America Report, chapter 8: Income and Poverty
- Currie, Janet (2009) "Poverty among Inner-City Children" chapter 8 in *Making Cities Work*

9. **Population and demographics – immigration, aging July 17**

Readings:
- Brookings, Metro America Report, chapter 1: Population and Immigration;
  chapter 2: Race and Ethnicity;
  chapter 3: Immigration;
  chapter 4: Age

Due by 11:59pm (July 18): Analysis

10. **Course evaluation and final presentations July 24**
UNIVERSITY AND CLASS POLICIES

The Syllabus: This syllabus is your guide to the course. If any questions arise, please check the syllabus before contacting me. Sound educational practice requires flexibility and I may revise content during the semester.

Late or Missed Class: Attendance is required. Any unexcused absence will result in a deduction from your grade. If you are late or absent from class, it is your responsibility to obtain all announcements, assignments, and handouts from Blackboard or from your classmates.

Submission of Written Work Products: It is your responsibility to make sure that you are able to access Blackboard to make your submissions on time. All work must be submitted by the assigned due date in order to receive full credit. Only extreme circumstances warrant exceptions. Unexcused late submissions will be marked down for each day that they are late.

Academic Honesty: All examinations and other graded work products are to be completed in conformance with the George Washington University Code of Academic Integrity. It states, in part: “Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.” Note especially the definition of plagiarism: “intentionally representing the words, ideas, or sequence of ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise; failure to attribute any of the following: quotations, paraphrases, or borrowed information.” For the remainder of the code, see: http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html. You may also wish to consult the Office of Student Judicial Services web page (http://gwired.gwu.edu/osjs/Policies/) for more information about standards for conduct as well as your rights as a student.

Incompletes: You must consult with me to obtain an incomplete no later than the last day of classes in the semester. At that time, you will fill out the CCAS contract for incompletes for both of us to sign, and you will submit a copy to the School Director. Please visit http://www.gwu.edu/~ccas/faculty/files/Incomplete_poli0.pdf for the complete CCAS policy on incompletes, and consult the TSPPPA Student Handbook.

Changing Grades after Completion of Course: No changes can be made in grades after the conclusion of the semester, other than in cases of clerical error.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities: If you need extra time on exams or assignments due to a disability, let me know in the first week of class. Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should also contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Marvin Center, Suite 242, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/

University Counseling Center: The University Counseling Center (UCC), 202-994-5300, offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students' personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include: crisis and emergency mental health consultations; confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals. http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/CounselingServices/AcademicSupportServices.

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.

University Policy on Religious Holidays:

1. Students should notify faculty during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance;

2. Faculty should extend to these students the courtesy of absence without penalty on such occasions, including permission to make up examinations;

3. Faculty who intend to observe a religious holiday should arrange at the beginning of the semester to reschedule missed classes or to make other provisions for their course-related activities

For other university policies on teaching, see http://www.gwu.edu/~academic/Teaching/main.htm.