POLS 290A: Intro. to Public Policy  
Fall 2013  
PELR209, 2:20-3:50 MW  
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Office: 103 Asbury  
Ofc Hours: 1:00-2:00 M,12:00-2:00 W, and by appt.  
  
COURSE DESCRIPTION  
This course provides a broad overview of the policy process. While our primary focus will be on national policy, the concepts and analytical tools introduced in this course can be applied at a variety of levels; we will touch on local and international policy-making.  
There a two broad approaches to the study of public policy. One approach takes as given a specific set of values, and proceeds (usually using economic methods) to determine what type and degree of policy intervention will be optimal.  
This is not the approach that we will take. In this course, we will approach public policy as a problem-driven contest of values. Indeed, the question whether a given state of affairs constitutes a problem is, itself, a reflection of values. Understanding the role of values in problem definition, agenda-setting, and policy-choice is essential for understanding why certain policies are enacted over others – and why some issues reach formal governmental agendas while others do not.  
  
COURSE REQUIREMENTS  
10% Quizzes  
10% News Media Briefs (2x5%)  
10% Participation  
25% Midterm 1  
25% Midterm 2  
20% Group Exercise / Policy Study / Presentation  
  
QUIZZES  
I expect all students to have completed all assigned readings by the relevant date on the course schedule. To hold all students accountable for this, I will give periodic quizzes at the start of meeting. I have not decided exactly how many quizzes I will give over the course of the semester. Quizzes cannot be made up, though I will drop each student's lowest quiz score when computing the quiz avg. I will drop additional quizzes for university-sanctioned absences  
  
NEWS BRIEFS  
Each student is responsible for submitting two news briefs. The first one is due by midterm #1; the second is due by midterm #2. A news brief consists of a 2-page response to a media report (of your choosing) on some public policy controversy (e.g., gun control). For this exercise, please stick to established media outlets (e.g., New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Indianapolis Star, Washington Post, The Economist, etc). For the first brief, you will address whether or to what extent Stone's typology of values can help explain disagreement surrounding the policy in question. For the second brief, you will explain whether the author has deliberately framed their presentation of the problem to suggest a particular policy resolution (i.e., made a "normative leap"). Explain how one might frame the problem differently, suggesting a different policy option.  
  
PARTICIPATION  
Participation is 50% attendance and 50% discussion. The latter is not a freebie. If you fail to contribute to course discussions, you will receive a 0 for that half of the grade. I don't expect everyone to be at the top of their game every day, and I don't mean to encourage filibustering (quantity over quality). I do expect regular, thoughtful contributions to course discussions. These contributions can be verbal or written (questions posted to the Moodle discussion board).  
  
MIDTERMS  
Midterm exams may consist of a small number of multiple-choice questions, a small number of identifications / short answer questions, and 1-2 short essays. Exams cover not only assigned readings but also lecture material presented during meetings.  
  
GROUP EXERCISE  
Working in groups of 2-3, you will study a public policy controversy of your choosing. At the end of the semester, you will turn in a short paper (6-8 pages), and present your findings to the group. Note that I expect each group to have chosen a specific policy by September 25. I expect a preliminary outline and list of references by October 28. I will post more detailed information, including (1) resources for selecting a policy issue, (2) a detailed grade rubric for the paper, and (3) presentation instructions. I will form groups at random, once the add/drop period is over.  
  
GRADING SCALE  
92.5+ (A)  
89.5-92.4 (A-)  
87.5-89.4 (B+)  
82.5-87.4 (B)  
79.5-82.4 (B-}  
77.5-79.4 (C+)  
72.5-77.4 (C)  
69.5-72.4 (C-)  
67.5-69.4 (D+)  
62.5-67.4 (D)  
59.5-62.4 (D-)  
< 59.5 (F)  
  
REQUIRED TEXTS  
  
Kingdon. 2011. Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies, 2e. Pearson/Longman.  
Stone. 2012. Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making, 3e. W.W. Norton.  
  
The course schedule (below) lists which chapters of Kingdon and Stone are to be completed, by which date. The following book is assigned as a reference for completing the group assignment. It is an extremely straight-forward text, and I do not plan to insult your intelligence by lecturing on it in class. As a guideline, I would suggest completing part one (pp.1-78) by the end of September, and part two (pp. 79-108) by the end of October.   
  
Bardach. 2012. A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis. Sage/CQ Press.  
  
A few additional readings have been posted directly to Moodle.

Week 1

**Wednesday, 8/28**No meeting - American Political Science Association Annual Convention (Chicago, IL)

Please note: Because of the APSA Convention, we will hit the ground running this semester. Feel free to email me with any questions you have about the course/syllabus. I'll respond ASAP.

Beginning Monday, 9/2, I expect students to have read assigned material before the relevant course meeting.

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Week 2 - Introductions

**Monday, 9/2**Introductions and review of course schedule

**Wednesday, 9/4  -  What is Public Policy?**Read: Stone, Introduction and Chapter 1

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Week 3

**Monday, 9/9  -  Public Policy as a Clash of Values**  
Read: Stone, Chs. 2-4. Then,   
Read: Affirmative Action: Erasing Race (<http://www.economist.com/node/13185552>)

**Wednesday, 9/11  -  Public Policy as a Clash of Values, cont'd**Read: Stone, Chs. 5-6.  Then,  
Read: Drugs and Democracy: Toward a Paradigm Shift

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Week 4

**Monday, 9/16  -  Introducing The Policy Process**Read: Kingdon, Ch.1

**Wednesday, 9/18  -  Official Actors in Public Policy**  
Read: Kingdon, Ch.2

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Week 5

**Monday, 9/23 - Unofficial Actors in Public Policy**Read: Kingdon, Ch.3

**Wednesday, 9/25 - Rationality and the Policy Process**Read: Kingdon, Ch. 4  
Read: Allison, "Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis"

* + [[File](https://moodle.depauw.edu/mod/resource/view.php?id=19927) Cuban missile crisis readingFile](https://moodle.depauw.edu/mod/resource/view.php?id=19927)

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Week 6

**Monday, 9/30  -  Cuban Missile Crisis Wrapup / Midterm Review**No new readings

**Wednesday, 10/2  -  Midterm 1**

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Week 7

**Monday, 10/7  -  Facts and Values in Problem Interpretation**Read: Kingdon, Ch.5  
Read: Stone, Chs. 7-8

**Wednesday, 10/9  -  Problem Interpretation, cont'd**Read: Stone, Chs. 9-10

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Week 8

**Monday, 10/14  -  Facts and Values in Climate Policy: the IPCC**Read: Lubchenco, "...A New Social Contract for Science"  
(<http://www.sciencemag.org/content/279/5350/491.full>)

Read: Executive Summary (pp.10-16) of the The Independent Climate Change Email Review  
(pdf available at <http://www.cce-review.org/>)

**Wednesday, 10/16 - Decisions**Read: Stone, Ch.10

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Week 9 - Fall Break

**Monday, 10/21**no meeting

**Wednesday, 10/23**no meeting

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Week 10

**Monday, 10/28 - The Policy Stream and the Politics Stream**Read: Kingdon, Chs.6-7

**Wednesday, 10/30 - Joining the Streams / Policy Entrepreneurs**Read: Kingdon: Ch.8

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Week 11

**Monday, 11/4  -  Multiple Streams & "Don't Ask, Don't Tell"**Read: Washington Post timeline of DADT  
(Available at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/special/politics/dont-ask-dont-tell-timeline/>)

Read: Part I (Executive Summary) and Part XII (Our Overall Assessment) of the DOD Report of the Comprehensive Review of the Issues Associated with a Repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell."

Feel free to skim additional sections as interests dictate

**Wednesday, 11/6**

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Week 12

**Monday, 11/11 - International Policy Entrepreneurs**Read: Keck, Margaret E. and Kathryn Sikkink. 1999. "Transnational advocacy networks in international and regional politics." International Social science Journal 51(159): 89-101.

Read: Carpenter, R. Charli. 2007. "Studying Issue (Non-)Adoption in Transnational Networks." International Organization 61(3): 643-667.

**Wednesday, 11/13  -  Open Date / Midterm 2 Review**

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  + [[File](https://moodle.depauw.edu/mod/resource/view.php?id=16274) Carpenter, studying Issue Non-Adoption...File](https://moodle.depauw.edu/mod/resource/view.php?id=16274)

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Week 13

**Monday, 11/18  -  Midterm 2**

**Wednesday, 11/20  -  Incentives and Rules: Policy Design**Read: Stone, Chs. 12-13

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Week 14

**Monday, 11/25  -  Policy Design: CAFE Standards, 2017-2025**Reading TBD

**Wednesday, 11/27**no meeting - Happy Thanksgiving!

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Week 15

**Monday, 12/2 - Debating the Scope of Public Policy**Read: Tullock, "Social Cost and Government Action"  
Read: Schultze, "The Public Use of Private Interest"

**Wednesday, 12/4 - Health Care Reform under Clinton and Obama**Read: Kingdon, epilogue

(Additional Readings TBD)

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  + [[File](https://moodle.depauw.edu/mod/resource/view.php?id=16276) Schultze, The Public Use of Private InterestFile](https://moodle.depauw.edu/mod/resource/view.php?id=16276)https://moodle.depauw.edu/theme/image.php?theme=depauw&component=core&rev=1380133217&image=spacer

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Week 16

**Monday, 12/9  -  Presentations**

**Wednesday, 12/11  -  Presentations**