

**PA 8170 Public Policy Processes and Strategies
Fall 2009**

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Day/Time/Location: Mondays, 3-5:30pm in 106 LeFevre

Course website: <http://blackboard.missouri.edu>

Course Description.

This course is an introduction to the theories and practice of public policy making. We will focus on public policymaking in the context of American political institutions, but many of the ideas and topics we discuss will apply to other modern democratic systems. The course will not focus on a specific area of public policy, but we will discuss substantive policy to illustrate important concepts.

We will pay particular attention to the constraints that operate on policy makers, and the circumstances in which policy makers can overcome these constraints to change the direction of public policy. The course will also provide you some of the tools necessary to successfully negotiate the policy process.

Required Texts.

- Anderson, J. 2005. *Public Policymaking* (6th Edition). Houghton Mifflin.
Derthick, M. 2005. *Up in Smoke: From Legislation to Litigation in Tobacco Politics* (2nd Edition). CQ Press.
Sabatier, P. 2007. *Theories of the Policy Process: Theoretical Lenses on Public Policy* (2nd Edition). Westview Press.
Smith, C. 2005. *Writing Public Policy*. Oxford University Press.
Stone, D. 2002. *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making* (Revised Edition). Norton.

Additional readings will be posted on the course Blackboard website.

Recommended Texts.

Students come into this course with varying levels of familiarity with American politics and American policy processes. While many of the subjects we will discuss apply directly to other countries, our emphasis will be on policymaking in the United States, and a basic understanding of American political institutions and policymaking is assumed. For students less familiar or who need a refresher, I recommend the following:

- Kernell, S. and G. Jacobson. 2006. *The Logic of American Politics* (3rd Edition). CQ Press.
Kraft, M. and S. Furlong. 2007. *Public Policy: Politics, Analysis, and Alternatives*, (2nd Edition). CQ Press.

Course Requirements/Grading.

Final grades for the course will be computed as the weighted average of the following:

Class Preparation and Participation (10%)

Participation includes attendance and participation. Students who miss a class will need to explain their absence. If you know that you are going to be absent ahead of time, please let me know. More than one missed class will jeopardize your grade for the entire course. Participation in class is a vital part of this course. Students are expected to do all readings in advance of class and to show evidence in class of having pondered over them. Effective participation requires engagement, and students should be prepared to engage with me and your classmates in all aspects of class discussion.

Three in-class quizzes (10% each)

These quizzes will test that you have digested and understood assigned readings. They will be short and administered in class, with relatively little preparation required except keeping up with the required readings.

Policy Issue Definition Memo (15%)

This will be a 2-4 page memo that you will prepare individually on a topic of your choice. This type of memo is used to identify and define a public problem in order to get it on the public agenda. Further details for this assignment will be provided in class and posted on Blackboard.

Policy Briefing Memo (15%)

This will be a 4-6 page memo that you will work on with a small team on a topic assigned by the instructor. This type of memo is used to provide background information on a policy issue for a policy actor. Further details for this assignment will be provided in class and posted on Blackboard.

Policy Proposal Memo (15%)

This will be a 6-8 page memo that you will work on with a small team to prepare on a topic assigned by the instructor. The purpose of this type of memo is to propose a policy (or a set of policies) to address a particular public problem. Further details for this assignment will be provided in class and posted on Blackboard.

Policy Strategy Formulation and Presentation (15%)

You will work with a team to develop a policy strategy for a topic assigned by the instructor, drawing on strategies and tools discussed in the course. The objective of the strategy is to influence policymakers to implement a policy proposal. You will present your strategy plan to the class during the last class meeting. Further details for this assignment will be provided in class and posted on Blackboard.

Policy on Late Assignments and Incompletes.

Please plan to complete all of the work for this course by the specified due dates. Assignments will be penalized **one letter grade** for each day late. I will only grant incompletes under extraordinary circumstances, which must be brought to my attention immediately.

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and

honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort was successful. The academic community regards academic dishonesty as an extremely serious matter, with serious consequences that range from probation to expulsion.

I do not tolerate cheating or plagiarism of any kind. Cheating of any kind will jeopardize your credit for the entire course. When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, or collaboration, please consult the course instructor.

Collaboration

Peer collaboration is an important part of this course, and you will be working jointly with classmates on several assignments. A critical component of group work is accountability, and students will be given several opportunities to provide feedback to the instructor on the contributions and performance of team members. The instructor will incorporate this feedback into grading for group assignments.

Electronic Devices

Please turn off all electronic devices before class. I also discourage the use of laptops during class. While some people prefer them for note-taking, most of the note-taking you will do in this class is better-suited to traditional pen and paper. Besides, having a laptop open will tempt you to use the web, email, and text messaging all of which are inappropriate during class and distracting to you, your classmates, and me.

Students With Disabilities

If you need accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please inform me immediately. Please see me privately after class, or at my office.

To request academic accommodations (for example, a notetaker), students must also register with the Office of Disability Services, S5 Memorial Union, 882-4696. It is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students requesting academic accommodations, and for accommodations planning in cooperation with students and instructors, as needed and consistent with course requirements. For other MU resources for students with disabilities, click on "Disability Resources" on the MU homepage.

Class Schedule.

The schedule for the course is subject to change. I will announce any changes during class, and I will post changes to the syllabus on the class Blackboard site.

PART I: AN INTRODUCTION TO POLICYMAKING

8/24	Topic:	Introduction
	Case:	Babcock Place
8/31	Topic:	Tobacco Politics and Policy: An Initial Foray into Public Policy
	Reading:	Derthick, entire
9/7	No Class	Labor Day Holiday

- 9/14 Topic:** Actors, Institutions, and Agendas
Writing Policy Documents
Reading: Anderson, Chapters 1-3
Smith, Chapters 1-3
Case: HIV Reporting Requirements
Assignment: In-class Quiz #1
- 9/21 Topic:** Policy Goals and Problems
Reading: Stone, Chapters 1-9
Case: Alabama's Confederate Flag Controversy
- 9/28 Topic:** Policy Solutions
Reading: Stone, Chapters 10-15, pp. 376-414
Smith, Chapters 4 and 7
Case: The San José State University Blood Drive Ban
Assignment: Policy Issue Definition Memo due

PART II: THEORIES OF THE POLICY PROCESS

- 10/5 Topic:** Stages Approach and the Multiple Streams Framework
Reading: Anderson, Chapters 4, 6-7
Sabatier, Chapters 1 and 3
"A Multiple Streams Model of U.S. Foreign Aid Policy" by Rick Travis and Nikolaos Zahariadis (Blackboard)
Case: Building a case about the second Iraq War:
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/iraq/>
Assignment: In-class Quiz #2
- 10/12 Topic:** Incrementalism and Punctuated Equilibrium
Reading: "The Science of Muddling Through" by Charles Lindblom (Blackboard)
Sabatier, Chapter 6
"The Dynamics of Incrementalism: Subsystems, Politics, and Public Lands" by Robert Wood (Blackboard).
"Punctuated Equilibria and Budgets in the American States" by Christian Breunig and Chris Koski (Blackboard)
Case: Implementing the Weighted Student Formula in Chicago Public Schools
Assignment: Policy Briefing Memo due
- 10/19 Topic:** Institutional Rational Choice and the Problem of Collective Action
Reading: "The Tragedy of the Commons" by Garrett Hardin (Blackboard)
Sabatier, Chapter 2
Fish Banks preparation packet?
Case: Fish Banks Simulation?
- 10/26 Topic:** Policy Adoption, Implementation, and Bureaucracy
Reading: Sabatier, Chapter 8
Lipsky, Michael, 1980, *Street-Level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services*, New York: Russell Sage, Chapters 1-2 (Blackboard)

Case: Implementing a New Drug and Alcohol Treatment Model in Sacramento County

PART III: FORMULATING POLICY STRATEGIES

- 11/2** **Topic:** Social Construction
Reading: Sabatier, Chapter 4
Schneider, Anne and Helen Ingram, 1993, "Social Construction of Target Populations: Implications for Politics and Policy," *American Political Science Review* 87(2): 334-347 (Blackboard)
Smith, Chapter 6
Case: Making Work Pay for Seattle Public Housing Residents
Assignment: In-class Quiz #3
- 11/9** **Topic:** Networks, Coalition Formation, and Lobbying
Reading: Sabatier, Chapters 5 and 7
"Understanding Policy Networks: Towards a Dialectical Approach" by David Marsh and Martin Smith (Blackboard)
"Tobacco Lobby Political Influence on US State Legislatures in the 1990s" by Michael Givel and Stanton Glantz (Blackboard)
Case: Obesity and McLawsuits
- 11/16** **Topic:** Influencing Public Opinion
Reading: "Effects of Public Opinion on Policy" by Benjamin Page and Robert Shapiro (Blackboard)
"Issue Framing and Public Opinion on Government Spending" by William Jacoby (Blackboard)
Culture War? Myth of a Polarized America, by Morris Fiorina, Chapters 1-4 (Blackboard)
Case: Granite City Building Inspectors
Assignment: Policy Proposal Memo due
- 11/23** **No Class** Thanksgiving break.
- 11/30** **Topic:** Project work.
- 12/7** **Topic:** Conclusions and Policy Strategy Presentations
Assignment: Policy Strategy Formulation due