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PSCI 503.01: Masters of Public Administration Policy Analysis

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PSCI 503 Policy Analysis

Masters of Public Administration Program / Spring 2012 / Campus Class

LA 337 -- 4:10-6:30 (Tuesdays)

Professor: Jeffrey Greene

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The Spring 2012 begins on Monday, January 23 and ends Friday, May 11.

This class is open to graduate students from any graduate program at the University of Montana. Undergraduates must have the consent of the instructor to take this course.

TEXTS

Public Policy: An Evolutionary Approach, 3/e, by Lester and Stewart (Students can use the 2/e of this book)

Issues for Debate in American Public Policy, 12/e, by The CQ Researcher (Supplemental reader; these books change each year, so you will need the 12/e)

Public Policy: Theories, Models, and Concepts, by McCool (Supplemental reader of classic articles; used for article summaries)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Public policy is one of the most exciting areas in political science and public administration. **PSCI 503** is designed to provide students with an overview of the public policy process and an overview of the history and evolution of policy studies. The course also provides an introduction to the fundamental theories, concepts, terms, and methodologies associated with policy analysis, and an introduction to the basic procedures used in conducting policy analysis.

The purpose of the course is to acquaint students with the complexities of public policy and policy analysis. The course is intended to provide students with an adequate background at a level of understanding appropriate for a variety of public sector employment settings. The course will blend theory and practice. Much of the course (the last five or six weeks) will be used discussing and analyzing a series of policy issues included in the Lester and Stewart text and the ***Issues for Debate in American Public Policy*** text by Congressional Quarterly.

Primary Objectives

Objective #1: To provide students with a general understanding of public policy and policy analysis by

reading and discussing classic and contemporary literature. Students will be exposed to the basic concepts, terms, and methodologies associated with policy studies. In this process, students will gain a general understanding of the history and evolution of policy studies. Students' proficiency will be measured via class discussions. *The written, comprehensive exam that was used in the past will not be used in this section of PSCI 503.*

Objective #2: To enhance students' ability to write concise reports pertaining to public policy. This objective will be accomplished by having students write article critiques and an 8-12 page policy summary. Details of these projects are explained later in the syllabus. Students' proficiency will be assessed via the written article critiques and the policy summary paper.

Objective #3: To provide students with the basic procedures used to conduct policy analysis. Students' proficiency in this area will be assessed by material included on the comprehensive exam. Students will also develop proficiency at "framing" policy issues. This idea is developed in the National Issue Forums books; you can view these booklets at Public Agenda, www.publicagenda.org for a variety of policy issues.

Upon successful completion of the course, students should be able to:

- 1). Demonstrate knowledge of the history and evolution of domestic public policy
- 2). Demonstrate an understanding of the fundamental terms and concepts associated with public policy and policy studies, including the various stages of the *policy cycle*
- 3). Demonstrate proficiency at writing concise reports that deal with complex material
- 4). Be able to construct a policy analysis design
- 5). Demonstrate a thorough understanding of a specific policy by writing a policy summary.
- 6). Demonstrate the ability to "frame" complex policy issues.
- 7). Demonstrate the ability to present a complex public policy problem in a presentation format to a group.

It should be stressed that **PSCI 503** contains many other secondary objectives. For example, oral communication skills and critical thinking skills are not primary objectives in **PSc 503** but are deeply embodied in the course. Additional and more specific learning objectives can be viewed at [PSCI 503 Learning Objectives](#).

REQUIREMENTS: POLICY PAPER, ARTICLE SUMMARIES, and ORAL PRESENTATION OF A PUBLIC POLICY ISSUE

Exam

There is not a written, formal exam in PSCI 503.

Article Critique Guidelines

The McCool text contains a variety of articles that will be assigned to students on the first day of class. Part of designated classes will be used for brief oral summaries of the assigned articles. The articles will be assigned to "individual students" and a written summary should be prepared to hand out to the class.

The critiques constitute 20 percent of one's final grade. *All students are expected to read all of the assigned articles for each class but only have to prepare a written critique for their pre-assigned article.*

Each student is responsible to have thoroughly read the article, be prepared to present an overview of the article, and be prepared to respond to questions from the instructor and the class. The total time of the presentation should be no longer than 5 minutes. There are some specific questions one should consider while reading the article and developing a summary.

1. What is the major subject and theme of the article?
2. What is the major question the author addresses?
3. What techniques, tools of analysis, or methods are employed by the author to answer the question?
4. What major points does the author make?
5. What does the author conclude? What suggestions are made?
6. What is the relevance of the article to theory or practice? (What does it mean?)

[Click here](#) for a sample article critique.

Policy Presentations

Each student will present a 30 minute presentation on a public policy issue. Students will select the policy, which must be approved to avoid replication by other students, and to ensure the policy areas is not too broad. This presentation is similar to what is used in PSCI 505 (the public budgeting class) but will consist of providing an overview of a policy, describing how the policy has been framed (or various ways it has been framed), an overview of the potential remedies to resolve the problem -- the pros and cons of the remedies. Students are encouraged to use PowerPoint or other presentation software.

Students may use the same policy that they plan to use for the take home exam. This policy does NOT have to be a broad policy, such as welfare or economic policy. It should be a narrow policy or a part of a much larger policy. For example, no one should select health care policy in America, but a person might select either the new prescription drug plan associated with Medicare or "providing prescription drugs for senior citizens," and examine the various proposals.

The last few sessions of the class will be used for presentations.

Grade Weights

Policy Paper..... 40% Due May 8 (Tuesday)

Policy Presentation.....40% Due when scheduled during the final weeks of class; presentations should begin April 17 depending on the size of the class

Article Critiques.....20% Due when presented in class

Attendance and Participation: Students are encouraged to attend and participate in class discussions. Poor attendance and poor quality or lack of participating in class discussions may affect one's final grade.

Students are expected to miss no more than two classes during the semester.

COURSE OUTLINE and READINGS

** Note: we will move quickly through the first nine chapters of the Lester and Stewart textbook*

PART I THE BASICS OF PUBLIC POLICY

Session 1: Introduction / No readings assigned (January 24)

This is the introductory class and will cover some introduction to the various approaches and methods for conducting public policy.

Session 2 Introduction, Background, and Context: What is Public Policy? What is Policy Analysis? (January 31)

Lester & Stewart, Chapters 1,2

McCool, Sections 1,2 _____

Assigned Articles (McCool)

"Interest Groups and the Nature of the State" by Truman _____

"Three Types of Pluralism" by Kelso _____

"The Golden Era of Interest Group Pluralism" by Garson _____

"The Comparative Study of Political Elites" by Putnam _____

"A Critique of Elitist Theory of Democracy" by Walker _____

"The Political System Under Stress" by Easton _____

"Policy Science as Metaphysical Madness" by Banfield _____

Session 3 Approaches and Models (February 7)

Lester & Stewart, Chapters 3,4

Assigned Articles (McCool)

"The Science of Muddling Through" by Lindblom _____

"Stages of the Policy Process" by Ripley _____

"Four Systems of Policy, Politics, and Choice" by Lowi _____

Session 4 Analysis in the Policy Process: Agenda Setting and Policy Formulation (February 14)

Lester & Stewart, Chapters 5,6

Assigned Articles (McCool)

"Developing Public Policy Theory..." by Greenberg, Miller, Mohr, and Vladeck _____

"Typologies of Public Policy..." by Steinberger _____

"Promoting Policy Theory" by Spitzer _____

"Fiscal Behavior of the Modern Democratic State by Mitchell _____

Session 5 Implementation, Evaluation, and Policy Change (February 21)

Lesser and Stewart: Chapters 7,8,9

Assigned Articles (McCool)

"The Subsystems in Perspective" by Freeman _____

"Issue Networks and the Executive Establishment" by Hecl _____

"Patterns of Influence among Committees, Agencies, and Interest Groups" by Hamm _____

"An Advocacy Coalition Framework of Policy Change and the Role of Policy Learning Therein" by Sabatier

Section 6 of McCool

"Introduction: The Age of Dead Ideas?" by McCool _____

"The Future: Theoretical Choices" by McCool _____

PART 2 ANALYZING POLICY CHOICES AND POLICY ISSUES

Analyzing Public Policy Choices

*This section will examine a variety of policies, including Education Policy, Welfare Policy, Crime Policy, and Environmental Policy from the Lester & Stewart text. Also, additional policies are included from the CQ Reader. In addition to what is assigned in the printed material, students will read summaries and overviews provided by **Public Agenda**. Adobe files are available that provide the general summaries for Public Agenda's studies. Public Agenda is located at <http://www.publicagenda.org>*

Please note that only three policy chapters are included in the 3/e of Lester and Stewart. There are more policy chapters in the 2/e.

Session 6: Education Policy (February 28)

Education Policy (Lester & Stewart, Chapter 10) and Education (Chapters 1, 2 and 3 in the CQ Reader)

7. School Reform _____

Public Agenda's summary of education policy is located at
<http://www.publicagenda.org/citizen/issueguides/education>

Session 7 Social and Welfare Policy (March 6)

Lester and Stewart, Chapter 11 and the following articles in the CQ Reader

5. Income Inequality _____

6. The Graying Planet _____

Public Agenda's summary of welfare policy
<http://www.publicagenda.org/citizen/issueguides/poverty-and-welfare>

There is an article that appears in *City Journal* by James Q. Wilson. It is an interesting article titled, "Why We Don't Marry." It is related to welfare policy. _____

Session 8: Health Care Policy (March 13)

No readings in Lester & Stewart

The following article in the CQ Reader

16. Health-Care Reform _____

Public Agenda's summary of health care policy is located at
<http://www.publicagenda.org/citizen/issueguides/health-care>

"Ten years later, tobacco deal going up in smoke" by Sullivan _____

A report from Public Agenda on Health Care in America
<http://publicagenda.org/citizen/researchstudies/health-care-medical-research>

Session 9: Crime Policy (March 20)

Lester & Stewart, Chapter 12 (2/e only); there is not a chapter on crime policy in the 3/e. Read the articles at the Public Agenda link below.

Public Agenda's summary of crime policy is located at
<http://www.publicagenda.org/citizen/issueguides/crime>

"Broken Windows," by James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling

<http://www.theatlantic.com/ideastour/archive/windows.html> _____

Session 10: Environmental Policy (March 27)

Lester & Stewart, Chapter 13 in 2/e; Chapter 12 in 3/e; and Environment, the following articles in the CQ Reader

11. Managing Nuclear Waste _____

12. Energy Policy _____

13. Climate Change _____

Public Agenda's summary of environmental policy is located at
<http://www.publicagenda.org/citizen/issueguides/environment>

A report from Public Agenda on energy and the environment
<http://publicagenda.org/citizen/researchstudies/energy-environment>

Session 11: Spring Break April 2 – April 6 No Class

Session 12: Business and the Economy (April 9)

The following articles in the CQ Reader about business and the economy

1. Public Employee Unions _____

2. National Debt _____

3. Financial Industry Overhaul _____

4. Jobs Outlook _____

Assigned Article (McCool)

"American Business, Public Policy, Case Studies, and Political Theory" by Lowi _____
(McCool's book)

Public Agenda's summary of economic policy is located at
<http://publicagenda.org/citizen/issueguides/economy>

Direct link to Public Agenda's report of immigration
<http://www.publicagenda.org/pages/immigrants> _____

Session 13: Presentations begin (April 17)

Session 14: Presentations (April 24)

Session 15: Presentations (May 1)

Session 16: Presentations (May 8) Exam Week; All work returned. **Please note that the class will likely meet in a different room if Exam Week is needed for presentations.** *Policy papers are due; these are the written version of your presentation policies.*

Study Guide and PSCI 503 Learning Objectives (*The learning objectives are considered to be part of the study guide. Although there will not be a traditional exam in this section, the learning objectives should be reviewed by all students.*)

The **final exam** was a "take home" exam in past. There is not an exam used this year but it can be downloaded or viewed at Take Home Exam. (This file is a Microsoft Word document). The document is also available in Adobe Acrobat format. You may find the instructions and format of this document useful in preparing your policy papers.

Click the following links for samples of past policy papers. Sample 1 Sample 2 (These are Word documents)

Visit **Governing.com**, which is filled with news and policy matters pertaining to state and local government at www.governing.com

For students interested in foreign policy, visit Foreign Policy Online Magazine

Visit Public Agenda, which is a rich source of data and studies about public policy.

Articles about New Orleans and Hurricane Katrina

Many point to Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans, and the Gulf Coast as a perfect example of weaknesses and failures in federalism and intergovernmental relations. Public policy is at the center of preventing disasters and rebuilding after disasters occur.

I enjoyed reading the following article about New Orleans and Katrina. This article, from **City Journal**, is an interesting account of New Orleans. It is called "Who is killing New Orleans," by Nicole Gelinas. Click here for a copy of the article in Adobe Acrobat, or click this link to go directly to the article at **City Journal**. http://www.city-journal.org/html/15_4_new_orleans.html

Another article found in *Governing Magazine* is located at <http://www.governing.com/topics/economic-dev/The-Katrina-Breakdown.htm> The article is about the communication breakdown among various levels of government and between agencies. "THE KATRINA BREAKDOWN," by Jonathan Walters & Donald Kettl.

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Below is the Table of Contents for the CQ Reader, 12/e

Business and the Economy

1. Public Employee Unions
2. National Debt
3. Financial Industry Overhaul
4. Jobs Outlook

Social Issues

5. Income Inequality
6. The Graying Planet

Education

7. School Reform

Politics and Government (not used in PSCI 503)

8. Redistricting Debates
9. States and Federalism
10. Tea Party Movement

The Environment

11. Managing Nuclear Waste
12. Energy Policy
13. Climate Change

Homeland Security and Foreign Policy (not used in PSCI 503)

14. Afghanistan Dilemma
15. Government Secrecy

Health-care

16. Health-care Reform