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PSC 495.01: Public Policy Cycle - Politics of Forest Managenement

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Political Science 495
The Public Policy Cycle: Politics of Forest Management
Summer 2004

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Course Description

Using forest management policy as the focus of analysis, this course provides an opportunity for students to explore the entire public policy cycle. This cycle includes how a problem reaches the political agenda, how alternatives are suggested for resolving the problem, how one of these alternatives is enacted into law, how a specific agency is charged with implementing the law, and how the policy continues to evolve. In short, this course allows students to witness the twists and turns of politics as policy is formulated by the legislative branch, implemented by the executive branch, and reviewed by the judicial branch.

Students needing a general education writing course may register for PSC 300, a one-credit co-requisite. Political Science majors needing to satisfy the upper division writing expectation of their major may register for PSC 400, also a one credit co-requisite.

Course Objectives

1. To develop a broad understanding of one area of public policy, i.e., forest management policy.
2. To develop a conceptual understanding of the cyclical process by which policy is made, implemented, and changed.
3. To improve our writing, analytical, and conceptual skills.

Required Texts

Packet of readings available from UC Bookstore.

Course Requirements

Students are required to complete all reading assignments, be prepared to discuss them in class (20 points), complete four writing assignments (20 points each), and resubmit the writing assignments as a polished term paper (100 points). A=180 points; B=160 points, etc.

Reading and Writing Assignments

Tuesday, May 25

Public Policy and the Policy Cycle

- 1) Lester and Stewart, "The Nature of Public Policy," Public Policy, pp. 2-9.
- 2) Section 6, National Forest Management Act of 1976 (P.L. 94-588), U.S. Statutes at Large, v. 90, 1976.
- 3) Timeline of Events Relating to the NFMA of 1976

Consider:

1. Conceptually speaking, what do we mean by policy?
2. Conceptually speaking, what basic types of policy are there?
3. Which type of policy does forest management policy represent?
4. What are the basic stages in the policy cycle?
5. Why is it referred to as a cycle?
6. What are the key provisions of the NFMA of 1976?

Wednesday, May 26

Organizing the Term Paper/Writing the Introduction

****Introduction due on Friday****

Thursday, May 27

Policy Background: The Tragedy of the Commons

1. Tompkins, Historical Overview of Forest Management.
2. Barnard DeVoto, "The Sturdy Corporate Homesteader," excerpt from Harper's, May 1953.
3. Samuel Trask Dana, "Oregon Land Frauds," excerpt from Forest and Range Policy, 1956.
4. Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons," excerpt reprinted in Hardin and Baden, Managing the Commons, Freeman, 1977.

Consider:

1. What key themes emerge from the Historical Overview?
2. What is the significance of the repeated references to fraud?
3. What does Hardin mean by "commons"?
4. What is the "tragedy of the commons"?
5. What does this tell us about the role of government in a democracy?

Friday, May 28

The Agenda-Setting Stage

****Introduction due today****

1. John Kingdon, "How Does an Idea's Time Come?" Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies (Little, Brown, 1984), 1-19.
2. Lester and Stewart, "Agenda Setting, Public Policy (Wadsworth, 2000), 66-76.

Consider:

1. Conceptually speaking, what types of agendas are there?
2. What specific factors or conditions determine whether an issue reaches one or more of these agendas?

Monday, May 31

****Holiday****

Tuesday, June 1

Agenda Setting and the NFMA

1. Charles Wilkinson, "The National Forest Management Act: The Twenty Years Behind, the Twenty Years Ahead," University of Colorado Law Review 68 (1997): 659-669.
2. Select Committee of the University of Montana, Report on the Bitterroot National Forest, 1970, pp. 1-30. (The Bolle Report).
3. Testimony by Congressman Roy Taylor of North Carolina before the House Subcommittee on Forests, March 22, 1976, pp. 62-65.

Consider: What specific factors or conditions explain how the issue of forest management reached the systemic and institutional agendas in the mid-1970s?

Wednesday, June 2

The Monongahela Decisions

1. West Virginia Div. of Izaak Walton League, Inc. v. Butz (367 F. Supp. 422, 1973).
2. West Virginia Div. of Izaak Walton L. of Am., Inc. v. Butz (522 F.2d 945, 1975).

Consider:

1. How is the authority of an agency established?
2. Why did the Izaak Walton League pursue a judicial remedy rather than some other course of action to stop clear-cutting?
3. What were the specific legal arguments advanced by the plaintiffs and defendants in these cases?

Thursday, June 3

****No class. Work on Section #1 Due Monday****

Friday, June 4

The Policy Formulation Stage

1. Lester and Stewart, "Policy Formulation," Public Policy, 87-96.

Consider:

1. Where do policy ideas/alternatives originate?
2. Does the comprehensive-rational model or the incremental model best describe how policy is formulated?
3. What factors explain which alternative, if any, is adopted?

Monday, June 7

Two Policy Alternatives: A Comparison

1. S. 2926 (The Randolph bill)
2. H.R. 3091 (The Humphrey bill)

Consider: In what ways were these bills similar? In what ways different?

Tues.-Wed., June 8-9

Content Analysis of Congressional Testimony

1. Testimony by Congressman Symms of Idaho before the Subcommittee on Forests of the House Committee on Agriculture, March 22, 1976.
2. Various testimony presented during joint hearings before the Senate Subcommittee on Environment, Soil Conservation and Forestry (Committee on Agriculture and Forestry) and the Senate Subcommittee on the Environment and Land Resources (Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs), March 15, 16, and 22, 1976.

Consider:

1. What basic arguments were made for or against passage of each of these bills?
2. Which groups seemed to be making which arguments?
3. What can the testimony tell us about why the Humphrey bill was preferred over the Randolph bill?

Thursday, June 10

****No Class. Work on Section #2 Due Monday****

Friday, June 11

The Policy Implementation Stage

1. U.S. Government Manual 2002/2003, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service.
2. USDA Forest Service Website: Meet the Forest Service.
3. Administrative Procedures Act, United States Code (USC) Title 5, Chapter 5 (5USC 533).

Consider:

1. How is the Forest Service organized? Is it centralized or decentralized?
2. How did the Forest Service originate, and what is its source of authority?
3. What is the purpose or significance of the U. S. Administrative Procedures Act?

Monday, June 14

Administrative Rules: Forest Management Planning

1. Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 36, Chapter II, Part 219 (36 CFR Ch. II). (Just skim these paragraphs).

Consider:

1. Which passages in the law correspond with which passages in the rules?
2. What are the primary steps or requirements in the planning process?

Tuesday, June 15

Administrative Rules: Public Participation

1. Code of Federal Regulations, Title 36, Chapter II, Part 215 (36 CFR Ch. II).
2. Excerpt from Cubbage et al., Forest Resource Policy, 336-340.

Consider: How can interested parties challenge forest management decisions?

Wednesday, June 16

The Process Predicament

USDA Forest Service, "The Process Predicament: How Statutory, Regulatory, and Administrative Factors Affect National Forest Management," June 2002.

Consider: What are the main reasons that the planning process is so slow and policy implementation so difficult?

Thursday, June 17

**** To Be Announced ****

Friday, June 18

****No Class. Work on Section #3 Due Monday****

Monday, June 21

The Policy Evaluation and Change Stage: Congress

Elise S. Jones and Will Callaway, "Neutral Bystander, Intrusive Micromanager, or Useful Catalyst?: The Role of Congress in Effecting Change Within the Forest Service," Policy Studies Journal, (no. 4, 1995): 337-350.

Consider: How does Congress continue to shape policy long after a law has been passed?

Tuesday, June 22

Litigation as a Source of Policy Change

Elise S. Jones and Cameron P. Taylor, "Litigating Agency Change: The Impact of the Courts and Administrative Appeals Process on the Forest Service," Policy Studies Journal 23 (no. 2, 1995): 310-336.

Consider: How do interest groups use the courts to shape policy and policy implementation long after a law has been passed?

Wednesday, June 23

Reconciling Competing Values and Interest

(Take a look at the hand-out in the packet of readings).

Consider: How can we reconcile competing values and interests in a democratic society?

Thursday, June 24

****Review****

Friday, June 25

****Papers are Due****

Guidelines for Writing the Term Paper

Title: The Public Policy Cycle and the National Forest Management Act of 1976

Paper Outline:

Introduction
The Agenda Setting Stage
The Policy Formulation Stage
The Policy Implementation Stage
The Policy Evaluation and Change Stage
Conclusion

The Body: Each section should 1) provide a conceptual definition of the stage under analysis; 2) introduce the key analytical question that "begs" to be addressed at this stage; and 3) provide the necessary analysis to address that question.

Key Analytical Questions:

Agenda Setting: What factors **explain** why and how forest management policy reached the public and institutional agendas in the 1970s?

Policy Formulation: What factors **explain** why the Humphrey bill was preferred over the Randolph bill?

Policy Implementation: How was the general intent of the NFMA translated into specific rules for purposes of implementation, and what factors **explain** the difficulties faced by the Forest Service in implementing the law?

Policy Evaluation and Change: What factors **explain** how and why policy continues to change?