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PSC 495.01: Public Policy Cycle - Politics of Forest Management

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Political Science 495
The Politics of Forest Management
Summer 2003

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Hours: Right after class.

Course Description

Using forest management policy as the focus of analysis, this course provides an opportunity for students to explore the entire policy cycle. This cycle includes how a problem becomes defined as a political issue and is placed on the public agenda, translated into specific policy proposals, enacted into law, and subsequently evaluated for possible modifications. By focusing narrowly on forest management policy, 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 improve research and writing skills as they relate to political analysis.
2. To develop a comprehensive understanding of one key area of national policy.
3. To develop a comprehensive understanding of the interconnectedness of policy agenda setting, policy formulation, policy implementation, and policy change.

Required Texts

None. We will rely primarily on class hand-outs.

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 in the form of a term paper (100).

Reading and Writing Assignments

Wednesday, May 28 An Overview of the Policy Cycle

- 1) Lester and Stewart, "The Nature of Public Policy," Public Policy, pp. 2-9.
- 2) Section 6, The National Forest Management Act of 1976 (P.L. 94-588), U.S. Statutes At-Large, v. 90, 1976.

Consider: 1) What do we mean by policy? 2) What basic kinds 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) In what sense is it actually a cycle? 6) What are the key provisions of the NFMA?

Thursday, May 29 Discussion of Term Paper

****Introduction to Term Paper Due Monday****

Friday, May 30 Historical Overview of Forest Management Policy

- 1) Historical Overview of Forest Management
- 2) Barnard DeVoto, "The Sturdy Corporate Homesteader," excerpt from Harpers, 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 society?

Monday, June 2 Stage 1: Agenda-Setting

- 1) John Kingdon, "How Does an Idea's Time Come?" Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies, pp. 1-19.
- 2) Lester and Stewart, "Agenda Setting," Public Policy, pp. 66-79.

Consider: 1) What types of agendas are there? 2) What specific factors or conditions determine whether an issue reaches one or more of these agendas?

Tuesday, June 3 Agenda-Setting and the NFMA

- 1) Charles F. 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. 1-32. (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 public and governmental agendas in the mid-1970s?

Wednesday, June 4**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 to act established? 2) Why did the Izaak Walton League pursue a judicial remedy rather than some other course of action? What was its political agenda and strategy? 3) What were the specific legal arguments advanced by the plaintiffs and defendants in these cases?

Thursday, June 5**Review of Agenda Setting Stage**

**** Writing Assignment Due Monday ****

Friday, June 6**Stage 2: Policy Formulation**

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 9**The Randolph and Humphrey Bills Compared**

- 1) S. 2926 (The Randolph bill).
- 2) S. 3091 (The Humphrey bill).
- 3) Testimony of James Moorman, Counsel, Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, on the Randolph bill.

Consider: 1) Who actually drafted the Randolph bill and how? 2) In what fundamental ways do these two bills differ?

Tues.-Wed., June 10-11**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 given 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).

Consider: 1) What were the key themes raised during testimony? 2) Do these themes vary according to whether those testifying support or oppose a particular bill?

Thursday, June 12**Review of the Policy Formulation Stage**

**** Writing Assignment due Monday ****

Friday, June 13**Stage 3: Policy Implementation**

- 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 (5 USC 553).

Consider: 1) How is the Department of Agriculture and Forest Service organized? Is the Forest Service mainly centralized or decentralized? 2) How did the Forest Service originate and what is its source of authority to act? 3) What is the purpose and/or significance of the U.S. Administrative Procedures Act?

Monday, June 16 Administrative Rules

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 36, Chapter II, Part 219 (36 CFR Ch. II). (Skim)

Consider: 1) What are your thoughts on the administrative rules promulgated by the Forest Service to guide implementation of the National Forest Management Act of 1976? 2) Are the linkages between the law and the rules clearly apparent?

Tuesday, June 17 Forest Management Planning

1) Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 36, Chapter II, Part 215.

2) Excerpt from Cubbage et. al., Forest Resource Policy, pp. 336-340.

Consider: 1) What does forest management planning entail? 2) How can interested parties appeal forest management decisions?

Wednesday, June 18 The Process Predicament

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

Consider: Why is the planning process so slow and implementation so difficult?

Thursday, June 19 The Forest Service Perspective

Friday, June 20 Review of Policy Implementation Stage

****Writing Assignment due Monday****

Monday, June 23 The Evaluation and Change Stage

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 23 (no. 4, 1995): 337-350.

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

Tuesday, June 24 Courts as a Source of 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 various interest groups use the courts to shape policy long after a law has been passed? How do they use the courts to direct and control what agencies do?

Wednesday, June 25 **Current Issues and Stakeholders**

Thursday, June 26 **Current Issues and Stakeholders**

Friday, June 27 **Discussion of Final Draft of Paper**

****Term papers due Monday morning, June 30****