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### PSC 468.01: Public Policy Cycle

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Political Science 468  
**The Public Policy Cycle**  
Winter Session 2006

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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 public agenda, how alternative solutions emerge, how one or more alternatives is enacted into law, how the law is implemented by a specific executive agency, and how the policy is 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 develop a broad understanding of the cyclical process by which policy is made, implemented and changed.
2. To develop a broad understanding of one key area of national policy, i.e., forest management policy.
3. To improve our writing, analytical, and conceptual skills.

**Required Texts**

Packet of readings.

**Course Requirements**

Students are required to complete all reading assignments, be prepared to discuss them in class (20 points), complete three writing assignments (20 points each), and resubmit the writing assignments in the form of a term paper (100).

Grades will be assigned as follows:

168-180 = A	162-167 = A-	157-161 = B+	150-156 = B
144-149 = B-	139-143 = C+	132-138 = C	126-131 = C-

**Graduate Student Assignment**

To receive graduate credit for this course, graduate students must write a 10-12 page policy analysis paper on one of the topics identified in a class hand-out. You will want to introduce the controversy and your thesis-position, summarize the interests at stake, and then develop your argument.

## **Reading and Writing Assignments**

### **Wednesday, January 4**

### **Public Policy and the Policy Cycle**

- 1) Section 6, National Forest Management Act of 1976 (P.L. 94-588), U.S. Statutes at Large, v. 90, 1976.
- 2) Key Provisions of the NFMA.
- 3) Timeline of Events Relating to the NFMA.
- 4) Lester and Stewart, "The Nature of Public Policy," Public Policy, pp. 2-9.
- 5) Tompkins, "Historical Overview of Forest Management."
- 6) Barnard DeVoto, "The Sturdy Corporate Homesteader," excerpt from Harpers, May 1953.
- 7) Samuel Trask Dana, "Oregon Land Frauds," excerpt from Forest and Range Policy, 1956.
- 8) Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons," excerpt reprinted in Hardin and Baden, Managing the Commons, Freeman, 1977.
- 9) Competing Values Handout.

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 is the significance of the repeated references to fraud? 7) What does Hardin mean by "commons"? 8) What is the "tragedy of the commons"? 9) What does this tell us about the role of government in society? 10) How can government and government officials be expected to resolve competing social values?

### **Thursday, January 5 The Agenda-Setting Stage**

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

**\*\*The Introduction to Your Term Paper is Due Tomorrow\*\***

## **Friday, January 6      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. 1-30. (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: 1) What specific factors or conditions explain how the issue of forest management reached the systemic and institutional agendas in the mid-1970s? 2) What do we learn from Congressman Taylor about the impacts of the Monongahela decisions?

## **Monday, January 9              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 to stop clear-cutting? What was its political agenda and strategy? 3) What were the specific legal arguments advanced by the plaintiffs and defendants in these cases?

## **Tuesday, January 10              \*\*No Class\*\***

**\*\*Section #1, entitled "The Agenda Setting Stage", is due by 4 p.m. today\*\***

## **Wednesday, January 11      The Policy Formulation Stage**

- 1) Lester and Stewart, "Policy Formulation," Public Policy, 87-96.
- 2) S. 2926 (The Randolph bill).
- 3) S. 3091 (The Humphrey bill).
- 4) Testimony of James Moorman, Counsel, Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, on the Randolph bill.

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? 4) What do we learn from James Moorman about the origins of the Randolph bill? 5) In what respects did these two bills differ?

## **Thursday, January 12**

## **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), 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?

### **Friday, January 13 Content Analysis of Congressional Testimony (continued)**

**\*\* Section #2 of your paper, entitled "The Policy Formulation Stage," is due Tuesday\*\***

**Monday, January 16                      \*\*Martin Luther King Holiday\*\***

**Tuesday, January 17                      Policy Implementation Stage and Forest Management Planning**

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

Consider: 1) How is the Department of Agriculture and Forest Service organized? Is it 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? 4) What passages in the law correspond with which passages in the administrative rules promulgated by the Forest Service to guide implementation of the National Forest Management Act of 1976? 5) Are the linkages between the law and the rules clearly apparent? 6) What are the primary steps or requirements involved in forest management planning?

**Wednesday, January 18                      Public Participation in Forest Management Planning**

- 1) Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 36, Chapter II, Part 215.
- 2) USDA Forest Service, "The Process Predicament: How Statutory, Regulatory, and Administrative Factors Affect National Forest Management," June 2002.
- 3) Administrative Procedures Act, Chapter 7 – Judicial Review
- 4) Sierra Club and Alliance for the Wild Rockies v. Deborah Austin and the United States Forest Service.

Consider: 1) How can interested parties appeal forest management decisions? 2) What are the primary reasons that the planning process is so slow and policy implementation so difficult?

Thursday, January 19      **\*\*No Class\*\* Write Section #3 and submit it by 4pm.**

**Friday, January 20 Policy Evaluation and Change**

1) 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: 1) What role does Congress and the Courts play in evaluating and changing policy? 2) What are some of the other causes or sources of evaluation and change?

**\*\*Term papers due Monday, January 23\*\***

**Guidelines for Writing The Term Paper**

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

**Paper Outline:**      Introduction  
                         Agenda Setting  
                         Policy Formulation  
                         Policy Implementation  
                         Policy Evaluation and Change  
                         Conclusion

**The Body:** Each section of the body of the paper should 1) provide a conceptual understanding of what occurs at the stage being analyzed; 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 systemic 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 Congress 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?