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PSC 503.01: Policy Management - Public Policy Analysis

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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 a comprehensive exam.

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 8-10 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. This is the focus of the Patton and Sawicki text. Students' proficiency in this area will be assessed by material included on the comprehensive exam, which will include constructing a policy analysis design.

Upon success 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
- 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.

It should be stressed that **PSc 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. It should also be noted that this course includes a plethora of terms and concepts (usually 350+ terms and concepts are covered). A study guide will be provided prior to the final exam.

REQUIREMENTS: EXAM, TERM PAPER, and ARTICLES SUMMARIES

Exam

The exam will be given in class and students are expected to take the exam during the scheduled time. The exam will include defining terms and concepts, essays that require the integration of concepts and the use of critical thinking skills, and creating a policy analysis design.

Policy Summary Paper

The policy summary paper is intended to enhance students' ability to write concise reports and demonstrate a competent understanding of a specific policy area. Students may select any policy area. Simply stated, a policy summary is a concise overview of a real public policy area that could be used as a chapter or section in a report, or as a freestanding report that one might construct for a public agency. The Lester and Stewart text provides four excellent examples (the chapters on education, crime, welfare, and environmental policy) that can serve as models for your paper. In short, after reading a policy summary, the reader should have a good understanding of the specific policy area. Policy summaries should provide an overview of the policy area, include a brief overview of the history and evolution of the policy, the pertinent issues and debates associated with the policy area, and provide alternative solutions currently being considered to solve problems associated with the policy.

Article Critique Guidelines

The McCool text contains a variety of articles that will be assigned to students on the first day of class. The last part of designated classes will be used for brief oral summaries of the assigned articles. The articles will be assigned to "groups of students" and a written summary should be prepared to hand out to the class. The critiques constitute 10 percent of one's final grade and the grades for each group will also apply to members of the group.

The group 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 10 minutes. Each group should also develop a summary of their article. A summary is a brief overview of the article. It briefly outlines the article's key themes, major points, and conclusions. 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 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?)

Grade Weights:	Exam.....	40%	April 27 (Monday)
	Paper	40%	Papers due May 4 (Monday)
	Participation.....	10%	
	Article Critiques....	10%	Due when presented in class

ATTENDANCE: Students are encouraged to attend class. Poor attendance may affect one's final grade.

COURSE OUTLINE and READINGS

PART I THE BASICS OF PUBLIC POLICY

Week

1 Introduction No Readings

What is Public Policy? What is Policy Analysis?

2,3 Background and Context

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 _____

4 No Class

5 Approaches and Models

Lester & Stewart, Chapters 3,4

Assigned Articles (McCool)

“The Political System Under Stress” by Easton _____

“Fiscal Behavior of the Modern Democratic State by Mitchell _____

“The Science of Muddling Through” by Lindblom _____

“Stages of the Policy Process” by Ripley _____

6,7 Analysis in the Policy Process: Agenda Setting, Policy Formation, Implementation, and Evaluation

Lester & Stewart, Chapters 5,6,7,8,9

Assigned Articles (McCool)

“Four Systems of Policy, Politics, and Choice” by Lowi _____

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

“Typologies of Public Policy...” by Steinberger _____
“Promoting Policy Theory” by Spitzer _____

8 Spring Break March 16-20

9,10 Analyzing Public Policy Choices

Lester & Stewart, Chapters 10,11 (Week 8)
Lester & Stewart, Chapters 12,13,14,15 (Week 9)

Assigned Articles (McCool)

“American Business, Public Policy, Case Studies, and Political Theory” by Lowi _____
“The Subsystems in Perspective” by Freeman _____
“Issue Networks and the Executive Establishment” by Heclo _____
“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 _____

PART II METHODS OF POLICY ANALYSIS

11 Simple Policy Analysis for Public Managers

Patton & Sawicki, Chapters 1,2

12 Defining the policy problem and Collecting Data

Patton & Sawicki, Chapters 3,4

13 Evaluation Criteria, Identifying Alternatives, and Evaluating Alternative Policies

Patton & Sawicki, Chapters 5-8

14 Setting Up Policy Analysis Designs: Case Studies

Patton & Sawicki, Chapters 10,13,16
(Downtown Redevelopment, Campus Parking, and Public-Private Development: Underground Atlanta)

15 Exam April 27