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## Policy Analysis and Program Evaluation

BPOLST 503; 5 Credit Hours

Spring 2013

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**Instructor:** Nives Dolšak, Associate Professor

**Class/lab time:** Tuesdays 5:45 PM-10:05 PM

**Room:** UW1 121

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays, 4:30 PM-5:30 PM and by appointment

**Office:** UWB2-332

**E-mail:** [ndolsak@uwb.edu](mailto:ndolsak@uwb.edu)

### Course Description

Public sector across levels of governance is under increasing pressure to provide better services with fewer resources. Policy analysts and public managers, therefore, need to be able to prioritize what services will be offered and evaluate whether the programs designed to provide such services have been effective and efficient. This course focuses on methods and approaches used in policy analysis and program evaluation. We will examine and apply most commonly used interdisciplinary approaches and methods for evaluating policy impacts and outcomes, including, but not limited to cost-benefit analysis, randomized field experiments, quasi-experimental assessment, and participatory assessment. In addition, we will examine the role of policy analysis and program evaluation in democratic governance.

The class first meets for 2.5 to 3 hours to discuss assigned readings and analyze methods. After the class, students complete on-line assignments that will require between 1 and 1.5 hours of additional work. Students will have the choice of completing these assignments during the second half of the class session or on their own over the weekend. The class meets in a computer lab and students will be able to use computers in the lab. Excel and SPSS are loaded on these computers. If you wish to work on the assignments at home, you will likely need the above software. It can be obtained through UW bookstore. In the addition to the above in-class work, students will also need to commit additional time outside the classroom to complete the assigned readings (prior to coming to the class) and develop a policy analysis/program evaluation proposal.

### Course Objectives

The course objectives are three-fold. First, students will learn and apply skills required for designing, conducting, and communicating policy analysis and program evaluation. Students will use Excel, SPSS, or other software as applicable in this field. Second, students will learn oral and written communication techniques employed in the field of policy analysis. They will read, evaluate, and present policy analysis and program evaluation conducted and published by others. Third, through learning about the role of policy analysis in a democratic policy dialogue, students will be better equipped to get engaged in democratic policy decision making.

### **Course Preparation**

While this course has no formal prerequisites, prior knowledge of basic statistics (including, but not limited to analysis of variance) and pre-calculus (exponential functions) will be advantageous. Similarly, familiarity with Excel and SPSS will be helpful. Students without the above background knowledge are encouraged to use tutoring services available through the quantitative skills centers at UW.

### **Required Readings**

**Textbooks** available for purchase at the UW Bookstore and also on 4-hour reserve at the UWB/CCC library:

(1) Gupta, Dipak K. 2011. *Analyzing Public Policy: Concepts, Tools, and Techniques*. 2/E. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press.

(2) Fitzpatrick, Jody L., James R. Sanders, Blaine R. Worthen. 2011. *Program Evaluation: Alternative Approaches and Practical Guidelines*, 4/E. New York: Addison, Wesley, and Longman.

**Additional required** readings will be available electronically through the Electronic Reserve Readings at the UWB/CCC library. Please note that access to all electronic reserve course pages requires your UW NetID.

Ellis, Ralph. D. 1998. "A Method for Quantifying Distributive Justice." In *Just Results: Ethical Foundations for Policy Analysis*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press. Pp. 143-172.

Guess, George M. and Paul G. Farnham. 2000. "Ch. 6: Cost-Effectiveness Analysis: The Case of Mother-to-Infant HIV Transmission." In *Cases in Public Policy Analysis*. Second Edition. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press. Pp. 249-302.

Guess, George M. and Paul G. Farnham. 2000. "Ch. 7: Cost-Benefit Analysis: The Case of Environmental Air Quality Standards." In *Cases in Public Policy Analysis*. Second Edition. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press. Pp. 303-332.

Weimer, David L, and Aidan R. Vining. "Preview: The Canadian Salmon Fishery." *Policy Analysis: Concepts and Practice*.5/E. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2011. 1-22.

### **Laptops and Software**

While no particular software is required to complete the assignments, students may be most productive using Excel and/or SPSS for assignments 3-5. The class meets in a computer lab. You will need your UW netid to be able to log onto the computers.




### **Academic Integrity**

I expect students to uphold the highest standards of academic conduct. Students have to be familiar with and adhere to the rules regulating academic integrity as defined in the University of Washington, Bothell student handbook ("Maintaining Academic Integrity" section). This is based upon the University of Washington Student Conduct Code, Section WAC 478-120-020-

2(a). Ignorance will not be accepted as a defense for academic misconduct. For additional information and guidelines, see <http://www.bothell.washington.edu/learningtech/plagiarism>

### Assignments, Evaluation, and Grading

The below assignments are described in detail on the **Blackboard** site for this course.

| Assignment  | Maximum Possible Points |
|---|-------------------------|
| On-line Assignment 1:<br>The Role of Government(s)  | 10                      |
| On-line Assignment 2:<br>Collecting Policy Analysis Information   | 15                      |
| On-line Assignment 3:<br>Projection Techniques   | 25                      |
| On-line Assignment 4:<br>Cost-Benefit Analysis   | 5                       |
| On-line Assignment 5:<br>Distributional Weights  | 10                      |
| On-line Assignment 6:<br>MAPS Capstone Reviews (two reviews, each 10 points max)  | 20                      |
| Academic/Professional Policy Analysis/Program Evaluation Presentation   | 15                      |
| Policy Analysis/Program Evaluation Proposal   | 30                      |
| Policy Analysis/Program Evaluation Proposal Presentation  | 10                      |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>140</b>              |



indicates the assignments that may be completed and submitted individually or in a pair.

#### Late Submission Policy

Assignments in this course are scheduled to provide hands-on exercises applying methods we learn each week. To be productive in this class, students have to remain on schedule practicing the methods as they are taught and submitting their work on-time. Therefore, I will not be able to accept late assignments. If you are not able to meet the deadline for medical reasons, please provide documentation from your physician indicating the duration of the incapacitation. Without this document, I will not be able to accept any late assignments. I will expect your late assignment within 3 days of the last date indicating your incapacitation. Past that date, I will not accept a late assignment.





#### Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact me as soon as possible. You also need to contact the Disabled Student Services at the University of Washington, Bothell: 425.325.5307, TDD 425.352.3132, [dssuwb@u.washington.edu](mailto:dssuwb@u.washington.edu), located in LBA-106.

### **Electronic Exchange of Documents on Blackboard**

You will be submitting your assignments on the Blackboard site [BPOLST 503 and SMEA550- Spring 2013](#) accessible at (<http://bb.uwb.edu>) in the section “assignments”. To be able to access the BPOLST 503 Blackboard site, you will first have to enroll in this class on the Blackboard class site. For information on how to use Blackboard, see the Learning Technologies Guide accessible at <http://www.uwb.edu/learningtech/elearning/blackboard>

If you have problems accessing black board site, contact the UWB Information Systems at 425-352-3456 or [it@uwb.edu](mailto:it@uwb.edu).

| Weekly Schedule |  |   |   |
|-----------------|--|---|---|
| Date            | Topic  | Readings  | Assignments   |
| 04/02           | Rationality and the Role of Policy Analysis  | Gupta, Ch. 1-3,<br>Gupta Appendix A <b>OR</b><br>Weimer and Vining (2005)<br><br>Review/skim Gupta, Ch. 4 |   |
| 04/09           | Policy Research Design   | Gupta, Ch. 5, 6   | On-line Assignment 1<br><b>Due April 14, 11:00 PM</b>   |
| 04/16           | Data for Policy Analysis and Hypothesis Testing  | Gupta, Ch. 7-9, Appendix B  | On-line Assignment 2<br><b>Due April 21, 11:00 PM</b>   |
| 04/23           | Projection Techniques  | Gupta, Ch. 10-12  | On-line Assignment 3<br><b>Due April 28, 11:00 PM</b>   |
| 04/30           | Cost-Benefit Analysis  | Gupta, Ch. 14;<br>Ellis<br>Guess and Farnham, Ch. 6, 7  | On-line Assignments 4, 5<br><b>Due May 5, 11:00 PM</b><br> |
| 05/03<br>Friday | Policy Studies Research Conference   | <b>Attend at least two panels</b> to be able to complete Assignment 6.                                    |   |
| 05/07           | Class does not meet this Tuesday to allow students to attend the Policy Studies Research Conference. |   | On-line Assignment 6<br><b>Due May 12, 11:00 PM</b>   |
| 05/14           | Approaches to Program Evaluation   | Fitzpatrick, Sanders, and Worthen, Ch. 4-10   |    |
| 05/21           | Planning Program Evaluation  | Fitzpatrick, Sanders, and Worthen, Ch.11-14   |    |
| 05/28           | Conducting and Using Program Evaluations   | Fitzpatrick, Sanders, and Worthen, Ch.15-17<br>Another reading TBD.                                       |    |
| 06/04           | Students present their proposals and provide peer feedback on each other's work.                     | Another reading TBD.  | Presentation: in class<br><br>Proposal<br><b>Due June 9, 11:00 PM</b>   |



Denotes the class sessions for which students will be able to sign up for their presentation of an academic/professional policy analysis they have identified and read themselves. Please sign up on the Blackboard Discussion board and sign up EARLY. While there is sufficient number of class sessions scheduled for these presentations during the quarter, if you wait too long, there may be no more slots left to present when you wish to present. I will not be able to schedule additional presentation slots.