
Policy Analysis and Program Evaluation

BPOLST 503; 5 Credit Hours

Spring 2012

Instructor: Nives Dolšak, Associate Professor

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

Room: UW2 340

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

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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 to 2.5 hours to discuss assigned readings and analyze methods. Students are then expected to 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 with the instructor's supervision or on their own over the weekend. Students opting to complete the assignments during the second half of the class will need to bring their laptops with them. If you do not have Excel/SPSS, you can obtain them through UW bookstore.

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. Through hands-on exercises, students will learn Excel and SPSS 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 Prerequisites

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 Center at UWB.

Required Readings

Textbooks available at the UW Bookstore:

(1) Fitzpatrick, Jody L., James R. Sanders, Blaine R. Worthen. 2003. *Program Evaluation: Alternative Approaches and Practical Guidelines*, 3/E. New York: Addison, Wesley, and Longman.

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

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.

Optional readings

Judge, Millie M. 2011. 2011 Implementation Status Assessment. Final Report. A *Qualitative Assessment of Implementation of the Puget Sound Chinook Salmon Recovery Plan*. A Report for the National Marine Fisheries Service.




<http://www.nwr.noaa.gov/Salmon-Recovery-Planning/Recovery-Domains/Puget-Sound/upload/implement-rpt.pdf>

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. Please bring your laptop for the second half of these class sessions. If you do not have Excel/SPSS, you can obtain them through UW bookstore. If you do not have a laptop, you can check one out at the UWB/CCC library.

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



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.

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>









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, located in LBA-106.

Electronic Exchange of Documents on Blackboard

You will be submitting your assignments on the Blackboard BPOLST 503 class site (<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.

Weekly Schedule			
Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments
03/27	Rationality and the Role of Policy Analysis	Gupta, Ch. 1-3, Appendix A OR Judge (2011) Review/skim Gupta, Ch. 4	On-line Assignment 1 Due April 1, 11:00 PM
04/03	Policy Research Design	Gupta, Ch. 5, 6	
! Thursday, 04/05 UW2 105	Data for Policy Analysis and Hypothesis Testing	Gupta, Ch. 7-9, Appendix B	On-line Assignment 2 Due April 8, 11:00 PM 
04/10	Projection Techniques	Gupta, Ch. 10-12	On-line Assignment 3 Due April 15, 11:00 PM 
04/17	Cost-Benefit Analysis	Gupta, Ch. 14; Ellis Guess and Farnham, Ch. 6, 7	On-line Assignments 4, 5 Due April 22, 11:00 PM 
! 04/24	We do not meet this Tuesday. This class session will be used by Prof. Jacoby for BPOLST 501 in the UW2 340 classroom.		
05/01	Approaches to Program Evaluation	Fitzpatrick, Sanders, and Worthen, Ch. 3-9	
05/08 ! 05/11	Class does not meet this Tuesday. Students are expected to attend two panels at the MAPS Capstone Conference on May 11.		
05/15	Planning Program Evaluation	Fitzpatrick, Sanders, and Worthen, Ch.10-13 Another reading TBD.	On-line Assignment 6 Due May 20, 11:00 PM 
05/22	Conducting and Using Program Evaluations	Fitzpatrick, Sanders, and Worthen, Ch.14-18	
05/29	Students present their proposals and provide peer feedback on each other's work.		Presentation: in class Proposal Due June 3, 11:00 PM



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.