

Political Science 573A  
Th 1:30-4:20  
Smith Hall rm 107  
Autumn 2008

Professor Peter May  
Office: Smith 221B; tel: 543-9842  
Email: [pmay@u.washington.edu](mailto:pmay@u.washington.edu)  
course website: <http://faculty.washington.edu/pmay/pols573>

## POLICY TOPICS

### Implementation and Bureaucratic Politics

This is a topical seminar that addresses policy implementation and bureaucratic politics. We will attempt to come to grips with the resurgence of research on these topics in recent years.

Particular attention will be paid to consideration of the relationship between policy design and implementation, intergovernmental implementation, street-level bureaucracy, and bureaucratic influences on policy processes. We will ground the discussion with consideration of how these issues play out in various policy areas. Each week's topics will typically consist of a mix of conceptual perspectives and research articles that examine relevant perspectives. The course is relevant to students in American politics and policy processes, but also has applications to those with interests in comparative politics.

### *Requirements*

Each student will be required to develop a synthesis paper, two response papers, and lead some of the class discussions of assigned readings. Grades will be based on a combination of performance on the required papers and contributions to the seminar. Each component will be assessed as follows:

- *Synthesis Paper.* The purpose of this paper is to advance your thinking about some strand of the diverse literature that we will be addressing this quarter. This will count for 50 percent of the course grade. The paper could take one of several forms:
  - Discussion of an under-developed concept in the implementation or bureaucratic politics literature with attention to the varieties of way that the concept has been conceptualized, research findings about it, and suggested directions for improving understanding of the concept. Examples include: bureaucratic agendas, bureaucratic power, implementation success, and street-level discretion.
  - Conceptualization of key relationships that have been underspecified with attention to the relevant concepts, potential propositions or hypotheses about the relationships (and their logic), and relevant findings concerning them. Examples include: role of interest groups in influencing policy implementation, contextual differences in street-level bureaucratic behavior, bureaucratic agency use of rules and guidance in making policy, bureaucratic "signaling" of issue importance, role of agency capacity and commitment in affecting implementation efforts.
  - Applying a key perspective in implementation or from studies of bureaucratic politics to case material for a subject of interest to you. This could be an "exceptional" case analysis that considers how the case elucidates the perspective. Examples include illustrating design or other factors that facilitate implementation, bureaucratic responses to higher-level policy mandates, coping behavior by street level bureaucrats, and bureaucratic agency response to crisis or failures.
  - Designing research to address an understudied aspect of these literatures. This should identify a puzzle, some testable propositions, and a strategy for examining these with attention to issues of research design and data collection. The research need not be actually conducted.

The synthesis paper is not intended to be as comprehensive as research paper. In practical terms, I am thinking of something like a 10 to 15 page paper rather than a 20 or 30 page paper (double spaced). *The synthesis paper is due December 8<sup>th</sup>*, the Monday following the last class session by 4 pm as emailed to [pmay@u.washington.edu](mailto:pmay@u.washington.edu) as a word or pdf document. There is a penalty for late final papers of .5 point reduction for each day late.

You are required to turn in a two-page topic paper on October 16<sup>th</sup> (week 4). You should be able to identify which of the above directions you are heading and enough of the specifics to show that you are on top of things. The topic paper will be graded as “ahead of the game” (plus .1), “on target” (zero), or “time to get going” (minus .1). The final paper grade will be adjusted by the grade points listed in parentheses to a maximum grade on the final paper of 4.0. Failure to turn in the topic paper on time will result in a .3 grade reduction to the final paper.

- *Response Papers.* Each will count for 15 percent of the grade for a total of 30 percent. Each will be evaluated on a scale of “stellar analysis and insights” (3.8 to 4.0), “strong analysis but more limited insights” (3.6 to 3.8), “acceptable analysis” (3.4 to 3.6), or “analysis has notable deficiencies” (3.3 or below). Late papers will be reduced by .5 grade points for each day they are late. These are to be short, four-to-five page (double spaced) papers as follows:
  - *Paper #1 – Policy Design and Implementation* – due October 9<sup>th</sup> at class time (week 3). Your charge is to develop an analytic essay that addresses the policy design for a policy of your choice to consider with attention to how the design structures implementation.
  - *Paper #2 – Bureaucratic Delegation and Prescription* – due November 13<sup>th</sup> at class time (week 8). Your charge is to develop an analytic essay that addresses a policy that sets forth a new program or activities with attention to two considerations: (a) the choice of agency to which implementation is delegated, and (b) the extent to which agency actions are prescribed (or proscribed).
- *Contribution to the Seminar.* Your contributions to the seminar will be assessed with respect to: (1) your performance in leading assigned discussion of material for the course, and (2) your contributions to the seminar discussion and in weekly course postings. For most weeks of the course (weeks 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 9) you are required to post comments about the readings using the Catalyst Go-Post feature (linked in course website) by 12n of the day of the class. These should be a paragraph or so of your comments that provide your reactions, questions that occur to you, and other observations about the readings or theoretical perspectives. Those taking the lead for any given topic should scan the posted comments and be prepared to address them as part of the discussion of relevant material. Each student’s contributions will be evaluated on a scale of “stellar contributions” (3.8 to 4.0), “solid contributions” (3.6 to 3.8), “acceptable contributions” (3.4 to 3.6), or “less than desired contributions” (3.3 or below). A single grade will be provided for this component and it will constitute 20 percent of the course grade.

## ***Readings***

The following books are available for purchase at the University Bookstore:

Required:

Jeffrey Pressman and Aaron Wildavsky. 1973. *Implementation*. Berkeley: University of California Press (original edition 1973, latest edition 1989).

Recommended:

Michael Hill and Peter Hupe. 2002. *Implementing Public Policy*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

James Q. Wilson. 1989. *Bureaucracy*. New York: Basic Books.

Recommended background for those with limited exposure to the fundamentals of policy processes in the United States:

Thomas Birkland, *An Introduction to the Policy Process* – now in 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe 2005).

Additional journal articles – Items marked with a (d) in the readings listing are available for download from the course website with a password protected login.

## SCHEDULE OF SESSIONS

**Week 1. Course Introduction and Other Thoughts**  
(September 25)

(d) Saetren, Harald 2005. “Facts and Myths about Public Policy Implementation: Out-of-Fashion, Old Fashioned, Allegedly Dead, but Still Very Alive and Relevant,” *Policy Studies Journal* 33 (4): 559-582.

(d) Olsen, Johan P. 2005. “Maybe it is time to Rediscover Bureaucracy” *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 16: 1-24; advance access version March 2005.

### Part I. Implementation: Conceptual Perspectives

**Week 2. Some Historical Perspective on the Field**  
(October 2) – readings comments to be posted by 12n

> *Roots*

Pressman and Wildavsky, *Implementation*

> *Conceptual Perspectives – The Top-Down Bottom-Up Diversion*

(d) Sabatier, Paul A. 1986. “Top-down and Bottom-up Approaches to Implementation Research: A Critical Analysis and Suggested Synthesis,” *Journal of Public Policy* 6(1): 21-48.

(d) Elmore, Richard F. 1979-80. “Backward Mapping: Implementation Research and Policy Decisions,” *Political Science Quarterly* 94(4): 601-616.

> *Re-conceptualizing the Implementation Process*

(d) Winter, Søren C. 2006. “Implementation” In B. Guy Peters and Jon Pierre (eds.) *Handbook of Public Policy*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

> *Also see (optional items):*

Eugene Bardach, *The Implementation Game*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1977.

Malcolm L. Goggin et al., *Implementation Theory and Practice, Toward a Third Generation*. Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1990.

Daniel A. Mazmanian and Paul A. Sabatier, *Implementation and Public Policy*.  
Glenview, IL: Scott Foresman and Company, 1983.

## Part II. Implementation: Research and Empirical Perspectives

### Week 3. *Research Perspectives*

(October 9) – readings comments to be posted by 12n

#### *Response Paper #1 due – Policy Design and Implementation*

##### > *Research Challenges*

(d) Goggin, Malcolm L. 1986. “The ‘Too Few Cases/Too Many Variables’ Problem in Implementation Research,” *Western Political Quarterly* 39(2): 328-247.

##### > *Policy Design and Implementation*

(d) May, Peter J. 2002. “Policy Design and Implementation.” In B. Guy Peters and Jon Pierre (eds.) *Handbook of Public Administration*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, pp. 223-233

(d) Koski, Chris. 2007. “Regulatory Choices: Analyzing State Policy Design,” *Law and Policy* 29(4): 407-434.

##### > *Policy Instruments and Implementation*

(d) McDonnell, Lorainne M and Richard F. Elmore. 1987 “Getting the Job Done, Alternative Policy Instruments” *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 9(2): 133-142.

(d) Elmore, Richard F. 1987 “Instruments and Strategy in Policy” *Policy Studies Review* 7(1): 174-186.

(d) Howlett, Michael. 2000. “Managing the ‘hollow state’: Procedural Policy Instruments and Modern Governance,” *Canadian Public Administration* 43(4): 412-431.

(optional) Also see Lester Salamon ed. 2002. *Tools of Government*, New York: Oxford.

##### > *Interests and Implementation*

(d) Koski, Chris and Peter J. May. 2003. “Interests and Implementation: Fostering Voluntary Regulatory Actions,” *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 16(3): 329-349.

**Week 4. Studying Intergovernmental and Multi-organizational Implementation**

(October 16) -- readings comments to be posted by 12n

***Synthesis topic paper due.***>*Implementation Issues and Overviews*

(d) O'Toole, Laurence J. Jr. 2002. "Interorganizational Relations in Implementation. In B. Guy Peters and John Pierre's (eds.) *Handbook of Public Administration*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, pp. 234-244

(d) Stoker, Robert P. 1989. "A Regime Framework for Implementation Analysis: Cooperation and Reconciliation of Federalist Imperatives," *Policy Studies Review* 9(1) 29-49. [For elaboration see his book, *Reluctant Partners, Implementing Federal Policy*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburg Press, 1991.]

>*Multi-level Governance Theoretical Perspectives*

(d) Hill, Carolyn J. and Laurence E. Lynn Jr. 2004. "Governance and Public Management, An Introduction," *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 23(1): 3-11.

(d) Meier, Kenneth J. Laurence J. O'Toole Jr., And Sean Nicholson-Crotty. 2004. "Multi-Level Governance and Organizational Performance: Investigating the Political-Bureaucratic Labyrinth," *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 23(1): 31-47.

>*Selected Findings*

(d) May, Peter J. 1995. "Can Cooperation Be Mandated? Implementing Intergovernmental Environmental Management in New South Wales and New Zealand," *Publius* 25(1): 89-113.

(d) Weiss, Janet. 1987. "Pathways to Cooperation among Public Agencies," *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 7(1): 94-117.

(d) May, Peter J. and Søren Winter. 2007. "Collaborative Service Arrangements: Patterns, Bases, and Perceived Consequences," *Public Management Review* 9(4): 479-502.

**Week 5. Studying Street-Level Bureaucrats**

(October 23) -- readings comments to be posted by 12n

>*Conceptual Issues and Overviews*

(d) Michael Lipsky. 1980. "The Critical Role of Street Level Bureaucrats." In Michael Lipsky, *Street Level Bureaucrats*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation; pp 3-23.

(d) Marcia K. Meyers and Susan Vorsanger. 2002. "Street-Level Bureaucrats and the Implementation of Public Policy." In B. Guy Peters and John Pierre's (eds.) *Handbook of Public Administration*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, pp. 245-255.

(optional) Brehm, John and Scott Gates. 1997. *Working, Shirking, and Sabotage, Bureaucratic Response to a Democratic Public*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

(optional) James Q. Wilson, ch 9 "Compliance" pp 154-175.

> *Selected Findings – Influences on SLBs in Social Policy Implementation*

(d) Meyers, Marcia K., Bonnie Glaser, and Karin Mac Donald. 1998. "On the Front Lines of Welfare Delivery: Are Workers Implementing Policy Reforms?" *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 17(1): 1-22.

(d) May, Peter J. and Soren C. Winter. 2008. "Politicians, Managers, and Street-Level Bureaucrats: Influences on Policy Implementation," *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* advance access October 25, 2007.

> *Selected Findings – Regulatory Inspectors*

(d) Søren C. Winter. 2002. "Explaining Street-Level Bureaucratic Behavior in Social Regulatory Policy," Paper Prepared for the 2002 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association. August 29 – September 1, Boston, MA.

(d) Nielsen, Vibeke Lehmann. 2006. "Are Street-Level Bureaucrats Compelled or Enticed to Cope?" *Public Administration* 84(4): 861-889.

(d) May, Peter J. and Søren Winter. 2000. "Reconsidering Styles of Regulatory Enforcement: Patterns in Danish Agro-Environmental Inspection," *Law and Policy* 22(2): 144-173.

**Part III. Bureaucratic Politics: Foundations**

Week 6. *Thinking about Public Bureaucracies*

(October 30) -- readings comments to be posted by 12n

> *Revisiting Bureaucracy*

Kauffman, Herbert. 2001. "Major Players: Bureaucracies in American Government," *Public Administration Review* 61(1): 18-42.

Lynn, Laurence E. Jr. 2001. "The Myth of the Bureaucratic Paradigm: What Traditional Public Administration Really Stood For," *Public Administration Review* 61(2): 144-160.

Olsen, Johan P. 2008. "Ups and Downs of Bureaucracy," *Annual Review of Political Science* 11: 13-37.

> *Creation, Reorganizational, and Death of Public Bureaus*

(d) March, James G. and Johan P. Olsen. 1983. "Organizing Political Life: What Administrative Reorganization Tells Us about Government," *American Political Science Review* 77(2): 281-296.

(d) Lewis, David E. 2002. "The Politics of Agency Termination: Confronting the Myth of Agency Mortality," *Journal of Politics* 64(1): 89-107.

(d) Light, Paul C. 2007. "The Homeland Security Hash," *Wilson Quarterly* Spring: 36-44.

(optional) Also see: Anthony Downs. 1967. *Inside Bureaucracy*. Boston: Little, Brown.

(optional) Wilson, chapter 10, "Turf," pp. 179-195.

> *Interests and Agency Functioning*

(optional) Wilson, chapter 5 "Interests," pp 72-89.

**Week 7. Toward Synthesis Papers**

(November 6) – No class this week due to APPAM conference; individual sessions to be scheduled earlier in the week to talk about synthesis papers.

**Part IV. Bureaucracies and Politics****Week 8. Perspectives on Bureaucracies and Politics**

(November 13) -- readings comments to be posted by 12n

**Response Paper #2 due – Bureaucratic Delegation and Prescription**> *Principal-Agent Perspectives – Public Bureaucracies as Administrative Agents*

(d) Gary J. Miller. 2005. “The Political Evolution of Principal-Agent Models,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 8: 203-225.

(d) Jeff Worsham, Marc Allen Eisner, Evan J. Ringquist. 1997. “Assessing the Assumptions: A Critical Analysis of Agency Theory,” *Administration and Society* 28(4): 419-440.

(optional) Also see: Terry M. Moe. 1984. “The New Economics of Organization,” *American Journal of Political Science* 28(4): 739-777.

> *Beyond “Neutral Competence” – Bureaucracies as Political and Policy Entities*

(d) Samuel Workman. 2008. “Economizing Attention: Bureaucracy and Bottom-up Signaling in the Administrative State” Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago April, 15pp.

(d) Sean Nicholson-Crotty. 2005. “Bureaucratic Competition in the Policy Process,” *Policy Studies Journal* 33(3): 341-361.

(d) May, Peter J., Samuel Workman, and Bryan D. Jones. 2008. “Organizing Attention: Responses of the Bureaucracy to Agenda Disruption,” *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, in press.

(d) Yackee, Susan Webb. 2006. “Assessing Inter-Institutional Attention to and Influence on Government Regulations,” *British Journal of Political Science* 36: 723-744.

> *An Important Aside – Administrative Rulemaking*

(d) Cornelius Kerwin. 2007. “The Management of Regulatory Rulemaking,” Report for the IBM Center for the Business of Government, 46pp.

(d) William West. 2006. “Administrative Rule Making: An Old and Emerging Literature” *Public Administration Review* 65(6): 655-668.

**Week 9. Agency Delegation, Control and Oversight**

(November 20) -- readings comments to be posted by 12n

> *Delegation*

(d) Lavertu, Stephane and David Weimer. 2008. “Integrating Delegation into Theories of the Policy Process,” Paper presented at the Workshop on Future Directions of Policy Theories, University of Oklahoma, 15pp.

(d) Potoski, Matthew. 2002. “Designing Bureaucratic Responsiveness: Administrative Procedures and Agency Choice in Environmental Policy,” *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 2(1): 1-23.

(d) Epstein, David and Sharyn O'Halloran. 1994. "Administrative Procedures, Information, and Agency Discretion," *American Journal of Political Science* 38(3): 697-722.

(d) Huber, John D., Charles R. Shipan, and Madelaine Pfahler. 2001. "Legislatures and Statutory Control of Bureaucracy," *American Journal of Political Science*. 45(2): 330-345.

> *Control and Oversight*

(d) Matthew D. McCubbins and Thomas Schwartz. 1984. "Congressional Oversight Overlooked: Police Patrols versus Fire Alarms," *American Journal of Political Science* 28(1): 165-179.

(d) Ken Meier and Laurence O'Toole, Jr.. 2006. "Political Control versus Bureaucratic Values: Reframing the Debate," *Public Administration Review*. Advance access -- March/April 2006, pp. 177-192.

(d) Carpenter, Daniel P. 1996. "Adaptive Signal Processing, Hierarchy, and Budgetary Control in Federal Regulation," *American Political Science Review* 90(2): 283-302.

(d) Whitford, Andrew B. 2005. "The Pursuit of Control by Multiple Principals" *Journal of Politics* 67(1): 29-49.

## Part V. Coming to Loose Ends

### Week 10. Course Wrap Up

(December 4)

*Synthesis papers due December 8<sup>th</sup>*, the Monday following the last class session by 4 pm as emailed to [pmay@u.washington.edu](mailto:pmay@u.washington.edu) as a word or pdf document. There is a penalty for late final papers of .5 point reduction for each day late.

Presentations about synthesis papers during class.