

Political Science 575
Public Affairs 575
M 1:30-4:20, Smith Hall 107
Winter 2009

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PUBLIC POLICY PROCESSES

This course is broadly concerned with political science research about policy processes. We will conduct this course as a research seminar in American politics. The material addresses various perspectives concerning policy processes primarily in the American context but with some examples outside of the United States. The course is aimed at PhD students who desire to use the course for developing their interests and research possibilities in studying aspects of policy processes or public policy.

Requirements

The main requirement is development of a research paper that addresses relevant concepts and/or one or more of the theoretical perspectives discussed in the course. Details about the paper will be provided in class. Examples of prior papers are contained in the readings listed below.

Grades will be based on a combination of performance on a short response paper, the required research paper, and contributions to the seminar. Each component will be assessed as follows:

- *Response Paper.* This will be due the 3rd week of the quarter. By then, we will have worked our way through a variety of theories about policy processes. For this assignment, you are asked to write a 4 to 5 page (double-spaced) response paper that addresses the question “what is the state of theorizing about policy processes?” with attention to your take on (a) emerging consensus about how to study policy processes, (b) fruitful areas of research, (c) less fruitful areas of research, and (d) major gaps in theorizing and/or research. The emphasis should be on your assessment of the literature that we have addressed as in answering a qualifying exam question. This will count for 20 percent of the course grade.
- *Research Paper.* This will be developed in a series of steps that include: (1) preliminary topic paper due during the 4th week (due January 26th at the start of class); (2) “toward final paper” due the 6th week (due February 9th at class time); (3) in-class presentation to be given during week 9; and (4) the research paper itself (due March 10th). Each of the first two items will be graded either 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 for each rating (i.e., maximum of plus/minus .2) to a maximum grade on the final paper of 4.0. Failure to turn in either intermediate paper on time will result in a .3 grade reduction to the final paper for each instance. In addition, note that there is a penalty for late final papers. The research paper constitutes 60 percent of the course grade.
- *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 selected weeks of the course (weeks 2, 4, 5, 6, and 8) 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 to the seminar will be evaluated on an overall 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:

Frank R. Baumgartner and Bryan D. Jones, *Agendas and Instability in American Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).

Eric M. Patashnik, *Reforms at Risk: What Happens after Major Policy Changes are Enacted* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008).

Paul Sabatier, ed., *Theories of the Policy Process, 2nd edition* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2007).

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 2nd edition (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe 2005).

Additional journal articles and sample student papers – each marked with (w) in the list of readings that follow – will be available for downloading from a password-protected portion of the course website.

Web Resources

A web site has been established for the course as indicated at the top of the first page of the syllabus. That site provides updates on assignments and links to useful research sites.

SCHEDULE OF SESSIONS

We are constrained this quarter by conflicts between the scheduled course meeting date and two holidays (January 16th and February 19th) along with another conflict on March 9th. This means that some sessions will cover more material than normal and that we may have to schedule additional meeting times if we fall behind.

PART I. OVERVIEW AND IMAGES OF POLICY FORMATION AND CHANGE

*Week 1. Political Science, Policy Analysis, Policy Research, and Policy Processes
Studying Policy Agendas and Agenda Change*

January 5

Course Overview

Policy Processes – Overview of Theoretical Issues and Perspectives

Paul Sabatier, "The Need for Better Theories," Chapter 1, pp. 3-17; and "Fostering the Development of Policy Theory," Chapter 11, pp 321-336 in Sabatier *Theories of the Policy Process*.

Wermer Jann and Kai Wegrich, "Theories of the Policy Cycle," in Fischer et al, *The Handbook of Policy Analysis* 2006, 24pp (w).

Studying Policy Agendas and Agenda Change

John Kingdon's "Streams Metaphor" and the Opening of Policy Windows

Nikolaos Zahariadis, "The Multiple Streams Network: Structure Limitations and Prospects," Chapter 3 in Sabatier *Theories of the Policy Process*, pp. 65-92.

Thomas Birkland, "Focusing Events, Mobilization, and Agenda Setting," *Journal of Public Policy* 18 (January-April, 1998): 53-74 (w)

Baumgartner and Jones: Punctuated Equilibrium and Agenda Change

James True, Bryan Jones, and Frank Baumgartner, "Punctuated-Equilibrium Theory: Explaining Stability and Change in American Policymaking," Chapter 6 in Sabatier *Theories of the Policy Process*, pp. 155-187.

Baumgartner and Jones, "Punctuated Equilibria in Politics," Chapter 1, pp. 3-24, and "Two Models of Issue Expansion," Chapter 5 in *Agendas and Instability in American Politics*, pp. 83-102.

Robert S. Wood, "They Dynamics of Incrementalism: Subsystems, Politics, and Public Lands," *Policy Studies Journal* 34 (1, 2006): 1-16. (w)

Sample Student Papers

Barry Pump, "The Politics of Recession: How the Public Drives Economic Policy," POLS 575 paper 2008, 16pp. (w)

Travis W. Reynolds, "Coalitions, Institutions, and Strategy in United States Climate Change Policy," POLS 575 paper 2008, 30pp. (w)

Week 2. Problem Definitions, Interests, and Institutions

January 12 – reading comments to be submitted by 12n

*Problem Definitions and Causal Reasoning**Schneider and Ingram's "Social Construction" Theory*

Anne Schneider, Helen Ingram, and Peter DeLeon, "Social Construction and Policy Design," Chapter 4 in Sabatier *Theories of the Policy Process*, pp. 93-126.

Mark Donovan, "The Social Construction of People with AIDS: Target Populations and U.S. Policy, 1981-1990," *Policy Studies Review* 12 (Autumn 1993): 3-29. (w)

Causal Reasoning, Problem Definitions, and Social Construction

Deborah A. Stone, "Causal Stories and the Formation of Policy Agendas," *Political Science Quarterly* 104 (Summer 1989): 281-300. (w)

Stephen Hilgartner and Charles Bosk, "The Rise and Fall of Social Problems: A Public Arenas Model," *American Journal of Sociology* 94 (July 1988): 53-78. (w)

Regina G. Lawrence and Thomas A. Birkland, "Guns, Hollywood, and Criminal Justice: Defining the School Shootings Problem across Public Arenas," *Social Science Quarterly* 85 (5, 2004): 1193-1207. (w)

*Interest Involvement in Policy Processes**Paul Sabatier and Hank-Jenkins Smith: Advocacy Coalition Framework*

Paul Sabatier and Christopher Weible, "The Advocacy Coalition Framework: Innovations and Clarifications," Chapter 7 in Sabatier *Theories of the Policy Process*, pp. 189-220.

Christopher Weible, "An Advocacy Coalition Framework Approach to Stakeholder Analysis: Understanding the Political Context of California Marine Protected Area Policy," *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 17 (1, 2007): 95-117. (w)

Other Perspectives on Interest Accommodation

Peter J. May, "Reconsidering Policy Design: Policies and Publics," *Journal of Public Policy* 11 (part 2, 1991): 187-206. (w)

*The Role of Institutions and Institutional Design**Elinor Ostrom: Institutional Analysis and Development Framework*

Elinor Ostrom, "Institutional Rational Choice: An Assessment of the Institutional Analysis and Development Framework, Chapter 2 in Sabatier *Theories of the Policy Process*, pp. 21-64.

Eduardo Araral, "The Strategic Games that Donors and Bureaucrats Play: An Institutional Rational Choice Analysis," *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, advance access December 3, 2008, 19pp (w)

Sample Student Papers:

Anne Buffardi, "Diverse Domain-Driven Policy: Defining US Foreign Assistance," PolS 575 Paper, Winter 2008, 26pp (w).

Week 3. Toward Final Papers

January 19 – Holiday. Individual consultations regarding the final paper to be arranged.

Response Paper due January 19th with submission by 4pm by email to pmay@u.washington.edu as a word document. Place your name on a cover page only to permit blind grading of the paper.

Week 4. Making Policy Stick – Reforms at Risk

January 26 – reading comments to be submitted by 12n

Topic Paper due TODAY at start of class

Discussion of research paper directions – individual presentations – and resources for completion of research papers

What Happens after Major Policy Changes are Enacted

Eric Patashnik, *Reforms at Risk* – focus on chapters 1, 2, & 9 (theorizing and conclusions) and read at least one of the case chapters (3 through 8)

PART II. RESEARCH CONCERNING POLICY PROCESSES

This part of the course will mix discussion of extensions of theorizing about policy processes discussed in Part I of the course with discussion around the development of student-initiated research papers concerning perspectives on policy processes.

Week 5. Foci and Units of Analysis – Policy Venues, Subsystems, and Regimes

February 2 – reading comments to be submitted by 12n

Policy Venues and Venue Shopping

Sarah B. Pralle, “Venue Shopping: Political Strategy and Policy Change: The Internationalization of Canadian Forest Advocacy,” *Journal of Public Policy* 23 (2003): 233-260. (w)

Lisa L. Miller, “The Representational Bias of Federalism: Scope and Bias in the Political Process, Revisited,” *Perspectives on Politics* 5(June 2007): 305-321. (w)

Subsystems, Stability, and Change

Daniel McCool, “The Subsystem Family of Concepts: A Critique and a Proposal,” *Political Research Quarterly* 51 (2, 1998): 551-570. (w)

Peter J. May, Joshua Sapotichne, and Samuel Workman, “Widespread Policy Disruption: Terrorism, Public Risks, and Homeland Security,” forthcoming *Policy Studies Journal* 40pp (w)

Jeffrey Worsham. 2007. “Up in Smoke: Mapping Subsystem Dynamics in Tobacco Policy,” *Policy Studies Journal* 34(3): 437-452.

Policy Regimes

Carter A. Wilson, “Policy Regimes and Policy Change,” *Journal of Public Policy* 20 (3, 2000): 247-274. (w)

Peter J. May, Ashley Jochim, and Joshua Sapotichne, “Policy Regimes and Governance: Constructing Homeland Security,” Center for American Politics and Public Policy, 40pp (w)

Sample Student Papers:

Shauna Fisher, "Policy Venues, Social Constructions, and Same Sex Marriage: Defining the Issue of Same Sex Marriage across Congress and Courts," Paper Political Science 575 course 2004, 27pp. (w)

Ashley E. Watson (Jochim), "Issue Evolution, Policy Regimes, and Intergovernmental Policymaking: Lessons from Federal Education Reform Paper Political Science 575 course 2008, 26pp. (w)

Week 6. Component Based Policies and Policy Coherence

February 9 – reading comments to be submitted by 12n

Draft "Toward Final Paper" due at the start of class

Discussion of research paper directions and how they are shaping up – individual presentations.

Policy Components and Coherence

Peter J. May, Bryan D. Jones, Betsi E. Beem, Emily A. Neff-Sharum, and Melissa K. Poague, "Policy Coherence and Component-Driven Policymaking: Arctic Policy in Canada and the United States," 2005. *Policy Studies Journal* 33 (1): 37-63. (w)

Peter J. May, Joshua Sapotichne, and Samuel Workman, "Policy Coherence and Policy Domains," 2006. *Policy Studies Journal* 34(3): 381-403. (w)

Joshua Sapotichne, "Reconstructing National Urban Policy," PhD Prospectus, Department of Political Science, Spring 2008, 20pp. (w)

Sample Student Papers:

Emily Neff-Sharum, "In a Domain of Their Own? :Women's Policy as Component Driven Policy versus a Policy Domain," MA essay, Department of Political Science, University of Washington, 2004, 29pp. (w)

Week 7. Really Toward Final Papers

February 16 – Holiday. Individual consultations regarding the final paper to be arranged.

Week 8. Policy Learning and Feedback

February 23 – reading comments to be submitted by 12n

Policy Learning

Peter J. May, "Policy Learning and Failure," *Journal of Public Policy* 12 (Part 4, 1992): 331-354. (w)

Colin Bennett and Michael Howlett, "The Lessons of Learning: Reconciling Theories of Policy Learning and Policy Change," *Policy Sciences* 25 (August 1992): 275-294. (w)

Peter A. Hall, "Policy Paradigms, Social Learning, and the State: The Case of Economic Policymaking in Britain," *Comparative Politics* 23 (April 1993): 275-296. (w)

Betsi Beem. "Planning to Learn: Blue Crab Policymaking in the Chesapeake Bay," *Coastal Management Journal* 34 (2006): 167-182. (w)

Policy Feedback

[revisit discussion of policy feedback in Patashnik book, pp 29-33]

Suzanne Mettler and Joe Soss, "The Consequences of Public Policy for Democratic Citizenship: Bridging Policy Studies and Mass Politics," *Perspectives on Politics* 2 (1, March 2004): 54-73.

Week 9. Research Presentations & Wrapping up course

March 2

Individual presentation of key themes, ideas, and findings from research papers.

Week 10. Finalizing Papers

March 9 – P. May out of the country – research papers due this week.

Research Papers Due March 10th by email to pmay@u.washington as a word document (MS word) by 4pm.