

PUAD 540
Public Policy Process
Fall 2017
Wednesday 4:30 –7:10
Enterprise Hall 275

Dr. Priscilla M. Regan
Schar School of Policy and Government
George Mason University
Office: Research Hall Room 338
Phone: 993-1419
Email: pregan@gmu.edu
Office Hours: Tuesday 6:00 – 7:00 & Wednesday 3:00-4:00, or
By appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course is designed to provide an understanding of the dynamics of the public policy process in the United States. The course examines policy environments and major governmental and non-governmental actors that play roles in policymaking. Policymaking is analyzed across the stages of the policy process, from agenda setting and policy formulation to policy implementation and evaluation. The course also analyzes in-depth the policy context, policy process, and policy changes in several areas of public policy including highway funding, Internet policies, gun control, immigration, affirmative action, and elections. In all instances, particular emphasis will be placed on the dynamic interactions among ideas, interests, institutions, and actors.

CLASS SESSIONS: Classes will follow a seminar format. The quality of class discussions will be critical to the success of this seminar. Students will be given discussion questions/topics each week to consider in completing the readings for the following week. Please come to class prepared to respond to these questions, as well as to raise questions of your own.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: Students will be required to write two short papers (3-4 pages in length, double spaced) analyzing selected readings. Paper questions will be distributed a week in advance and are due on the dates indicated on the course schedule. A reflective essay, drawing on both readings and Capitol Hill Day, is also required. There is also a group project related to the readings. Additionally students will write a policy memo on a topic of their choice (8 pages, single spaced) and present their memo to the class.

COURSE EVALUATION: The final grade for the course will be based on:

- class participation 15%
- group project 15% each
- two papers on readings 15% each (30%)
- reflective essay on Capitol Hill Day 15%
- policy memo 20%
- policy memo presentation 5%

COURSE OBJECTIVES: This course is designed to enable students to **participate in and contribute to the policy process** (NASPAA 2nd core competency), specifically to acquire:

- Knowledge of various actors and institutions involved in the policy making process.
- Understanding of the complications and constraints that budgeting presents.
- Knowledge of the general process of public policy creation, formulation and implementation.
- Knowledge of the roles of different stakeholders in policy-making: The bureaucracy, legislature, and lobbies and/or special interest groups in the policy process.

In this course, particular attention will be paid to students' ability to:

- Gain an understanding of the principal actors, institutions, and procedures involved in making public policy.
- Develop a sophisticated understanding of the Constitutional systems of separation of powers and federalism and how these systems shape policymaking and policy implementation in the United States.
- Understand the policy justifications for government intervention in a particular area.
- Acquire knowledge of the policy process across a range of policy issues, such as transportation, health care, and climate change.
- Gain insights into how information and analysis can contribute to policy advice to elected and appointed officials.
- Improve students' ability to analyze public policy proposals and make inferences about the potential for effective implementation.
- Understand differences in the political dynamics between different types of policy issues and the opportunities and challenges presented at different stages of the policy process.
- Understand the challenges and opportunities for effective policymaking in periods of crisis and rapid shifts in public opinion.

BOOKS: The following books are available at the Campus Bookstore:

Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies

John Kingdon

Harper Collins (Pearson), 1997

All Roads Lead to Congress

Costas Panagopoulos and Joshua Schank
CQ Press, 2008

Pathways to Power

Tim Conlan and Paul Posner
Georgetown University Press, 2014

Additional readings, such as journal articles and book chapters, will be available either on Blackboard or through GMU Libraries E-Journals.

IMPORTANT DATES:

September 4 – Last day to add classes

September 9 – Final drop deadline (no tuition penalty)

September 10-30 – Web withdrawal period (100% tuition liability)

See for new Mason policy: <https://registrar.gmu.edu/drop-withdrawal-deadlines-faqs/>

OTHER:

If you are a student with a **disability** and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the DRC.

Faculty in the Schar School have zero tolerance for **academic dishonesty** and will strictly enforce Mason's **honor code** (see last page of syllabus).

COURSE SCHEDULE**August 29 Introduction and Overview**

Discussion of course themes, syllabus, and course requirements.

September 5 The American Political System – Context for Policymaking

In this session, we will examine the central characteristics or features of the American political system and discuss how they affect policymaking in the United States. We will evaluate how our system of government constrains the making of public policy. Additionally, we will investigate the major actors, both inside and outside government, who are involved in policymaking and consider theories or models that help us to explain the relationships among these actors.

John Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*, Chapters 2-3.

The Declaration of Independence
The Articles of Confederation
Federalist Papers #10 and #51
The Constitution of the United States

The above documents can be found in many American government textbooks and on the Internet at a variety of websites, for example the National Archives, http://www.archives.gov/exhibit_hall/charters_of_freedom/constitution/constitution.html, the Library of Congress, <http://thomas.loc.gov>, and the Liberty Library of Constitutional Classics, <http://www.constitution.org>

September 12 Politics and Policy: The Case of Highway Funding

In this session we will examine a detailed case of congressional policymaking. This case well illustrates not only the roles of Congress and the President, but also the impact that interest groups and ideas have on the shaping of public policy. Comparisons between the process used in this case and the ones outlined by the Framers will be drawn.

Panagopoulos and Schank, *All Roads Lead to Congress*

**First Paper
Due
September 12**

September 19 Policy Process – Formation and Formulation

In this class we will analyze in detail Kingdon's model for understanding the processes of agenda setting (formation) and development of alternatives (formulation). We will discuss why government addresses certain public problems and not others, and justifications for the role of government in economic and social life. The methodology that Kingdon used in his research will be evaluated.

Kingdon, Chapters 1, 4-10

September 26 Theories and Approaches to the Policy Process

During this session, we will examine a number of other theories and approaches to understanding the policymaking process. We will also continue our discussion of the justifications for government involvement in policy areas, as well as exploring which level of government should have primary responsibility for a policy area.

Theodore J. Lowi, "American Business, Public Policy, Case-Studies, and Political Theory" (1964), *World Politics* 16(4):677-715. (All journal articles will be available on GMU Library, E-Journals)

James Q. Wilson, Chapter 16 in *Political Organizations* NY: Basic Books, 1973.
(concepts and typology to contrast with Lowi) [will be on Blackboard]

Timothy J. Conlan, Paul L. Posner, and David R. Beam, *Pathways of Power: The Dynamics of National Policymaking*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2014, pp. 1-15, 106-189.

October 3 Pluralist and Partisan Pathways -- Case Study Analysis

In this session, we will carefully analyze the pluralist and partisan pathways using two cases involving Internet policy. In addition to evaluating whether the policy has followed that particular path in the past and is likely to in the future, each group will also use Kingdon's three streams framework to help organize their discussion and analysis. Everyone will read the chapters from *Pathways* and the *CQ Researcher* articles, the group for each pathway will organize a presentation and lead the discussion – and should do any needed additional research the group thinks necessary based on reading of the *CQ Researcher* article.

Conlan, Posner and Beam, *Pathways*, pp. 16-59 (Chapters 3-4)

Pluralist?

Ellen Kennedy, "Privacy and the Internet," *CQ Researcher*, February 9, 2018, v. 28, #6.

Partisan?

John Fullerton Lemons, "Fight Over Net Neutrality," *CQ Researcher*, March 16, 2018, v. 28, #11.

Group Project Presentations

October 10 Expert and Symbolic Pathways – Case Study Analysis

In this session, we will carefully analyze the expert and symbolic pathways using two different cases involving Internet policy. In addition to evaluating whether the policy has followed that particular path in the past and is likely to in the future, each group will also use Kingdon's three streams framework to help organize their discussion and analysis. Everyone will read the chapters from *Pathways* and the *CQ Researcher* articles, the group for each pathway will organize a presentation and lead the discussion – and should do any needed additional research the group thinks necessary based on reading of the *CQ Researcher* article.

Conlan, Posner and Bean, *Pathways*, pp. 89-127 (Chapters 5-6)

Expert?

Patrick Marshall, "Algorithms and Artificial Intelligence," *CQ Researcher*, July 6, 2018, v. 28, #24.

Symbolic?

Patrick Marshall, "Cyberwarfare Threat – Do Hackers Pose a Danger to National Security," *CQ Researcher*, October 6, 2017, v. 27, #35.

Group Project Presentations

**Capitol Hill Day
Friday, October 12
Gold Room (Rm. 2168), Rayburn House Office Building
9:00am – 1:00pm
(paper due October 24)**

October 17 Off For Capitol Hill Day (or could flip with Oct 31st depending on class preference)

October 24 Current Hot Button Issues – Policy Paralysis

In this session, we will discuss three current policy issues that seemed plagued by lack of agreement as to the appropriate course of action, by partisanship and politicization, and by implementation challenges. We will evaluate what best explains the paralysis and how we might move past it. We will pay particular attention to the role that states may play in policymaking for these issues.

Gun Control

Tom Price, "Gun Violence," *CQ Researcher*, July 27, 2018, v. 28, #27.

Immigration

Alan Greenblatt, "Federal-State Relations: Is Partisanship Putting Governance at Risk," *CQ Researcher*, April 27, 2018, v. 28, #16.

Health Care

John Kingdon, Last Chapter in *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies*

Capitol Hill Day Paper
Due
October 24th

October 31 Policy Memos – Discussion of Ideas and Proposals

November 7 Courts as Policymaking Institutions – Affirmative Action

We will discuss the reasons that courts become involved in policymaking, the constraints on the courts as policymaking institutions, and differences in the judicial and legislative policymaking processes.

Federalist Paper #78

Donald L. Horowitz, *Courts and Social Policy*, Washington, DC: Brookings, 1977, Chapter Two: Attributes of Adjudication, pp. 22-56. (on Blackboard)

Rachel F. Moran, “Of Doubt and Diversity: The Future of Affirmative Action in Higher Education,” *Ohio State Law Journal* (2006) Vol. 67: 201-239.

November 14 Courts as Policy Making Institutions -- Elections

We will continue our discussion of the courts, focusing on the Supreme Court’s rulings in two areas of election law.

Redistricting:

Jane Fullerton Lemons, “Redistricting Showdown: Should Partisan Gerrymandering Be Eliminated?,” *CQ Researcher*, August 25, 2017, v. 26, #18

Saikrishna Bangalore and John Yoo, “People (not =) Legislature, Prakash,” *Harvard Journal of Law and Public Policy* (2016) Vol. 39(2): 341-370.

New reports on four 2018 Supreme Court “decisions” –

Wisconsin and Maryland: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/18/us/politics/supreme-court-wisconsin-maryland-gerrymander-vote.html>

North Carolina and Texas: <https://www.politico.com/story/2018/06/25/supreme-court-wont-hear-north-carolina-partisan-redistricting-case-for-now-669335>

Campaign Finance/Political Parties:

Tom Price, "Campaign Financing: Does Big Money in Politics Subvert Democracy," May 6, 2016, v. 26, #18

Joseph Fishkin and Heather K. Gerken, "The Party's Over: *McCutcheon*, Shadow Parties, and the Future of the Party System," *The Supreme Court Reporter* (2014): 175-214

**Second Paper Due
November 14th**

November 21	Off for Thanksgiving
November 28	Policy Memo Presentations
December 5	Policy Memo Presentations

**Policy Memo Paper
Due
December
12th**

HONOR CODE POLICY

The Honor Code policy relative to the types of academic work indicated below is set out in the appropriate paragraphs:

1. Quizzes, tests and examinations. No help may be given or received by students when taking quizzes, tests, or examinations, whatever the type or wherever taken, unless the instructor specifically permits deviation from this standard.
2. Course Requirements: All work submitted to fulfill course requirements is to be solely the product of the individual(s) whose name(s) appears on it. Except with permission of the instructor, no recourse is to be had to projects, papers, lab reports or any other written work previously prepared by another student, and except with permission of the instructor no paper or work of any type submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of another course may be used a second time to satisfy a requirement of any course. No assistance is to be obtained from commercial organizations which sell or lease research help or written papers. With respect to all written work as appropriate, proper footnotes and attribution are required.

(Longman classics in political science). Boston: Longman. The Public Policy Theory Primer. Related Posts. New Books,
and Public Policies Second Edition fohn W Kingdon T HE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN With new foreword by James A. Thurber THE
AMERICAN UNrVERSf fY New York San Francisco Bosccm london Toromo Sydncy Tokyo Singaporo Madrid Mexico Cicy Munich P:ui>
Cape Towu Hong Kong Montrcol. l 1 i Vice President and Publisher: Priscilla McGeehon Executive Editor: Eric Stano Senior
Marketing Manager: Megan Galvin-Fak j Production Coordinator: Shafiena Ghani j Cover Designer/Manager: Wendy Ann Fredericks
Cover Photo: Jim