

Making Public Policy, POSC 386

Prof. Jessica Green

Spring 2014

MWF 11.30-12.20

(as of 10 January 2014; I reserve the right to amend the readings)

Mather 315

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Course Overview

This course introduces students to the study of public policy. It focuses on how public policy is made, and in that way is a branch of political science. Students will find that the field also includes many analytic tools from other disciplines, but that the political perspective is central to understanding their work. Students whose interest is more in politics and less in policy will find that this course provides a different way of understanding politics.

The concepts in this course – such as agenda-setting, the importance of implementation, and conflicts about value and fact – can be used to analyze action in any group or organization or community. For example, they can be applied to discussions of American politics, with its extremely complicated division of formal authority into competing institutions. But they also can be applied to British politics, with its much simpler structure of formal authority; to international politics, in which there is relatively little formal authority; or to Case Western Reserve University.

The first thing to remember about any decision for a group of people is that it is likely to involve disagreement about what to do, or even what the problem is. The first section of this course therefore focuses on values, some of the reasons for disagreement, and how people argue about collective choices. For this section we will read one of the most influential books in the field, Deborah Stone's *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision-Making*, other articles, and look at some case studies.

A second key point about policy-making is this: politicians (and bureaucrats, and corporate managers) not only assert influence, but they also “puzzle.” That is, they try to figure out what actions (such as a law or a business plan) will accomplish what goals. Therefore you can look at any policy process as a series of components, such as the definition of problems, generation of alternatives, assessment of alternatives, adoption of a policy, implementation of a policy, and feedback about the new problems the policy creates. How analysis actually enters into decision-making varies with the organizational circumstances, and understanding that is part of understanding how any decision process “puzzles.” For this section we will read one another very influential book in the field, John Kingdon's *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies*, as well as other articles and case studies. We will also examine the various actors involved in the “puzzling” process, and their myriad interests and motivations.

A third key point is that there are numerous ways to achieve the same goal (or at least, to try to achieve it). As such, we examine various types of *actual* policies, specifically, command and control (or regulation), market-based policies, policymaking at the global level and self-regulation.

Course Requirements

Readings

You are expected to complete all of the readings for every class. If you must triage, read the textbooks first and additional readings later. If the textbooks are not assigned that week, go in descending order. Doing some of the reading is always better than doing none of it. In order to guide you through the readings, each week has a “key question”, which you should be able to answer after completing the readings.

Participation and conduct

Classes will be a mix of lecture and discussion. You are expected to participate in discussions, and this will be **significant** part of your final grade (see below). Simply sitting in the class sessions will not earn you full marks on participation; coming to class with questions and comments will. I will take attendance on an unannounced basis. You will be granted one “freebie”—a class you may miss without penalty. Thereafter, each absence will result in a reduction in your participation grade.

Case studies

There are a number of case studies that we will examine in the context of the theoretical readings that week. Please come prepared with questions and comments. You may be asked to defend a point of view that is not necessarily your own, so be sure to consider both sides of the issue.

Exams

There will be two in-class exams on 7 March and 21 April. These are “review” exams. They will test whether you have done the readings and understand the basic arguments. They will also cover concepts discussed in class.

Research projects

This semester, we are fortunate to have a real policy client – the Mayor’s Office of Sustainability – for whom you will be conducting research and making policy recommendations. This is a chance for you to engage in real world problems and potentially, influence policy decisions. You will work in groups of 4-5 on a specific issue outlined in the City of Cleveland’s Climate Action Plan. You will have an opportunity to consult with Matthew Gray, the Director of the Office of Sustainability, and at the end of the semester, to present your findings and recommendations to him. Although this is a group project, there are also individual assignments. These are further detailed in a separate document on Blackboard.

Graduate Students

Graduate students will have additional assignments, to be decided jointly.

Grading

Participation: 20%

Review Exams: 25%

Research Project: 55%, broken down as follows

Project Journal (5%)

Paper (25%)

Policy memo (15%)

Presentation (10%)

Legal

1. **All deadlines are final.** For each day an assignment is late, a half grade will be deducted. This means if an A- paper is one day late, it will be a B+. If a B paper is two days late, it will be a C. THE ONLY exception to this rule is if you have a note from the Dean. Unless you have a note from the Dean, no extensions will be granted.
2. An unexcused absence for an exam will result in a failing grade for that exam.
3. I reserve the right to consider extraordinary or unforeseen circumstances on a case-by-case basis.
4. Re-grade requests for exams will be honored only if accompanied by a comprehensive written explanation of why you deserve a higher grade. Note that if accepted, a request for re-grading may result in the raising *or lowering* of your grade.

Plagiarism

Please read the policy on academic honesty and plagiarism

(<http://students.case.edu/handbook/policy/integrity.html>)

Academic dishonesty (plagiarism, cheating on examinations, etc.) **is a serious offense that can result in loss of credit, suspension, and possibly expulsion from the university.** All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies.

The Case handbook defines plagiarism as follows: "Plagiarism includes the presentation, without proper attribution, of another's words or ideas from printed or electronic sources. It is also plagiarism to submit, without the instructor's consent, an assignment in one class previously submitted in another."

If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism, PLEASE ASK ME! I also recommend the website www.plagiarism.org.

Other Class Policies

1. Please save paper; **submit everything to me electronically.**
2. **Please PUT YOUR CELL PHONES AWAY. TEXTING IS NOT PERMITTED.** If I observe you texting, you will be considered absent for that class session.
3. Unless you have permission from ESS, **laptops are not permitted.** (The exception is the days that you will be working on group projects.)
4. During the semester I am prepared to meet by appointment with any and all students enrolled in this course. I would like especially to meet with students with disabilities who are registered with the Coordinator of Disability Services (368-5230) and who may need individual arrangements.

Books to Purchase

Kingdon, John W. 2002. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*. New York: 2nd ed. Longman.

Stone, Deborah A. 2004. *Policy Paradox and Political Reason*. New York: Scott Foresman & Co.

These are available at the bookstore, but you may also purchase them used online. The edition doesn't matter.

Week 1: Introduction

What are the two main spheres of society and how do they differ?

13 Jan: Introduction.

15 Jan: Market and polis. Stone, Intro and Chap 1

17 Jan: Market and polis. No additional reading. **Sign up for research groups**

Week 2: Agenda Setting, part 1

What are the major goals of government and what are the tradeoffs among them?

20 Jan NO CLASS

22 Jan: Equity vs. Efficiency. Stone Chaps 2&3

24 Jan: Class projects. For class please read the Cleveland Climate Action Plan “CAP at a Glance” (<http://www.sustainablecleveland.org/about/climate-action-plan/>). In class you will meet with groups, review the full plan and talk with your group and with the class about how to begin.

Week 3: Agenda Setting, part 2

What are the major goals of government and what are the tradeoffs among them?

How do we understand the causes of problems, and what are the challenges to doing so?

27 Jan: Security vs. Liberty. Stone Chaps 4&5

29 Jan: Numbers, Symbols: Stone Chap 7 and Herbert Simon, Chapter 3 in *Administrative Behavior*, “Fact and Value in Decision-Making.” **On BB.**

31 Jan: Causes and the Challenges of causality. Stone Chap 8

****First project journal due****

Week 4: Agenda Setting, part 3

How do the various facets of the agenda-setting process influence the outcomes in the case studies on the Occupy Movement and Edward Snowden?

3 Feb: Occupy Wall Street: Disorganized bluster or real movement? Read the following stories:

- David Graeber, “Occupy rediscovers the radical imagination”
<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/cifamerica/2011/sep/25/occupy-wall-street-protest>.
- Michael Greenberg, “What future for Occupy?” *New York Review of Books*
<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2012/feb/09/what-future-occupy-wall-street/> (You need to be on campus or connect through VPN for access).
- Ullrich Fisher, “Occupying Wall street” *Der Spiegel*.
<http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/occupying-wall-street-the-start-of-a-new-american-movement-a-790975.html>.
- Matthias Schwartz, “Pre-Occupied” *The New Yorker*.
http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2011/11/28/111128fa_fact_schwartz.

5 Feb: Edward Snowden: Traitor or hero? Success or failure? Read the following stories:

- <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jun/09/nsa-whistleblower-edward-snowden-why>.

- <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/02/opinion/edward-snowden-whistle-blower.html>
- <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/jun/07/whistleblowers-and-leak-investigations>
- <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2013/06/what-we-dont-know-about-spying-on-citizens-scarier-than-what-we-know/276607/>
- <http://www.theguardian.com/world/interactive/2013/nov/01/snowden-nsa-files-surveillance-revelations-decoded#section/1> (just part 1)

7 Feb: Class projects – meet with groups, prepare for meeting with Matt Gray

Week 5: The policy process: Challenges of Collective Action

What are the challenges of collective action and how do they affect decisionmaking in a democracy?

10 Feb: Matt Gray, Mayor’s Office of Sustainability

12 Feb: Mancur Olson, Chapter 1 from *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*. **On BB.**

14 Feb: Anthony Downs, Chapter 3 from *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. **On BB.** (You may skim the last section on multiparty countries)

****Second project journal due****

Week 6: The policy process: Models of policymaking

17 Feb: Michael Munger, Chapter 1 of *Analyzing Policy: Choices, Conflicts, and Practices*. **On BB.**

19 Feb: Kingdon, Chapters 4, 6-8.

21 Feb: Kingdon, continued and class projects – preliminary presentation of problem overview

Week 7: Actors

How do different types of actors affect the policy process? What resources do they utilize and how do these vary across actors?

24 Feb: Bureaucrats: James Q. Wilson, Chapters 1&2 in *Bureaucracy*. **On BB.**

26 Feb: Bureaucrats: Michael Lipsky, Chapters 1&2 in *Street-Level Bureaucracy*. **On BB.**

- Briefly review:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2013/08/13/heres-what-you-need-to-know-about-stop-and-frisk-and-why-the-courts-shut-it-down/>

28 Feb: George Stigler, “The theory of economic regulation” *Bell Journal of Economics and Management Science*. **On BB**

****Problem overview with data due****

Week 8: Actors, Part 2

The question for this week is: How do different types of actors affect the policy process? What resources do they utilize and how do these vary across actors?

3 Mar: “Voices from the Edge” to be screened in class.

5 Mar: Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, Chapter 1 in *Activists Beyond Borders*.
On BB. I will also set aside some time to answer questions about the exam.

7 Mar: **First Review Exam**

Week 9: SPRING BREAK

Week 10: Actors, Part 3

The question for this week is: How does public opinion affect policy outcomes?

17 Mar: John Zaller, Chapter 2 of *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion* and John Zaller, "Monica Lewinsky's contribution to political science." **On BB (both).**

19 Mar: Martin Gilens, Chapter 1 of *Influence and Affluence*. **On BB.**

21 Mar: Case study: Climate Change. Readings TBA.

Third project journal due

Week 11: Contemporary Approaches: Regulation

The question for this week is: How do different regulatory approaches enhance the likelihood of policy success?

24 Mar: David Levi Faur, "Regulation and Regulatory Governance"

<http://levifaur.wiki.huji.ac.il/images/Chapter1hrp.pdf>.

26 Mar: Lori Benneer and Cary Coglianese "Flexible Approaches to Environmental Regulation," available at

http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1998849.

Week 12: Contemporary Approaches: Markets

How are markets used as a policy tool?

31 Mar: Charles Lindblom, *The Market System*. Chaps 1-4. **On BB.**

2 Apr: Michael Sandel, *What Money Can't Buy*. Chaps 1-2. **On BB.**

4 Apr: Milton Friedman. *Capitalism and Freedom*. Chaps 1-2. **On BB**

Week 13: Global Public Policy

How does globalization affect what we consider domestic policy?

7 Apr: Wolfgang Reinecke. "Global Public Policy." *Foreign Affairs*. **On BB**

9 Apr: David Vogel, *Trading Up*. Chap 1. **On BB.**

11 Apr: Case study TBA

Week 14: Self-Regulation

Do we need governments to regulate, or can actors do it themselves? What are the risks and benefits of such an approach?

14 Apr: Richard Locke, *The Promise and Limits of Private Power*. Chap 1. **On BB**

16 Apr: David Vogel, *The Market for Virtue*. Chap 1. **On BB.**

18 Apr: Review

Week 15: Sundry

21 Apr: **Second Review Exam**

23 Apr: Career day! Guest speaker, Prof. Laura Tartakoff

25 Apr: Final Presentations, Matthew Gray, Mayor's office

Week 16:
28 Apr: Wrap up.