

## Fall 2009 Syllabus

Instructor: Thad Hall, Ph.D. Associate Professor, Dept. Political Science

Class: Public Policy Theory and Application

Office hours: By Appointment

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Class Location: Marriott Library, Room 1150

NOTE: On October 26<sup>th</sup>, Class with Be in the Union Bldg., Saltair Room

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This course examines key theories in the area of public policy and considers the application of these theories or frameworks to the policy process. The course will be divided into three parts.

- First, we will consider the actors who shape public policy and the basic concepts that are the foundation for all policy debates.
- Second, we will focus on specific frameworks that have been used to explain the policy process. One key goal from this part of the course will be to develop a set of hypotheses for each theory that one would use to test the veracity of the theory.
- Third, we will focus on the application of these frameworks to the policy process and to specific policy areas.

By the end of the semester, we will have examined the key policy actors and policy theories and applied these frameworks to a specific policy area. We will consider various methodologies for studying these frameworks and understanding the way in which a given public policy issue is likely to develop.

### Course Expectations

This class is demanding; we will cover a large amount of material over the course of the semester. This class will work only if each of you comes to class having thoughtfully considered the readings; reading/skimming is a necessary but not sufficient requirement for this class. You need to be able to come to class having thought through issues such as: (1) What are the main components to this theory? (2) How does this theory compare to other theories? (3) How would I test this theory in the real world? (4) Are policy actors missing from the theory?

If I get the sense that people have not read for class, I reserve the right to give quizzes, have people come to the front of the class and lecture, or otherwise make life uncomfortable for everyone.

### Course Requirements and Grades

Your grade in this course comes from five assignments.

- **ASSIGNMENT 1: DUE SEPTEMBER 14.** First, each of you will be asked to read a case study – *Improving Children and Family Services in Iowa*—and consider how you might evaluate this case in light of the readings on August 31 and September 14. Specifically, you are to write a short four-page (4 page) about (1) how the program is structured, (2) why it is structured the way that

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it is, (3) how you would evaluate the evidence used in the discussion of improving the program, and (4) how “the new economics of organization” can be seen (or not) in the case.

- **ASSIGNMENT 2: DUE SEPTEMBER 28.** Second, you are to identify a policy issue – such as health care reform, abortion, immigration, financial reform – and find *five* (5) articles, four of which should be from academic journals (e.g., *American Political Science Review*, *Social Science Quarterly*, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, *Health Affairs*, *Journal of the American Medical Association*) and one of which can be from a policy report (e.g., Pew Research Center for the People and the Press). You are to write a short five-page (5-page) memo discussing how the given policy issue is framed in these articles and how attitudes about the given policy issue are affected by socio-economic (and other) factors.
- **ASSIGNMENT 3: DUE OCTOBER 19.** Third, in an 8-10 page exam, you are going apply the concepts in the book *Policy Paradox* to a policy issue. The exam will be distributed two weeks before it is due.
- **ASSIGNMENT 4: DUE NOVEMBER 2.** Fifth, you will write a short four-page (4-page) memo applying the framework in Mazmanian and Sabatier to the case: “Implementing a New Drug and Alcohol Treatment Model in Sacramento County (A) and (B).” When you read the chapter, the application will be straightforward.
- **ASSIGNMENT 5: DUE DECEMBER 14.** You can either:
  - take a final exam, which would build on the readings on Advocacy Coalitions and Punctuated Equilibrium, or
  - write a paper on a policy issue, examining a policy issue using the policy theory of your choice.

Either of these assignments will run somewhere between 8 and 12 pages. MPP students and doctoral students will be writing the paper.

## Grades

The five assignments will be weighted as follows:

- Assignment 1: 10%
- Assignments 2: 15%
- Assignment 3: 25%
- Assignment 4: 10%
- Assignment 5: 30%
- Participation: 10%

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### Reasonable Accommodation

In accordance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), I offer any student with a disability the opportunity to communicate with me privately to discuss receiving reasonable accommodation. Such accommodation will be afforded based on the specific disability and as agreed in writing. This statement in no way asks that students identify themselves publicly as having a disability, however, a request for reasonable accommodation can only be granted if a student makes his or her disability known to the professor. You should consult the University's Center for Disability Services (<http://disability.utah.edu>) if you have any questions about your rights in this regard. You should also familiarize yourself with the University's other accommodation policies.

### Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is expected, and dishonesty will not be tolerated. An act of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of F for the course and a recommendation of additional disciplinary action. Instances of academic dishonesty have increased dramatically in recent years, due primarily to the ease of access to published materials and paper-writing services on the web. I strongly recommend you read a style guide to learn the correct format for citations, as this will prevent you from accidentally doing something that results in disciplinary action against you.

### Life...and Academic ...Accommodation....and Swine Flu

**Life** – I also expect you to actually come to class and complete all assignments in a timely manner. I understand the issues that life presents; however, you should try to give me as much advanced notice as possible that you will be having a personal crisis.

**Academic** – We will discuss ideas and issues in this class that may express ideas that conflict with the core beliefs of some students. Public policy covers issues such as abortion, sex, drugs, immigration, climate change, and even rock-and-roll. Be prepared to participate in such discussions, in a pro-active, thoughtful, critical manner.

**Swine Flu** – According to the CDC, and evidence from South America, we are likely to have a nice fun flu season this fall. If you have the swine flu, don't come to class. Email me and let me know; do not come to class sick. If I get sick, I will arrange to have class taught.

### Required Readings

There are five required books for this class:

- Policy and Evidence in a Partisan Age: The Great Disconnect
- Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making, Revised Edition
- Policy Change And Learning: An Advocacy Coalition Approach

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- Agendas and Instability in American Politics, Second Edition
- Governance and Performance: New Perspectives

There are also online readings that can be accessed through the Marriott Library website.

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Weekly Schedule

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS	ASSIGNMENTS
24-Aug-09	Introduction -- What is Policy Theory?		
31-Aug-09	Public Policy in a Partisan Age	<i>Policy and Evidence in a Partisan Age: The Great Disconnect</i> (ENTIRE BOOK)	
<b>07-Sep-09</b>	<b>LABOR DAY</b>		
14-Sep-09	Policy Types, Tools, and Analysis	Dye, "Policy Making Process" Salomon, "Tools of Government" Moe, "New Economics of Organization" Katznelson, "When Affirmative Action Was White" Chubb "Politics, Markets, and the Organization of Schools"	ANALYSIS MEMO DUE
21-Sep-09	The Language of Policy	Policy Paradox, PARTS 1 AND 2	
28-Sep-09	The Language of Policy	Policy Paradox, PARTS 3 AND 4	
05-Oct-09	Policy and Public Attitudes	Students Provide Readings	PAPER 1 DUE
12-Oct-09	FALL BREAK		
19-Oct-09	NO CLASS		Midterm Exam Due

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DATE	TOPIC	READINGS	ASSIGNMENTS
26-Oct-09	Terror and Torture and Brains	Childhood Poverty, Chronic Stress, and Adult Working Memory Educating Information Through Torture	NOTE: CLASS TO BE HELD IN SALT AIR ROOM THE UNION BUILDING
02-Nov-09	Implementation	Wildavsky, "Implementation" Mazmanian, "Implementation and Public Policy"	IMPLEMENTATION MEMO DUE
09-Nov-09	Advocacy Coalitions	<i>Advocacy Coalition Framework</i> (ENTIRE BOOK)	
16-Nov-09	Agendas, Instability and Public Policy	<i>Agendas and Instability in Public Policy</i> (ENTIRE BOOK)	
23-Nov-09	Policy Diffusion and Policy Learning	Sanderson, "Evaluation, Policy Learning and Evidence-Based Policy Making" Mintrom "Policy Entrepreneurs and Diffusion of Information" Mossberger, "State-Federal Diffusion and Policy Learning" May, "Policy Learning and Failure" Glick, "Innovation and Reinvention" Hays, "Patterns of Reinvention"	
30-Nov-09	Governance and Performance	<i>Governance and Performance: New Perspectives</i> (ENTIRE BOOK)	
07-Dec-09	Class Discussion		
14-Dec-09	FINAL EXAM		FINAL PAPER DUE