

Public Policy 510.001: Politics of Public Policy

Winter 2021

Instructor: Jonathan Hanson

jkhanson@umich.edu

Office Hours: Mon. 11:00–12:30 (<https://umich.zoom.us/j/91735048318>),

Thurs. 12:00–1:30 (<https://umich.zoom.us/j/97026007818>), or by appointment

Graduate Student Instructor: Alison Christiansen

amchr@umich.edu

Office Hours: Weds. 10:00–12:00, or by appointment

The primary objective of this core course in the MPP curriculum is to equip students with the knowledge and skills needed for effective political analysis of public policy issues and decisions. The course covers conceptual and analytic frameworks for understanding political processes, institutions, stakeholders, contexts and policy decision making. In addition, the course builds written and verbal communication skills, emphasizing the ability to convey clear and concise political analyses in a variety of formats, including policy memos.

This section of 510 focuses on political strategy and policy processes in comparative perspective. Students will learn how national and regional contexts shape governing institutions, political cultures, stakeholders and strategies, and will develop tools to inform and influence policymaking given these differences. Overall, the course trains students: a) to analyze critically and in-depth the political dimensions of pressing policy issues; b) to engage in issue advocacy from grassroots mobilization to lobbying across national contexts; c) to develop a nuanced understanding of different including opposing interests in the policy process; d) to understand the policymaking environments of countries in Europe, Asia, and Africa, in comparative perspective with the United States; e) to work in teams; and f) to improve written and communication skills.

Course objectives:

- To increase knowledge regarding conceptual and analytic frameworks for understanding political processes, institutions, stakeholders, contexts and policy decision making.
- To equip students with the skills needed for effective political analysis of public policy issues and decisions.
- To build written and verbal communication skills needed in applied policy settings.

Class Meeting Schedule

Unless otherwise noted, class meetings are Mondays and Wednesdays from 8:30–9:50am via Zoom at <https://umich.zoom.us/j/92522520946>.

Readings

Most reading assignments are available on the course Canvas site (<http://canvas.umich.edu>) or through links to electronic holdings in the University of Michigan library. Some readings must be purchased, such as the cases from the Harvard Kennedy School Case Program (<http://case.hks.harvard.edu>).

Assignments and Grading

Your grade for this course will be determined by your performance on a variety of different assignments and class participation. These assignments are described in detail in the Assignments Guide on Canvas.

Class Participation	15%
Briefing memo	5%
Policy Environment Assessment memo	10%
Stakeholder Analysis memo	10%
Framing/Strategy memo	15%
Roundtable presentation	15%
Self-assessments and self-critique	5%
Peer questions and critiques	10%
Long Policy memo	15%

Since this course is largely discussion-based, class participation is an important element of this course. It is expected that you will come to class having completed the readings in advance. I reserve the right to give a brief reading quiz without warning should I sense that too many students are not prepared.

All writing assignments are expected to be turned in by their respective deadlines, which will typically be the time that class starts on the day the assignment is due. You will upload a PDF-formatted file to Canvas through links in the Assignments folder. Rather than your name, put only your student ID number at the top of the page.

Late assignments: Since your real-world policy memos will have deadlines that cannot be changed, we will follow the same practice in this course. A grade deduction of 10% per day will be applied for late assignments. Please note that Canvas records the time an assignment is uploaded and will automatically flag any assignment that is turned in late. If there are extenuating circumstances, such as a family emergency or serious illness, please get in touch with me as soon as possible.

Communication skills: a central objective of this course is to help you improve your written and oral communication skills for addressing a policy audience. The ability to write clearly, succinctly, and persuasively is critically important to being an effective practitioner in this field. Policy writing has some unique features, among them an emphasis on clarity and efficiency, that may differ from other forms of writing that you have done in the past. Writing assignments are typically short, but this part of what makes them difficult.

You are encouraged to make use of the Ford School's excellent writing tutors. Appointments are available through the following link: <http://www.fordschool.umich.edu/writing-center/>. Another great resource is the Sweetland Writing Center: <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/swc/>. No matter how good the quality of your writing is at present, you will surely benefit from these resources.

The last part of the course consists of roundtable discussions. Members of the class will be divided into

groups of 4-6 students. Each group will work on a particular policy question, and each member of the group will take on a particular role: government official, interest group representative, etc. Your job will be to advocate for your position on the issue, convincing the members of the audience (i.e. the rest of the class) to support your position on the issue.

In addition to your roundtable presentation, class discussions will offer an important opportunity for you to practice your oral communication skills. There are many ways to be an effective class participant: making an insightful comment, asking a question, showing good listening skills, and through overall engagement. Sometimes we will debate matters that are controversial or generate strong emotions. Your ability to discuss these issues respectfully and without rancor or personal attacks is essential.

The final course letter grade reflects the Ford School's guidelines. An A is awarded for work that is Excellent, an A- for work that is Very Good, a B+ for work that is Good, a B for work that is Acceptable, and a B- for work that is below expectations for graduate work. You should know I do not have a predetermined formula to convert numeric point totals into these categories. It would be a mistake, for instance, to assume that a grade of 10 out of 16 points on a writing assignment translates into a D.

Academic Integrity

It is expected that students are familiar with the Ford School's expectations for academic integrity as described at <http://fordschool.umich.edu/academics/expectations>, which adhere to the academic integrity policies for Rackham Graduate School. Violations of these policies will be taken seriously.

Students with special needs

If you believe you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Some aspects of this course may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make me aware of your needs, we can work with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities to help us determine appropriate accommodations. I will treat any information you provide as private and confidential.

Student Mental Health and Well-Being Resources

The University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and well-being of its students. We acknowledge that a variety of issues, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, and depression, directly impact students' academic performance. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, counseling and mental health services are available. For help, contact [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) and/or [University Health Service \(UHS\)](#). This includes the [Ford School embedded CAPS counselor](#).

In a crisis or emergency, students can call the CAPS Counselor on Duty at 734-764-8312 during business hours, or the same number and then press 0 after hours. Click [here](#) for a listing of other mental health resources available on and off campus.

Inclusivity

Members of the Ford School community represent a rich variety of backgrounds and perspectives. We are committed to providing an atmosphere for learning that respects diversity. While working together to build this community we ask all members to:

- share their unique experiences, values and beliefs
- be open to the views of others
- honor the uniqueness of their colleagues
- appreciate the opportunity that we have to learn from each other in this community
- value one another's opinions and communicate in a respectful manner
- keep confidential discussions that the community has of a personal (or professional) nature
- use this opportunity together to discuss ways in which we can create an inclusive environment in Ford classes and across the UM community

Please refer to <http://fordschool.umich.edu/academics/expectations> for a full statement on the Ford School's academic expectations.

COVID-19 Statement

In order to participate in any in-person aspects of this course, including meeting with other students to study or work on a team project, you must follow all safety measures mandated by the State of Michigan, the University of Michigan and the Ford School. This includes maintaining physical distancing of six feet from others and properly wearing a face covering at all times while on campus. In addition, it is expected that you will protect and enhance the health of everyone in the Ford School community by staying home and following self-isolation guidelines if you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, are awaiting a test result, or have engaged in a higher-exposure activity such as a flying or attending an indoor social gathering of more than 10 people. If you are unable or unwilling to adhere to all prescribed safety measures, you will be accommodated through remote access to all aspects of this course. Additional information on public health safety measures is described in the [Wolverine Culture of Care](#) and the [University's Face Covering Policy for COVID-19](#).

January 20: Introduction to the Course

Iris Geva-May, David C. Hoffman, and Joselyn Muhleisen (2018). "Twenty Years of Comparative Policy Analysis: A Survey of the Field and a Discussion of Topics and Methods." *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis*, 20(1): 18-25.

Thinking Comparatively about the Policy Process

January 25: The Policy Process

- Discussion of policy roundtable topic selection process.

Werner Jann and Kai Wegrich (2007). "Theories of the Policy Cycle." In *Handbook of Public Policy Analysis: Theories, Politics, and Methods*, Frank Fischer, Gerald J. Miller and Mara S. Sidney, eds., chapter 4. CRC Press.

Pete Earley (2016). "Behind the Scenes Account of How Mental Health Reforms Became Law: Told by Sen. Chris Murphy." Blog post.

January 27: Policymaking in Comparative Perspective

- Discussion of policy memo writing and first assignment.

Anneliese Dodds (2018). "Why Compare Public Policies?" In *Comparative Public Policy*, chapter 1. Palgrave.

Jerry McBeath and Jonathan Rosenberg (2006). "Introduction." In *Comparative Environmental Politics*, chapter 1. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer.

February 1: Theories of Public Policymaking

Stella Z. Theodoulou (2013). "In Search of a Framework to Understand the Policy Process." In *Public Policy: The Essential Readings*, Stella Z. Theodoulou and Matthew A. Cahn, eds. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education Inc.

National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy (2018). "An Introduction to Punctuated Equilibrium: A Model for Understanding Stability and Dramatic Change in Public Policies." Briefing Note.

February 3: Theories of Public Policymaking continued

- Deadline for roundtable topic preferences

Christopher M. Weible and Paul A. Sabatier (2007). "A Guide to the Advocacy Coalition Framework." In *Handbook of Public Policy Analysis*, chapter 9. Boca Raton: Taylor & Francis.

Evans School of Public Affairs Electronic Hallway (2009). "Changing Mandatory Drug Sentencing Laws on the Federal and State Levels."

February 8: Theories of Public Policymaking continued

- Briefing memo due by end of day.

Daniel Béland and Michael Howlett (2016). "The Role and Impact of the Multiple Streams Approach in Comparative Policy Analysis." *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis* 18(3): 221-227.

Bui Thi Thu Ha, Tolib Mirzoev, and Maitrayee Mukhopadhyay (2015). "Shaping the Health Policy Agenda: The Case of Safe Motherhood Policy in Vietnam." *International Journal of Health Policy and Management* 4(11): 741-746.

Judy Gregg, Julie Miller, and Kathleen F. Tennant (2018). "Nurse Policy Entrepreneurship in a Rural Com-

munity: A Multiple Streams Framework Approach.” *The Online Journal of Issues in Nursing* 23(3).

Assessing the Policy Environment

February 10: Institutional and Cultural Contexts

Ellen M. Immergut (1990). “Institutions, Veto Points, and Policy Results: A Comparative Analysis of Health Care.” *Journal of Public Policy* 10(4): 391-416.

Stephen Maluka, Dereck Chitama, Esther Dungumaro, Crecensia Masawe, Krishna Rao and Zubin Shroff (2018). “Contracting-out Primary Health Care Services in Tanzania Towards UHC: How Policy Processes and Context Influence Policy Design and Implementation.” *International Journal for Equity in Health* 17(118): 2-13.

February 15: Institutional and Cultural Contexts continued

- Group Stakeholder Proposal due February 15

Kathryn Harrison (2010). “The Comparative Politics of Carbon Taxation.” *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 2010(6): 507-529.

KSG Case 2062.0. “Pricing Carbon: The Birth of British Columbia’s Carbon Tax.”

February 17: In-Class Writing Exercise

February 22: Ann Arbor Public Schools case

February 24: No Class This Day

March 1: Institutional and Cultural Contexts continued

Miriam Smith. (2005). “The politics of same-sex marriage in Canada and the United States.” *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 38(2): 225-229.

Evan Gerstmann (2005). “Litigating Same-Sex Marriage: Might the Courts Actually Be Bastions of Rationality?” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 38(2): 217-220.

Molly Ball (2015). “How Gay Marriage Became a Constitutional Right.” *The Atlantic*, July 1, 2015.

Jeffrey Gettleman, Kai Schultz, and Suhasini Raj (2018). “India Gay Sex Ban is Struck Down. ‘Indefensible,’ Court Says.” *The New York Times*, September 6, 2018.

Actors in the Policy Process

March 3: Agenda Setting and Interest Group Representation

- Policy Environment Assessment memo due March 3

Elmer E. Schattschneider (1960). "The Scope and Bias of the Pressure System." In *The Semi-Sovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America*. New York: Holt, Reinhart, and Winston.

Thomas A. Birkland (2011). "Agenda Setting, Power and Interest Groups." In *Introduction to the Policy Process*. New York: Routledge.

Rhonda Riherd Trautman (2016). "Small-Town Policy Makers." *Public Administration Review* 76(2): 221-224.

March 8: Political Activists

Jelani Cobb (2016). "The Matter of Black Lives: A New Kind of Movement Found its Moment. What will its Future Be?" *The New Yorker*, March 14, 2016.

Elahe Izadi (2016). "Black Lives Matter and America's Long History of Resisting Civil Rights Protesters." *The Washington Post*, April 19, 2016.

Dan Gunderson (2017). "'Not Invisible Anymore': Standing Rock a Year After Pipeline Protests." *Minnesota Public Radio*, September 13, 2017.

Peter Walker (2016). "Malheur Occupation is Over, but the War for America's Public Lands Rages On." *The Conversation*, February 19, 2016.

Larry Buchanan, Quoc Trung Bui and Jugal K. Patel (2020). "Black Lives Matter May Be the Largest Movement in U.S. History." *New York Times*, July 3, 2020.

March 10: Discussion of Voters Not Politicians with Jamie Lyons-Eddy

Jimmy Tobias (2017). "Michigan Suffers From Some of the Most Extreme Gerrymandering in the Country." *The Nation*, August 29, 2017.

Lauren Gibbons (2019). "Volunteer Movement Helped Carry Redistricting Proposal to the Ballot." *MLive*, July 29, 2019.

David Eggert (2017). "Anti-Gerrymandering Group Defies Odds with 2018 Ballot Drive." *The Detroit Free Press*, November 19, 2017.

Daniel Newman (2020). *Unrig: How to Fix Our Broken Democracy*. First Second publishing, pp. 204–206.

Political Arguments and Tactics

March 15: Influencing Public Opinion

- Stakeholder Analysis memo March 15

Alan Sung-Soo Yang (2003). *Mass Opinion Change and Social Activism: The Politics of Knowledge and the Modern Lesbian and Gay Movement*. Ph.D. Dissertation, Chapter 1.

Caroline Schlauffer, Fritz Sager, and Iris Stucki (2018). “The Political Use of Evidence and Its Contribution to Democratic Discourse.” *Public Administration Review* 78(4): 645-649.

Elizabeth Kolbert (2017). “Why Facts Don’t Change our Minds: New Discoveries About the Human Mind Show the Limitations of Reason.” *The New Yorker*, February 27, 2017.

March 17: Narratives and Framing

Anne Schneider and Helen Ingram (1993). “Social Construction of Target Populations: Implications for Politics and Policy.” *The American Political Science Review* 87(2): 334-347.

“Strategic Frame Analysis & Policy Making: Where Does SFA Fit into our Strategic Plan?” FrameWorks Institute. <http://www.frameworksinstitute.org/toolkits/ttw/docs/policy.pdf>.

FrameWorks Institute (2017). *How to Reframe Refugee Resettlement: A Strategic Communications Brief for the Minnesota Department of Human Services*.

March 22: Strategies for Policy Actors

Katherine Cullerton, Timothy Donnet, Amanda Lee, and Danielle Gallegos (2018). “Effective Advocacy Strategies for Influencing Government Nutrition Policy: A Conceptual Model.” *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity* 15(83): 1-11.

Steven J. Hoffman, Maria I. Creatore, Ariane Klassen, A. Morgan Lay, and Patrick Fafard (2019). “Building the Political Case for Investing in Public Health and Public Health Research.” *Canadian Journal of Public Health* 110: 270-274.

Katie McNally (2017). “These Strategies Can Help Policymakers Break Through Partisan Gridlock.” UVA Today.

Jacqueline Sohn (2018). “Navigating the Politics of Evidence-Informed Policymaking: Strategies of Influential Policy Actors in Ontario.” *Palgrave Communications* 4(49): 1-12.

David Evans and Markus Goldstein (2018). “8 Lessons on How to Influence Policy with Evidence – from Oxfam’s Experience.” Blog post, worldbank.org.

Jake Neher (2022). “Michigan Now Leads Nation in Interpreting LGBTQ Discrimination Cases, Say Advocates.” WDET Public Radio. <https://wdet.org/2018/05/29/michigan-now-leads-nation-in-interpreting>

Miscellaneous

March 24: The Politics of Expertise

Bert Fraussen and Darren Halpin (2018). "Think Tanks and Strategic Policymaking." Blog post. <https://onthinktanks.org/articles/think-tanks-and-strategic-policymaking/>.

Eric Lipton and Brooke Williams (2016). "How Think Tanks Amplify Corporate America's Influence." *The New York Times*, August 7, 2016.

Tom Nichols (2017). "How America Lost Faith in Expertise: And Why That's a Giant Problem." *Foreign Affairs* 96(2): 60-73

Charles Ornstein and Katie Thomas (2018). "Top Cancer Researcher Fails to Disclose Corporate Financial Ties in Major Research Journals." *The New York Times*, September 8, 2018.

Ben Gittleson (2021). "Birx on Trump's disinfectant 'injection' moment: 'I still think about it every day'." *ABC News*, March 15, 2021.

March 29: Bureaucratic and Regulatory Politics

- Framing/Strategy memo March 29.

Cornelius M. Kerwin and Scott R. Furlong (2011). *Rulemaking: How Government Agencies Write Law and Make Policy*, 4th Edition. Washington, DC: CQ Press. Chapter 2 (Canvas).

KSG Case 1349.0. "Taking on Big Tobacco: David Kessler and the Food and Drug Administration."

March 31: Politics of Program Evaluation

- Roundtable Press Release due Friday end of day.

Eleanor Chelimsky (1987). "What Have We Learned about the Politics of Program Evaluation?" *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 9(3): 199-213.

KSG Case 1958.0. "Michelle Rhee's IMPACT on the Washington D.C. Public Schools."

April 5: Policy Roundtable # 1

April 7: Policy Roundtable # 2

April 12: Policy Roundtable # 3

April 14: Policy Roundtable # 4

April 19: Policy Roundtable # 5

April 21: Wrapping Up

Wednesday, April 28: Long Policy Memo due