

PSCI 325
M 7:05-9:45pm
3 credit hours
LWH 3005
M/W 12:55-2:10pm

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Public Policy

College of Arts & Sciences Syllabus

Introduction to the analysis of public policy, including the policy-making institutions and processes; normative and empirical models of policy-making, and case studies of specific public policies.

Prerequisites:

Undergraduate level PSCI 216 Minimum Grade of C or Undergraduate level AMER 216 Minimum Grade of C

Required Texts

There are two required texts for this course.

- Michael E. Kraft and Scott R. Furlong, *Public Policy: Politics, Analysis, and Alternatives* (6th edition) (Sage/CQ Press, 2018)
- Deborah Stone, *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making* (3rd edition) (Norton, 2012)

Objectives

This course is intended to give students insight into the making of public policy in the U.S. Substantial reading and writing is required, as well as informed class discussions. Students are expected not only to learn the substantive material, but also to apply the theories they learn across multiple areas. By the end of the semester students should have a detailed understanding of the policy process in the U.S.. Students are also expected to write a paper that demonstrates both their grasp of the material and their ability to generate informed opinions based on empirical research.

Academic Integrity Policy

By enrolling in this course, you are bound by the NEIU Student Code of Conduct: <http://www.neiu.edu/university-life/student-rights-and-responsibilities/student-code-conduct>. You will be informed by your instructor of any additional policy specific to your course regarding plagiarism, class disruptions, etc.

ADA Statement

Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU) complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. To request accommodations, students with special needs should make arrangements with the Student

Disability Services (SDS) office, located on the main campus in room D104. Contact SDS via (773) 442-4595 or <http://www.neiu.edu/university-life/student-disability-services>.

Campus Safety

Web links to Campus Safety: Emergency Procedures and Safety Information can be found on NEIUport on the MyNEIU tab or as follows:

http://homepages.neiu.edu/~neiutemp/Emergency_Procedures/MainCampus/.

Course Requirements

- 1) Complete all readings on schedule. If you miss a class, email me for the next reading assignment, as the schedule may change. Bring the assigned readings with you to class.
- 2) Attend on time and actively participate in class discussions. Those who arrive more than 5 minutes late, or who leave in the middle of class, will be marked for half of an absence. Each student is allowed only **three** unexcused absences. Your participation grade will be reduced by one-third of a letter for each unexcused absence over three. Not being active during class discussions will also result in a lowering of your participation grade. During week 6 of the semester I will update you as to your current participation grade, so that you will have an opportunity for improvement. Use of electronic devices such as phones, blackberries, or music players during class is prohibited. Laptops/tablets are permitted for note-taking only.
- 3) Keep up with the news. We will frequently discuss current events as they relate to the concepts we are discussing in class. This way, we will be able to connect what can be abstract ideas to real-world outcomes. Read a newspaper, visit cnn.com, or do anything that helps makes you an informed citizen.
- 4) Take the midterm and final exams. They will consist of essay questions and be given in take-home form. I will likely give you sample questions ahead of the test. Make-up exams will only be given in the event of an emergency, verified with proper documentation.
- 5) Submit all required writing assignments. **Late papers will be penalized one-third of a letter grade for each day they are late** (barring serious emergencies, which must be documented). For the purposes of this course, “late” is defined as submitted through D2L after the class starting time on the due date of the assignment. I will not accept submissions via email or in hard copy. Do not wait to the last moment to submit assignments.

Writing Assignment #1: You will write 5 short papers responding to one of the discussion questions at the end of the chapter (Kraft and Furlong book). You may not write more than one per chapter and you may not write more than one per class. You may not submit more than 5 in total. (Cite your sources appropriately.) Papers should be approximately two pages in length.

Once you have received a grade on your paper, I will give you the option of revising it, if you wish. All revisions are due within one week of when I return the paper to you.

Writing Assignment #2: Write an issue brief on a current public policy debate. I will provide a list of topics to choose from well in advance; if you wish to write about a different topic, speak to me first. This assignment will give you the opportunity to apply the theories we learn in this

course to a real-life policy debate currently ongoing in American politics. First, provide a summary of the major issues at stake in this policy area. Next, fairly and impartially summarize the leading views of the proponents of each side. Finally, selecting at least three of the theories of the policy process we have discussed, apply those theories to the policy debate in question.

Your paper must be between 8-10 pages and include appropriate references (either footnotes or parenthetical style is acceptable) as well as a bibliography. Your paper must be submitted no later than **April 15th**. You will also have the opportunity, if you wish, to revise your paper after it is returned to you. If you choose to submit a revision you must do so no later than **April 29th**.

All written assignments must be typed in a 12 point font, double spaced, with one-inch margins, and have page numbers. Papers not meeting these criteria will be penalized.

Grading

Work conducted towards the end of the semester will be more heavily weighted in my mind when dispensing final grades; in other words, *improvement counts*.

Attendance/Participation: 20%

Short Papers: 15%

Issue Brief: 25%

Midterm: 20%

Final: 20%

90-100 A

80-89 B

70-79 C

60-69 D

Below 60 F

Incompletes will only be given for valid, documented emergencies.

NOTE ON PLAGIARISM: Any student found plagiarizing work will receive a grade of **zero** for that assignment and an **F** for the course. You will also be reported to the University for violating the academic integrity policy. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to: direct copying of material that is not your own, copying the material even while providing a citation, or copying ideas without proper attribution. **It is your responsibility to avoid plagiarism; if you are uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism, please ask!**

Schedule of Classes and Exams

January 7th: Introduction

January 9th and 14th: Public Policy and Politics

Kraft and Furlong, chapter 1

January 16th and 23rd: Government Institutions and Policy Actors
(January 21st: No classes – Martin Luther King, Jr. day)

Kraft and Furlong, chapter 2

January 28th and 30th: Public Policymaking and Theories of the Policy Process

Kraft and Furlong, chapter 3

Bryan D. Jones, Graeme Boushey, and Samuel Workman, “Bounded Rationality and Rational Choice Theory” [D2L]

E.E. Schattschneider, “The Semisovereign People” [D2L]

February 4th and 6th: Policy Analysis – Introduction

Kraft and Furlong, chapter 4

February 11th and 13th: Policy Analysis – Problems and Alternatives

Kraft and Furlong, chapter 5

February 18th and 20th: Policy Analysis – Assessing Alternatives

Kraft and Furlong, chapter 6

February 25th: Midterm Exam

February 27th and March 4th: The Market and the Polis

Deborah Stone, *Policy Paradox*, chapter 1

March 6th, 11th, and 13th: The Goals of Policy

Deborah Stone, *Policy Paradox*, chapters 2 and 3

(March 18th-24th: Spring Break)

March 25th, 27th, and April 1st: The Goals of Policy, cont.

Deborah Stone, *Policy Paradox*, chapters 4, 5, and 6

April 3rd and 8th: Policy Problems – Symbols and Numbers

Deborah Stone, *Policy Paradox*, chapters 7 and 8

April 10th and 15th: Policy Solutions – Incentives and Rules

Deborah Stone, *Policy Paradox*, chapters 12 and 13

April 17th: Policy Solutions – Facts

Deborah Stone, *Policy Paradox*, chapter 14

April 22nd: Health Care Policy

Kraft and Furlong, chapter 8

April 24th: Education Policy

Kraft and Furlong, chapter 10

April 29th: Environmental and Energy Policy

Kraft and Furlong, chapter 11

Final: TBA