

Political Science 4320: Public Policy

University of Missouri, Spring 2022

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Class Hours: M/W/F 11-11:50 am
Office Hours: T/Th 1-3 pm

A mayor is a symbol and a public face of what a city bureaucracy provides its citizens.

–John Hickenlooper, US Senator and former mayor of Denver, CO

There are no solutions, only trade-offs; and you try to get the best trade-off you can get, that's all you can hope for.

–Thomas Sowell, *A Conflict of Visions: Ideological Origins of Political Struggles*

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the theory, process, and practice of making and implementing public policy in the United States. While public policy is a common topic of conversation and academic study, it is often difficult to define and even more challenging to understand. Even as public policy is becoming its own field of inquiry, it remains amorphous, interdisciplinary, and multifaceted, with many branches and approaches to its study. This class will survey the field, first focusing on theories of the policy process, then on policy analysis and evaluation, and finally substantive areas of policy research.

Required Materials

Smith, Kevin B. and Christopher W. Larimer. 2017. *The Public Policy Theory Primer*. 3rd ed. New York: Routledge.

Dye, Thomas R. 2016. *Understanding Public Policy*. 15th ed. Boston: Pearson Education. (Available on Canvas through the AutoAccess program)

Students should also download the iClicker Cloud app on their preferred device they plan to bring to class.

Course Objectives

The primary goal of this class is to encourage students to think critically about who makes public policy, why they make the decisions they do, and how it affects the public. By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- explain the basic processes of making public policy and understand various theories of how and why those policies are made;
- identify some of the most common tools used policymakers;
- compare how those processes and tools vary across different policy domains; and
- apply skills necessary to communicate and participate in the policy process.

Course Details

Class Structure

This will be an in-person class in a traditional lecture format, but I intend to have plenty of discussion as well. While some may wish to consider public policy to be independent of politics, the two are inextricably linked, and therefore people can be deeply passionate about their preferences. In order to create an environment conducive to discussion, it will be important for all students to show me and their colleagues respect, and I will treat students with respect as well. This means both trying to avoid making hurtful statements, but also giving your classmates the benefit of the doubt and not seeking out offense. Avoiding discussions on difficult topics may alleviate discomfort in the short term, but often only deepens divides in the long term.

Students are expected to attend class and participate to the extent the class size allows, unless they have a valid reason to be absent.

Assessments

There will be four different types of graded assignments and assessments in this class.

- **40%** of your grade will be determined by three exams (13.3% each). The first midterm is scheduled for February 25, the second midterm on April 8, and the third exam will be during the final exam period and will only cover material after the second midterm.
- **35%** of your grade will be determined by a policy memo project on a relevant public policy of your choice. The project will include the memo itself as well as a short video presentation summarizing the memo and discussion board posts concerning the videos. The memo will be 25% of the final grade, with the video and discussion providing the remaining 10% of the total. Further instructions will be provided later.
- **15%** of your grade will be determined by a handful of homework assignments allowing students to apply what they are learning and develop research and critical thinking skills.
- **10%** of your grade will be determined by participation. Because this is an upper-level course, students will be expected to make reasonable contributions to the class to the extent allowed by the class size. Participation includes:
 - Attendance: Unless you have an excused absence for a previously scheduled event or illness, you are expected to attend. If you must miss class, please let me know in advance. Students who must miss will have alternative means to earn full credit.
 - Participation in class surveys: this is a mid-sized class, and to alleviate issues related to involvement and discussion, we will utilize iClicker for polls and other forms of participation.
 - Active engagement: do the assigned readings and come to class prepared to discuss and ask questions.

I will accept late work for most assignments with a 10% penalty for each day the assignment is late. If circumstances require you to miss an exam, alert me as soon as possible to arrange alternative accommodations. Documentation may be required to avoid late penalties for exams. See the COVID-19 statement below for additional guidance on that issue.

Please note that I currently do not plan to offer extra credit opportunities in the class. Should I add an extra credit opportunity in the future, it will be applicable to all students, not select individuals.

Grading Policy

The Mizzou grading system is based on a four-point scale. The grade value for each letter grade in this class is as below. Scores will be rounded to the nearest whole number.

Grading Scale		
Grade	Low %	High %
A	95	100
A-	90	94
B+	87	89
B	84	86
B-	80	83
C+	77	79
C	74	76
C-	70	73
D+	67	69
D	64	66
D-	60	63
F	0	59

Course Policies

For University policies and support resources, please click the Support & Policies link in the course menu on Canvas.

Use of Canvas

While this class is currently not an online course, it will utilize Canvas extensively. Most students no doubt have had both positive and negative experiences with Canvas, and we will aim to have mostly positive experiences in this class.

Class Etiquette

Your instructor and fellow students wish to foster a safe learning environment. All opinions and experiences, no matter how different or controversial they may be perceived, must be respected in the tolerant spirit of academic discourse. You are encouraged to comment, question, or critique an idea but you are not to attack an individual. Our differences, some of which are outlined in the University's nondiscrimination statement, will add richness to this learning experience. Please consider that sarcasm and humor can be misconstrued, especially in online interactions, and generate unintended disruptions. Working as a community of learners, we can build a polite and respectful course ambiance.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

University standards prohibit cheating, plagiarism, and sabotage. Those caught engaging in such academic misconduct will receive a zero on the assignment and may be subject to further disciplinary action. For more information on Mizzou's policies, including the student honor pledge, see the [Office of Academic Integrity](#) website. For a brief explanation of academic integrity terms such as plagiarism, see [this article](#).

Recording Prohibition

University of Missouri System Executive Order No. 38 lays out principles regarding the sanctity of classroom discussions at the university. The policy is described fully in section 200.015 of the Collected Rules and Regulations. In this class, students may not make audio or video recordings of course activity, except students permitted to record as an accommodation under section 240.040 of the Collected Rules. All other students who record and/or distribute audio or video recordings of class activity are subject to discipline in accordance with provisions of section 200.020 of the Collected Rules and Regulations of the University of Missouri pertaining to student conduct matters.

Those students who are permitted to record are not permitted to redistribute audio or video recordings of statements or comments from the course to individuals who are not students in the course without the express permission of the faculty member and of any students who are recorded. Students found to have violated this policy are subject to discipline in accordance with provisions of section 200.020 of the Collected Rules and Regulations of the University of Missouri pertaining to student conduct matters.

Intellectual Pluralism

Below is the University's statement on intellectual pluralism:

The University community welcomes intellectual diversity and respects student rights. Students who have questions or concerns regarding the atmosphere in this class (including respect for diverse opinions) may contact the departmental chair or divisional director, the director of the Office of Students Rights and Responsibilities, or the MU Equity Office.

Intellectual Property

All course materials, including, but not limited to, the syllabus, course assignments, study guides, learning guides, online lecture videos and content, and lab book (i.e. course pack) are property of the instructor and University and may not be shared online or distributed in any manner to others. Students are prohibited from posting course materials or notes online and from selling notes to or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the express written permission of the professor teaching this course. Doing so will constitute both an academic integrity violation and a copyright violation. Violations of copyright laws could subject you to civil penalties and criminal liability. Violations of academic integrity may subject you to disciplinary action under University policies.

ADA Compliance and Accommodation

If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need to make arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please let me know as soon as possible.

If disability related accommodations are necessary (for example, a note taker, extended time on exams, captioning), please establish an accommodation plan with the MU Disability Center, S5 Memorial Union, 573-882-4696, and then notify me of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. For other MU resources for persons with disabilities, click on "Disability Resources" on the MU homepage.

Show Me Renewal COVID-19 Guidelines

As of now, this course will be taught as an in-person class. University policies may require students to miss classes for reasons related to COVID-19 protocols or other illnesses. Reasonable accommodations will be made for students required to miss class, specific to the students' situations. In all cases, for student who miss class but not assignments, the best way to stay caught up is to do the assigned reading. As with any excused absence, students must inform the instructor before missing an assignment to avoid penalties. This includes in-class quizzes and group presentations. Other University policies such as mask requirements will also be in force in the class, and will lapse if and when the University removes them.

Course Schedule

The schedule of weekly readings and assignments is tentative and subject to change. Assigned readings besides the Dye and Smith and Larimer books should be posted on Canvas. Some of the readings come from academic journals and can be quite dense and technical. In most cases students should focus on the big picture ideas put forward rather than methodology and jargon.

Week 1, 01/17 - 01/21: Introduction

- Jan. 17: No class, Martin Luther King Holiday
- Introduction
 - Forms of Local Government
- What is Public Policy?
 - Smith and Larimer, Chapter 1
 - Prather, Larry J. and Dan Delich. 2019. "In flood resilience debate, there are no solutions - only tradeoffs." *The Hill*, February 2. <https://thehill.com/opinion/energy-environment/428193-in-flood-resilience-debate-there-are-no-solutions-only-tradeoffs>

Week 2, 01/24 - 01/28: Policymaking Institutions

- Federalism
 - Dye, Chapter 5
- The Administrative State
 - Ballotpedia. "The Administrative State." https://ballotpedia.org/Administrative_state (January 8, 2022).
 - Missouri Secretary of State. 2021. *Missouri State Rulemaking Manual*. Jefferson City, MO: Secretary of State.
- Judicial Policymaking
 - Grossman, Matt and Brendon Swedlow. 2015. "Judicial Contributions to US National Policy Change since 1945." *Journal of Law and Courts*, 3(1): 1-35.
 - Excerpts from *Roe v. Wade* (1973)
 - Unborn Victims of Violence Act. 2004. *Statutes at Large*, Vol. 118, p. 568-70.
- Recommended Reading
 - Bacharier, Galen. 2022. "New to Missouri's legislature? A primer on how the Show-Me State's General Assembly works." *Springfield News-Leader*, January 2.

Week 3, 01/31 - 02/04: Theories of the Policymaking Process

- Policy Theory: Stages, Typologies
 - Smith and Larimer, Chapter 2
 - US Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service. 2021. "Policy Instruments for Protecting Environmental Quality." May 13. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/natural-resources-environment/environmental-quality/policy-instruments-for-protecting-environmental-quality/> (January 8, 2022).

- Policy Models
 - Dye, Chapter 2
- **Feb. 2: Policymaking institutions assignment due**

Week 4, 02/07 - 02/11: Theories of the Policymaking Process

- Policy Theory: Incrementalism, Public Choice, Institutionalism
 - Smith and Larimer, Chapter 3
- Policy Processes: Policy Subsystems, Advocacy Coalition Framework
 - Smith and Larimer, Chapter 5

Week 5, 02/14 - 02/18: Policy Processes

- Policy Processes: Punctuated Equilibrium, Garbage Cans and Policy Windows
 - Smith and Larimer, Chapter 5
- Policy Design
 - Smith and Larimer, Chapter 4
- **Feb. 16: Theory assignment due**

Week 6, 02/21 - 02/25: Policy Processes

- Decision Making
 - Dye, Chapter 3
- News Media
 - Russell, Annelise, Maraam Dwidar, and Bryan D. Jones. 2016. "The Mass Media and the Policy Process." *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- **February 25: Midterm Exam 1**

Week 7, 02/28 - 03/04: Policy Analysis

- Rationalist Approach
 - Smith and Larimer, Chapter 6
 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2013. *CDC's Policy Analytical Framework*. Atlanta: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- Alternative Approaches
 - Smith and Larimer, Chapter 6
- Recommended Reading
 - Hecl, H. Hugh. 1972. "Policy Analysis." *British Journal of Political Science*, 2(1): 83-108.

Week 8, 03/07 - 03/11: Policy Analysis and Evaluation

- Analysis in Practice
 - Crandall-Hollick, Margot L. 2018. *The American Opportunity Tax Credit: Overview, Analysis, and Policy Options*. Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service. CRS R42561.
 - Hudston, Paul and W.J. Wouter Botzen. 2019. "Cost-benefit analysis of flood-zoning policies: A review of current practice." *WIRE's Water*, 6(6): 1-21.
 - Miles, David K., Michael Stedman, and Adrian H. Heald. 2020. "'Stay at Home, Protect the National Health Service, Save Lives': A cost benefit analysis of the lockdown in the United Kingdom." *The International Journal of Clinical Practice*, 75(3): 1-14.
- Program Evaluation
 - Dye, Chapter 4
- **March 9: Policy analysis assignment due**

Week 9, 03/14 - 03/18: Policy Evaluation

- Program Evaluation
 - Smith and Larimer, Chapter 7
- Evaluation in Practice
 - Mye, Sarah C. and Kathryn E. Moracco. 2015. "'Compassion, pleasantry, and hope': A process evaluation of a volunteer-based nonprofit." *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 50: 18-25.
 - Wolf, Patrick J., Brian Kisida, Babette Gutmann, Michael Puma, Nada Eissa, and Lou Rizzo. 2013. "School Vouchers and Student Outcomes: Experimental Evidence from Washington, DC." *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 32(2): 246-270.
 - Baicker, Katherine, Sarah L. Tubman, Heidi L. Allen, Mira Bernstein, Jonathan H. Gruber, Joseph P. Newhouse, Eric C. Schneider, Bill J. Wright, Alan M. Zaslavsky, and Amy N. Finkelstein. 2013. "The Oregon Experiment - Effects of Medicaid on Clinical Outcomes." *The New England Journal of Medicine*, 368(18): 1713-1722.

Week 10, 03/21 - 03/25: Evaluation and Implementation

- Evaluation in Practice
 - Jerrim, John, Lindsey Macmillan, John Micklewright, Mary Sawtell, and Meg Wiggins. 2016. *Chess in Schools: Evaluation report and executive summary*. Milbank, UK: Education Endowment Foundation.
 - US Government Accountability Office. 2021. *Carbon Capture and Storage: Actions Needed to Improve DOE Management of Demonstration Projects*. Washington, DC: Government Accountability Office. GAO-22-105111.
- Policy Implementation
 - Smith and Larimer, Chapter 8
 - Pulzl, Helga and Oliver Treib. 2007. "Implementing Public Policy." In *Handbook of Public Policy Analysis: Theory, Politics, and Methods*, eds. Frank Fischer, Gerald J. Miller, and Mara S. Sidney. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.
- **March 23: Evaluation assignment due**

Week 11, 03/28 - 04/01: Spring Break

- No classes

Week 12, 04/04 - 04/08: Policy Reform and Diffusion

- Policy Reform
 - Porter, Keshia M. Pollack, Lainie Rutkow, and Emma E. Mcginty. 2018. "The Importance of Policy Change for Addressing Public Health Problems."
 - Beam, David R., Timothy J. Conlan, and Margaret T. Wrightson. 1990. "Solving the Riddle of Tax Reform: Party Competition and the Politics of Ideas." *Political Science Quarterly*, 105(2): 193-217.
- Policy Diffusion
 - Shipan, Charles R. and Craig Volden. 2012. "Policy Diffusion: Seven Lessons for Scholars and Practitioners." *Public Administration Review*, 72(6): 788-796.
 - Volden, Craig. 2016. "Failures: Diffusion, Learning, and Policy Abandonment." *State Politics and Policy Quarterly*, 16(1): 44-77.
- **April 8: Midterm Exam 2**

Week 13, 04/11 - 04/15: Economic Policy

- Fiscal and Monetary Policy
 - Dye, Chapter 10
 - Bischoff, Ivo and Frederic Blaeschke. 2016. "Performance Budgeting: Incentives and Social Waste from Window Dressing." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 26(2): 344-358.
 - Smialek, Jeanna. 2022. "Democrats Blast Corporate Profits as Inflation Surges." *The New York Times*, January 3. <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/03/business/economy/inflation-democrats-corporations.html>
 - Tsapelas, Elias. 2021. *Missouri's Budget: A Primer*. St. Louis: Show-Me Institute.
- Tax Policy
 - Dye, Chapter 11
- Recommended Reading
 - Amadeo, Kimberly. 2021. "What is the Federal Reserve?" *The Balance*. <https://www.thebalance.com/the-federal-reserve-system-and-its-function-3306001>
- **April 13: Memo topic due**

Week 14, 04/18 - 04/22: Economic Policy and Criminal Justice

- Tax Policy
 - Dye, chapter 11
 - Oates, Wallace E. and Robert M. Schwab. 2004. "What should local governments tax: income or property?" In *City Taxes, City Spending*, Amy Ellen Schwartz, ed. Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Publishing, Inc.

- Criminal Justice Policy
 - Dye, Chapter 6
 - Bartos, Bradley J. and Charis E. Kubrin. 2018. “Can We Downsize Our Prisons and Jails Without Compromising Public Safety? Findings from California’s Prop 47.” *Criminology and Public Policy*, 17(3): 693-715.

Week 15, 04/25 - 04/29: Social Welfare and Health Policy

- Social Welfare Policy
 - Dye, Chapter 7
- Healthcare Policy
 - Dye, Chapter 8
 - Guth, Madeline, Rachel Garfield, and Robin Rudowitz. 2021. “The Status of Medicaid Expansion in Missouri and Implications for Coverage and Cost.” Kaiser Family Foundation, June 30. <https://www.kff.org/policy-watch/status-of-medicaid-expansion-in-missouri-and-implications-for-coverage-and-cost/>
 - Keller, Rudi. 2022. “Deadlines loom on \$5.3B spending bill for Missouri Medicaid, pay raise for state employees.” *Columbia Missourian*, January 8. https://www.columbiamissourian.com/news/state_news/deadlines-loom-on-5-3b-spending-bill-for-missouri-medicaid-pay-raise-for-state-employees/article_6346892c-7029-11ec-8bcf-83420a8db285.html
- Recommended Reading
 - Gollust, Sarah E. and Jake Haselswerdt. 2019. “Introduction: Health and Political Participation: Advancing the Field.” *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*, 44(3): 341-348.
- **April 27: Policy Memo due**

Week 16, 05/02 - 05/06: Environmental Policy

- Environmental Policy
 - Dye, Chapter 13
 - Groves, David G., Kenneth Kuhn, Jordan R. Fischbach, David R. Johnson, James Syme. 2016. *Analysis to Support Louisiana’s Flood Risk and Resilience Program and Application to the National Disaster Resilience Competition*. Santa Monica, CA: The RAND Corporation.
- May 6: Reading Day
- **Memo video due May 4, discussion board posts due May 6**

Week 17, 05/09 - 05/13: Final Exam

- Final Exam: May 10, 10am-12pm