

**WINTER 2017**

PPG 301/POL 300  
Introduction to Public Policy  
Department of Political Science| School of Public Policy and Governance  
University of Toronto

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**Instructor:** Dr. Jonathan M. Craft  
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Office: Sidney Smith 3048  
Office Hours: Wednesday 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Class: Wednesday 12:00 p.m. – 2 p.m.  
CG 160 (School of Public Policy)

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## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The course introduces students to the study of public policy and the policy process. We will proceed in two parts. First, we explore foundational theories of policy making that seek to capture the role of political actors and organized interests, the importance of political institutions, and the influence of ideas and ideology. Part two builds on this theoretical foundation through examination of the policy cycle. It will focus on each specific “stage” of the policy process investigating how policy issues emerge, how agendas are set, how programs are designed and implemented, and outcomes evaluated.

As an introductory course, the learning objectives are:

- To enable you to understand and utilize key terms and concepts concerning public policy;
- To introduce you to the primary components of the public policy process;
- To further develop your analytical, writing, group work, and presentation skills.

## **COURSE FORMAT**

The course will feature a weekly lecture with extensive in-class discussion based on the readings. It will also include student led presentations. Students will be required to work collaboratively in groups as well as submit individual assignments.

## **REQUIRED TEXTS**

The following text is required for the course and is available at the U of T bookstore:

- Michael Howlett, M. Ramesh, and Anthony Perl. *Studying Public Policy: Policy Cycles & Policy Subsystems*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Other articles as assigned on the course syllabus can be accessed electronically through the library or the portal system.

## COURSE EVALUATION

Class Participation	15%
Pop Quiz	15%
Interdisciplinary (Energy) Policy Brief	10%
Case Study	60%

### Requirements and Evaluation

**Class Participation (15%):** Participation is measured by actions including but not limited to: (a) consistently attending class; (b) being attentive and respectful to your peers; (c) raising thoughtful comments and questions; (d) attending office hours; (e) bringing relevant articles and materials to the attention of the class; and above all else, (f) coming to class prepared. **At a minimum, this means having completed the required readings, and, for each reading, having reflected on the following questions:**

- What does the reading contribute to our understanding of the policy process?
- Were you persuaded by the author's argument? If so, why? If not, why not?
- What assumptions are being made in the reading, and are they warranted?
- What evidence does the author present? Does it support the general argument?
- Are there important weaknesses or contradictions in the reading?
- What are the implications of the author's arguments?

**Pop Quiz (15%):** At some point during the term students will be given one hour, in class, to respond to a single question dealing with course material.

**Interdisciplinary Policy Brief (10%):** Students will work collaboratively in teams with engineering students to prepare a briefing note in response to a particular policy issue. Additional details will be provided in class, week 2. Due in class week 6.

**Case Analysis (60%):** The purpose of this assignment is to encourage students to apply the theoretical content of the course to a practical case analysis. Additional instructions will be provided in class. You will be divided into groups, select a case from a list provided by the instructor, and complete the following:

1) *Group Presentation Outline (10%)* - A one-paragraph sketch of the central policy problem relevant to your case study, accompanied by a preliminary list of theoretical and empirical sources that the group will use to prepare its analysis. Grades will be based on the clarity of the group's problem statement and the extensiveness of their collective research effort. **Due in class Week 8.**

2) *Group Presentation (25%)* - A concise, 15-minute power point presentation that provides necessary background information to bring the class up to speed on the case, before analyzing (a) the emergence of the problem on the public agenda, (b) the policy response adopted by decision makers (c) the process of decision-making that led to this response (d) the means through which the policy response was carried out, and (e) the manner in which the response

was ultimately evaluated. Students will present during the final three classes, as needed, and field questions from their colleagues and the instructor. **As scheduled.**

3) *Individual Research Paper (25%)* – A 10-page essay (12-pt font, one-inch margins) that provides students the opportunity to demonstrate their individual creativity and unique perspective on the course material and case study presented by the group. **Due at political science main reception by 4pm, April 11th.**

**ELECTRONIC DEVICES POLICY:** Electronic devices may only be used to access readings or for classroom activities specified by the instructor. At all other times, laptops, phones, and tablets should be closed, switched to silent mode, or turned off to avoid distractions. Exceptions will only be made for those with accommodations or for official note takers.

Generally speaking, the negative impacts of electronic devices in the classroom (persistent distraction, low levels of engagement, poor knowledge retention, and lower grades) consistently outweigh the positives. Don't just take our word for it — see for yourself: Holstead, Carol E. 2015. "The Benefits of No-Tech Note Taking," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, March 4. Shirky, Clay. 2014. "Why I Just Asked My Students To Put Their Laptops Away," *Medium* (personal blog), September 8. Hamilton, Jon. 2008. "Think You're Multitasking? Think Again," *NPR.org*, October 2.

## **GRADING APPEALS**

Appeals of grades must be made in person and be accompanied by a 1-paragraph typed statement that outlines why you believe the grade is inappropriate. **Reconsiderations may result in increases or decreases** to the marks originally allocated.

## **ASSIGNMENT FORMATTING AND RECORD KEEPING**

Unless otherwise stated, assignments must be typed, double-spaced, 12-point font with standard margins, and MLA citation style. Students are also strongly advised to keep rough and draft work and hard copies of their assignments. These should be kept until the marked assignments have been returned. All graded assignments are to be kept by students until the grades have been posted on ROSI.

## **LATE ASSIGNMENTS AND PENALTIES**

All **late** assignments will be subject to a 5% penalty per day (including weekends) and must be submitted through the political science department's main reception to be date stamped. Exceptions will only be granted for documented medical or emergency situations.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Toronto is a strong signal of each student's

individual academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:

- Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- Making up sources or facts.
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment.

On tests and exams:

- Using or possessing unauthorized aids.
- Looking at someone else's answers during an exam or test.
- Misrepresenting your identity.

In academic work:

- Falsifying institutional documents or grades.
- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to) doctor's notes.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from your instructor or from other institutional resources (see <http://www.utoronto.ca/academicintegrity/>).

## **ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES**

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability or health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the Accessibility Services Office as soon as possible. The Accessibility Services staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations. The sooner you let them and me know your needs, the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course. (From [www.accessibility.utoronto.ca](http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca))

## **E-MAIL/Contact POLICY**

You are encouraged to come to my office hours to discuss course related materials and your assignments! Please be sure to use your University of Toronto e-mail accounts for all course related correspondence. Please also note the course code (PPG 301/POL 300) in the subject line of your messages. I will do my best to respond to e-mail within 48 hours of receiving

messages, with longer response times for those received during weekends and holidays. **No assignments will be accepted by email.**

## **PART I: THEORY AND CONTEXT IN PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH**

### **WEEK 1 (January 11): COURSE INTRODUCTION – WHY PUBLIC POLICY?**

Required Readings:

- Howlett, Ramesh, Perl - Chapter 1
- Fyfe, T. (2013, September 13). The Critical Role of Policy Advice. Canadian Government Executive, 9(7). <http://canadiangovernmentexecutive.ca/the-critical-role-of-policy-advice/>
- Piereson, James and Naomi Schaefer Riley. (2013). The Problem with Public Policy Schools. The Washington Post (6 December).

### **WEEK 2 (January 18) THEORETICAL APPROACHES**

Required Reading:

- Howlett, Ramesh, Perl - Chapter 2.
- Simeon, R. (1976). Studying Public Policy. Canadian Journal of Political Science, 9(4): 548-580.
- Meir, K. (2009). Policy Theory, Policy Theory Everywhere: Ravings of a Deranged Policy Scholar. The Policy Studies Journal, 37(1): 5-11.

### **WEEK 3 (January 25) THE POLICY CONTEXT**

Required Reading:

- Howlett, Ramesh, Perl - Chapter 3
- Stone, D. (2002). "The Market and the Polis," in Policy Paradox: The Art of Decision-Making. New York: W. W. Norton, pp. 17-34. (blackboard)
- Boucher, A. (2013). Bureaucratic Control and Policy Change: A Comparative Venue Shopping Approach to Skilled Immigration Policies in Australia and Canada. Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis: Research and Practice, 15(4): 349-367.

## **PART II: THE POLICY CYCLE**

### **WEEK 4 (February 1): AGENDA-SETTING**

Required Reading:

- Howlett, Ramesh, Perl - Chapter 4
- Birkland, T. A. (1998). Focusing Events, Mobilization, and Agenda Setting." Journal of Public Policy, 18 (1): 53-74
- Boothe, K., and Katherine Harrison. (2009). The Influence of Institutions on Issue Definition: Children's Environmental Health Policy in the United States and Canada. Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis: Research and Practice, 11(3): 287-307.

## **WEEK 5 (February 8): FORMULATION:**

Required Reading:

- Howlett, Ramesh, Perl - Chapter 5
- Prince, M. (2007). Soft Craft, Hard Choices, Altered Context: Reflections on Twenty-five Years of Policy Advice in Canada,” in Policy Analysis in Canada: The State of the Art, eds. Laurent Dobuzinskis, David H. Laycock, Michael Howlett. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, pp. 163-185. (Blackboard).
- Johal, S. Galley, A., and Melissa Molson. (2014). Reprogramming Government for the Digital Era, pages 5-20. Mowat Center. <https://mowatcentre.ca/reprogramming-government-for-the-digital-era/>

## **WEEK 6 (February 15): DECISION-MAKING**

*\*\* Energy Policy Brief Due \*\**

Required Reading:

- Howlett, Ramesh, Perl - Chapter 6
- Soloman, D. (June 3, 2013). Making Policy Through a Behavioral Lens. Policy Options Magazine. <http://policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/nudge/soman/>

## **Week 7 (February 22): Reading week**

## **WEEK 8 (March 1): IMPLEMENTATION**

*\*\*Group Case Study OUTLINE due \*\**

Required Reading:

- Howlett, Ramesh, Perl - Chapter 7
- Schneider, A., and Helen Ingram. (1990). Behavioral Assumptions of Policy Tools. Journal of Politics 52(2): 510-529.
- Bouchard, G., and Barbara Wake-Carrol. (2002). Policy-Making and Administrative Discretion: The Case of Immigration in Canada. Canadian Public Administration, 45 (2): 240-257.

## **WEEK 9 (March 8): EVALUATION**

Required Reading:

- Howlett, Ramesh, Perl - Chapter 8
- McConnell, A. (2010). Policy Success, Policy Failure and Grey Areas In-Between. Journal of Public Policy, 30(3): 345-362.
- Anderson, C. 1979. The Place of Principles in Policy Analysis. American Political Science Review 73(3): 711-23.

## **WEEK 10 (March 15): Policy Dynamics**

Required Reading:

- Howlett, Ramesh, Perl - Chapter 9
- Boothe, K. (2012). How the Pace of Change Affects the Scope of Reform: Pharmaceutical Insurance in Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom. Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law, 37(5): 779-814

### **PART III: Group Presentations and Course Wrap up**

**WEEK 11 (March 22):** Group presentations

**WEEK 12 (March 29):** Group presentations

**WEEK 13 (April 5):** Group presentations and course wrap up