Fall 2020

POL 474H1F/2317H1F - POLITICS AND POLICY ANALYSIS
Department of Political Science
University of Toronto

Instructor: Dr. Jonathan Craft
Contact: jonathan.craft@utoronto.ca
Seminar: Thursdays Noon – 2pm
Location: online via Zoom (link on Quercus)
Office Hours: Thursdays 10:30-11:30am
(Via Zoom, link on Quercus)

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course examines the work of policy analysts in modern liberal-democratic governments. It sets out the origins of the ‘policy analysis movement’ in the 1960s in the United States and traces the diffusion and evolution of the idea of policy analysis over the next 50 years. The merits and demerits of the recent tendency for analysis to shift from ‘modern’ to ‘post-modern’ analytical techniques, along with those of the most recent ‘evidence-based’ policy movement, will be discussed. The course highlights the tensions that exist between politics and policy analysis as well as shifts from traditional policy analysis as ‘speaking truth to power’ and contemporary notions that understand it as “making sense together”. The course is organized around four main themes: (1) trends in policy analysis over time; (2) sources, and configurations of supply and demand in policy analysis; (3) forms and styles of policy analysis; and, (4) normative considerations. To illustrate these themes the course will draw on case studies and contemporary events in Canadian and international politics and public policy.

COURSE FORMAT AND ACCESS REQUIREMENTS

This course is an advanced, reading- and discussion-intensive seminar. It will be conducted completed online during the scheduled time - using the Zoom platform (freely downloadable on the web) and students will be required to have access to a computer (or equivalent) with a microphone, web camera, and a speaker. Each week will begin with some introductory remarks from the instructor followed by student presentations, and extensive class discussion based on the readings and contemporary events.

MAKING THE MOST OF OUR ONLINE SEMINAR TIME

Our success as an online class will depend on the same commitment we share in the physical classroom.

We will adopt the same rules and norms: you will be expected to join the seminar after doing the essential readings; to take notes; to participate by asking and answering questions; to respond interactively with other colleagues.

For everyone’s benefit, ideally please try to participate in a quiet place, turn on your video feed whenever possible, and mute your microphone unless you are speaking. If this format presents challenges for you, please be in touch with me as soon as possible.
REQUIRED READINGS

Students are required to access the course readings. These are primarily available through scholarly journals accessible through the U of T Libraries. Required readings not available in that manner have been posted on Quercus. Non-required readings are available on the open shelves of the various libraries. All students may, and graduate students are encouraged to read in addition to the required readings and bring insights from those readings to class discussions and to their written work.


COURSE EVALUATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Short paper (Assignment 1)</td>
<td>30 %</td>
<td>Due on Quercus October 23th by 11:59 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Major paper (Assignment 2)</td>
<td>40 %</td>
<td>Due on Quercus December 4th by 11:59 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seminar presentation &amp; leadership</td>
<td>10 %</td>
<td>As assigned</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td>20 %</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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Seminar Engagement:

Engagement is measured by actions including but not limited to (a) consistent attendance (one cannot participate if one does not attend); (b) being prepared for class (at a minimum, this means having completed the required readings); (c) being attentive to class discussion; (d) raising thoughtful comments and questions in class; (e) providing insight and analysis to the readings and discussions; (vi) bringing relevant news articles and other materials to the attention of the class. The instructor will regularly engage you directly by asking for your views and reactions to the readings and others comments in seminar. Your participation grade in this class will be an aggregation of your weekly participation marks over the course of the term. Each week, I will assign you a participation grade using the following 3-point scale:

0 - Not present
1 - Present but did not participate
2 - Present and made some contribution
3 - Present and made purposeful, high quality contribution

Seminar leadership of article review/discussion

Student(s) will lead the seminar in analysis of a selected article. The order will be determined during the first week of class. This assignment involves a 10-minute seminar presentation & leadership of approximately 15 minutes of subsequent group discussion. Students must provide a concise summary of the article (no more than 3 minutes) but focus on a critical appraisal of the readings fit with course and weekly themes. You should assume that everyone has read the materials - the presentation should be thematic and analytical. Presenter(s) are expected to prepare questions and will be in charge of leading and promoting discussion for their assigned article. Presenters, and all seminar participants, should reflect critically on the article and be prepared to discuss it. All students should consider:

- What is the main argument/thesis?
- What are the implications of the arguments in the reading for the weekly issue/topic?
- How does this reading ‘fit’ with others we’ve examined?
• What are the practical consequences for policy analysis or policymaking from the reading?
• What are there main strengths or weaknesses of the reading?
• What assumptions are being made in the reading, and are they warranted?
• What evidence does the author present? Does it support the main argument?
• Where you persuaded by the argument? If so, why? If not, why not?
• What does the reading contribute to our understanding of politics and policy analysis?

Written work and assignment submissions:

All assignments are to be uploaded electronically through Quercus under the “Assignments” tab. Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University’s use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.

** This is done automatically when you upload your paper to Quercus. There is no need to submit a hardcopy of your paper, but one must be made available on request. **

Citation Format and Record Keeping

Cite all facts and figures that are not common knowledge in your essays. You must cite all ideas borrowed from other authors. Use the Chicago author-date citation format for your essay assignments. Failure to do so will result in a substantial penalty in calculating your assignment grade. If you have any questions about proper citation practices, you should consult with the Chicago Manual of Style online (link).

Unless otherwise stated, assignments must be typed, double-spaced, 12-point font with standard 1-inch margins using Chicago 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.

Written assignments form the majority of the course work and evaluation. Details for these are provided below, along with the essay question options for assignment 1 and 2. Further information will be provided in class on the nature and expectations of each assignment. Students should turn in assignments on time. Exceptions will only be made in the case of an adequately documented emergency. To avoid problems in your assignments, please consult “How Not to Plagiarize,” by Margaret Procter, Coordinator of Writing Support, U of T: http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize

Assignment 1 (Short essay): Due on Quercus October 23, by 11:59 pm
Length: 8 double-spaced pages (excluding references and foot/end notes), 12-point font, and one-inch margins.

Essay question: Select a real-world policy issue (e.g. minimum wage, public transportation, taxes, housing/education, climate policy etc.). Using course materials (weeks 1-6) and your own research, review and assess the main positions regarding the issue and how proponents use policy analysis to support their preferences. What does this suggest about the nature of your issue and the role of politics and policy analysis in policymaking?
Assignment 2 (Major paper): Due December 4th by 11:59 pm

Select one policy issue you are interested in (e.g. international trade, climate change, agriculture, obesity) **which must be approved by the instructor in writing**.

Use your selected topic in response to **ONE** (1) of the following questions:

a. A major dilemma of 21st century policy analysis is the need to incorporate participatory forms of citizen involvement in policy making, while at the same time encouraging rational decision-making based on the ‘best evidence’. How has this tension played out in your policy issue? Can evidence-based decision making and democratic decision making co-exist? Your answer must integrate course materials and your own research on your chosen policy issue.

OR

b. Evaluate the success or failure your specific public policy. Your response should integrate course material as well as additional research on your policy issue to support your assessment.

OR

c. How is your issue political? In what ways does your policy issue help us understand the intersection of politics and policy analysis? How do our course material help us make sense of that intersection in your case?

**Format:**

- *The research paper should focus squarely on presenting an argument based on your chosen question, defending that argument and analyzing/refuting counter arguments.*
- Provide a cover page with the question, your name, and the word count;
- Use 12 point font, DOUBLE SPACED with normal margins;
- **Graduate papers**: 4,000 words (excluding notes & bibliography).
- **Undergraduate papers**: 3000 words (excluding notes & bibliography).

**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.*

**LATE ASSIGNMENTS AND PENALTIES**

It is at my discretion whether or not to accept the late assignment and/or attach a lateness penalty *(which is 5% per day, weekend days included)*.

**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.

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)

OTHER SUPPORTS FOR STUDENTS

Students also have access to mental health and safety, and research and writing resources:

Mental Health & Safety
- Guide to available resources (link).
- Health & Wellness Centre (link).

Research & Writing*
- Research and writing guide (link).
- Chicago Manual of Style citation guide (link).
- Writing Centres (link).

OFFICE HOURS AND E-MAIL

Office hours are for you! If you have questions or concerns about assignments, the course, of want to talk about any course related materials please join my office. There will be a virtual ‘waiting room’ and I will do my best to accommodate everyone. If you are unable to make the scheduled office hours appointments may be possible. Please contact me to arrange a time.
Please be sure to use your University of Toronto e-mail accounts for all course related correspondence. Please also note the course code (POL 474H1S/2317H1S) in the subject line of your messages. I will respond to e-mail within 48 hours of receiving messages, with longer response times for those received during weekends/holidays.

**Course Schedule**

**WEEK 1 (September 10): Course Introduction**

Overview of course themes, assignments, presentation scheduling

**Required Readings**

- Wherry, A. The EI hiring credit: Joe Oliver will take the CFIB’s word for it. Let us now consider how our policy gets made. Macleans, November 20, 2014. [http://www.macleans.ca/politics/the-ei-hiring-credit-joe-oliver-will-take-the-cfib-s-word-for-it/](http://www.macleans.ca/politics/the-ei-hiring-credit-joe-oliver-will-take-the-cfib-s-word-for-it/)

**WEEK 2 (September 17): Foundations and Evolutions**

What are the foundations of policy analysis? How do we think of and practice it? How has it evolved over the years? What are the tensions between theory and practice? What are the leading ideal types of the policy process? Is policy analysis political, when and how do politics and policy analysis intersect?

**Required Reading:**


**Suggested Readings:**


**WEEK 3 (September 24): Rationality, Bounded Rationality, and Post Positive Analysis**

Many theorists assume that individuals are rational actors. What does that mean? What are the basic assumptions of rational choice theory?

**Required Reading:**

Suggested Readings:

Week 4 (October 1): Shifting Landscapes and Component Reconfiguration

Why does Prince contend we have moved from ‘speaking truth to power’ to ‘sharing truth with many actors of influence’? How have notions of ‘truth’ and ‘power’ changed? What do changes in the contexts within which politics and policy analysis unfold suggest for policymaking? How can we make sense of the various supplies of policy advice, and evolving practices, and their interaction??

Required Reading:

Suggested Readings:

Week 5 – (October 08) Public Service Policy Analysis

Does the practice of public service policy analysis match theory? What do public service policy workers actually do? Can (and should) public servants be neutrally competent, or more ‘responsive’ to the elected officials? Is public service policy analysis ‘political’?
Required Reading:

Suggested Readings:

WEEK 6 (October 15): Non-Public Service Policy Analysis
Does non-public service policy analysis differ than that of public servants? What function does it serve in contemporary policy-making? Is the growth in non-public service policy analysis ‘good’ for policy-making or hamper optimal policy-making? What do think tanks and ministerial political staffs do as analysts?

Required Reading:

Suggested Readings:

Week 7 (October 22): Evidence and Argumentation in Policy Analysis (*assignment 1 due*)
What is evidence? How do various theorists use it in the policy analysis literature? Does it have limits or can it be misused? How do argumentation, discourse, and persuasion play out in policy analysis?
Required Reading:


Recommended


WEEK 8 (October 29): Styles of Policy Analysis

Many have postulated the existence of different ‘styles’ of policy analysis. What are they, and what do they contribute to our understanding of policy analysis and politics? When are certain styles predominant? Can multiple styles exist concurrently? How are policy styles linked to broader patterns and types of ‘governance’ and politics?

Required Reading:


Suggested Reading:


Week 9 (November 05): Principles, Ethics, and Policy Analysis

What ethics should guide sound policy analysis? Who decides what is ethical and how does politics make the practice of ethical policy analysis challenging? What ethics and principles should be used to guide policy analysts and how has the place of principles and ethics evolved in the policy analysis tradition?
Required Readings:

Recommended Readings:

Week 10 (November 12): **Reading Week No Classes**

Week 11 (November 19): Policy Analysis and Democracy

*Policy analysis has faced harsh criticism for being overly technical and undemocratic. Many have called for more participatory forms of analysis and a ‘democratization’ of the policy sciences. How democratic should policy analysis be? Does greater participation improve or hamper policy-making?*

Required Reading:

Suggested Readings:

How can we analyze policy performance? How do we determine if policy has been ‘successful’ or a ‘failure’? Can we escape relativism, or is it an entirely subjective enterprise? How is policy evaluation political and what does policy analysis offer in terms of policy learning improving policy outcomes?

Required Reading:

Recommended Readings:

** No readings**

Far too often we do not take time to reflect on what exactly we have learned and how we can apply it. Through some seminar exercises we will spend our final session doing just that.