

Regent University

Robertson School of Government

GOV 612: Public Policy Analysis

Public Course Syllabus, Spring 2008

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NOTE: ALL INFORMATION IN THIS SYLLABUS IS TENTATIVE UNTIL THE START OF CLASS. MOREOVER, THE COURSE MATERIAL AND ASSIGNMENTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE UPON NOTICE PROVIDED ON *BLACKBOARD* OR IN CLASS.

DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE OF COURSE

GOV 612 teaches the student how to structure public policy problems, choose appropriate techniques, and understand the limits of various approaches to policy analysis. Understanding the impact of distributional effects, externalities, and the role of risk and uncertainty in policy analysis is key to this course. This course will help students identify criteria for choice, normative roles for analysis, and use information in making public policy decisions.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of the course, the student will:

1. Develop and apply research strategies for answering routine and non-routine questions posed by public policy makers.
2. Translate public administrative theories into applied research variables so that the impact of public sponsored policies, programs, and projects may be evaluated effectively.
3. Analyze and forecast costs, benefits, and effects of implementation of policy decisions on social problems, the economy, and other policy arenas.
4. Analyze the political feasibility of alternative plans of action including strategies for achieving specific policy proposals.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Bardach, Eugene, *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving*. Chatham House Publishers, 2000. ISBN 1889119296

Stone, Deborah, *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*. Rev. ed. W.W. Norton, 2002. ISBN 978-0-393-97625-0

COURSE ASSESSMENTS

A. Papers and Midterm Exam

The principal assessments in this course will be two short policy memos, a midterm exam, an extended public policy analysis essay, and class participation. Requirements for the essays will be published in *Blackboard*. Regarding the extended public policy analysis essay, topics must be approved by the professor in advance. Failure to submit the final essay will result in an "F" for the course, regardless of other grades. Additional requirements for this essay will be published on *Blackboard*.

The essays will be graded using the following percentages:

Thoroughness:	50%
Organization:	20%
Quality of Writing:	20%
Citation Format:	10%

By "Thoroughness," I mean researching and writing with sufficient rigor and exactitude to explore a subject in depth consistent with graduate-level studies. By "Organization," I mean arranging the paper in such a way that it logically flows from point to point. By "Quality of Writing," I mean using proper punctuation, spelling, grammar, and a concise and precise writing style, so that thoughts and concepts are clearly presented. **See my document entitled "Paper Expectations" in the Course Materials of Blackboard for help and information regarding writing style.**

By "Citation Format," I mean that citations and format must be according to Bluebook style (an instructional guide to Bluebook is posted in the Course Materials portion of Blackboard). See again "Paper Expectations" for further information (in fact, a prudent student would do the following each time before submitting a paper in my course: (1) Review again the question asked/assignment to ensure that your paper addresses it; and (2) review Paper Expectations to ensure that your paper complies with its advice).

Please submit all papers as email attachments to me (jameda2@regent.edu). These documents must be formatted in WORD and sent by 11:59 p.m. EDT/EST on their respective due dates. Late submissions will automatically have one point deducted every four hours or fraction thereof from their final assessment (e.g., one point will be deducted if the paper is submitted between 12:01 – 4:00 a.m., two points will be deducted if the paper is submitted between 4:01 and 8:00 a.m., etc.).

B. Dialogue in Blackboard

The purpose of dialogue in this course is for you to acquire and test your understanding of the required readings. You can read the material, but the test of whether you have some mastery of the concepts is the extent to which you can discuss and apply the concepts. If we met in class, we could discuss the topics verbally. The threaded discussion dialogues replace classes. You will find some topics and concepts more useful than others or easier to understand and apply. Not everyone will see things the way you do, so we will all benefit from your comments if you find something particularly useful - or if you find something particularly worthless. The idea is to contribute to the common learning.

Dialogue etiquette requires that posts generally not be longer than 200 words (there are, of course, good exceptions to this general rule, and I do not want to limit you to surface analysis by word limitations). A characteristic of good writing is to be able to say what you mean in

well-crafted tightly-worded documents. The focus of dialogue is on critical thinking about the material and how well you can engage in scholarly discourse with your colleagues. You are expected to use the discussions and other weekly interaction assignments to show your understanding of, questions about, and application of the content of the readings.

Evaluation of dialogue considers a balance of quality and quantity. Dialogue is a process rather than an assignment thus it is important that you engage other students early on in the forum's time period and continue to engage learners throughout the open time period. You should pose new thoughts and questions as well as respond to the thoughts and questions of other learners. It is important that you demonstrate mastery of the material through new application or evaluation of the material. Evaluation also includes how well you introduce outside reading materials.

Since we have no class discussions, the only way I can assess whether you are reading the assigned material is if you cite the material in your posts. Including references to the text will earn you good marks in the Bb dialogue. Failure to cite the text in your posts will lead me to believe that you are not reading the text, and therefore not completing your assignments. This, of course, will adversely affect your grade.

Specific Evaluation Criteria for Dialogue

Grade A (2 points each week of posting)

Posts three or more substantive messages for the week; responds not only to the assigned *Group Discussion Questions*, but also responds to the questions of others, while posing additional questions to stimulate dialogue; posts in a timely manner; cites text frequently.

Grade B (1.2 points each week of posting)

Posts two substantive messages for the week; responds minimally to the posted questions and to the questions of others; rarely asks additional questions to stimulate dialogue; infrequently cites text.

Grade C (.5 points each week of posting)

Posts one substantive message each week; responds minimally to the questions of others, or merely posts a question, thus does not enter the dialogue; does not cite text.

Grade F (0 points each week of posting)

Does not participate in posts for the week.

During the course of the week, I may participate in the discussion. If I do, it typically will provide encouragement, a little direction, or some insights I may have into the matter.

I will give the following weight to each of the areas of assessment:

Assessments:	Weight:
Weekly Discussion Board	10%
2 Policy Memos	25%
Midterm Examination	25%
Final Analysis Project	40%

Grading Standard

Grade	Percentage Score Range	Rationale & Meaning of Grade
A	94-100%	Superior work in all areas as indicated in the professor's written expectations. Exemplary performance, participation, creativity and writing.
A-	90-93.9%	Excellent work overall, but may be lacking in relation to some aspect of the professor's expectations. Excellent content in writing assignments.
B+	87-89.9%	Good work in most areas, minor deficiency in relation to the professor's expectations regarding content, standard writing style or procedures. Good content, but lacking in some areas (see professor's comments on course work).
B	83-86.9%	Good work in most areas, minor deficiency in relation to the professor's expectations regarding content, standard writing style or procedures. Attention to detail may have significantly improved the project.
B-	80-82.9%	Fair work in most areas: serious disregard for professor's expectations or standard writing and style procedures. Attention to written instructions may have significantly improved the project.
C+	77-79.9%	Passing work, but in need of improvement in several areas, especially in regard to form, content and professor's expectations.
C	74-76.9%	Passing work, but in need of improvement in many areas, especially in regard to form, content and professor's expectations; below professional quality standards.
C-	71-73.9%	Passing work, but in serious need of improvement in many areas, especially in regard to form, content and professor's expectations; substantially below professional quality standards.
D+	68-70.9%	Passing work, but in very serious need of improvement in many, many areas, especially in regard to form, content, and professional quality.
D	65-67.9%	Passing work, but in very, very serious need of improvement in many, many areas, especially in regard to form, content, and professional quality.
D-	63-64.9%	Passing work, but in very, very serious need of improvement in many, many areas, especially in regard to form, content, and professional quality.
F	<63%	Barely passing work, on the brink of failure.

Failing; little conformity to professor's expectations; not graduate quality work; requires repeat of the course and meeting with the professor and advisor.

INTEGRATION OF FAITH AND LEARNING

The Robertson School of Government seeks to restore our nation's Judeo-Christian heritage, to renew the traditional values of citizenship in the public affairs of the United States, and to promote these ideals in all the nations of the world. To that end, leadership and policy issues are rigorously analyzed from various academic perspectives in a broad, multidisciplinary endeavor, emphasizing the application of Judeo-Christian principles to theoretical and practical problems. The program is designed to produce principled graduates who are morally, spiritually, and intellectually well-grounded and who are also equipped with the practical and technological skills needed to meet today's challenges of leadership in government and politics.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Academic Honesty:

The Regent University community of teachers and scholars affirms that the biblical principles of truth and honesty are absolutely essential. Indeed, the Bible contains numerous admonitions against false witnessing, dishonesty and cheating. Upholding the standard of academic integrity with its reliance on honesty is a responsibility of both faculty and students.

Conduct that violates academic integrity includes:

Dishonesty. This is lack of integrity exhibited through lying, cheating, defrauding or deceiving. Examples of dishonesty include: copying from the examination paper of another, allowing one's own examination paper to be copied, reading without the instructor's consent a copy of the examination prior to the date it is given, giving or receiving unauthorized aid on a take-home examination, use of unauthorized aids, submitting the same work product in more than one course without the permission of the instructor(s), or disclosing or accepting information if one takes a test at a different time than other students in the same course.

Plagiarism. Plagiarism as defined in the Regent University Student Handbook (2005) is "...stealing or using ideas, writings or images of another as one's own. It involves failure to acknowledge material copied from others or failure to acknowledge one's indebtedness to another for the gist of important thoughts in formal statements, written or oral" (p. 27).

Plagiarism, through ignorance, neglect, or blatant dishonesty will not be tolerated in the Robertson School of Government.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

1. Quoting verbatim published sources without adequate documentation (See Bluebook or APA Manual for adequate documentation protocol)
2. Purchasing and/or submitting a paper already submitted by another person
3. Having someone else write the paper (i.e., friend, relative, colleague)

4. Summarizing or using the words or ideas of another without indicating that the words were another person's work.

Be forewarned that all RSG faculty have access to software that checks for plagiarism, and that I will use this software for all papers where I suspect plagiarism. Charges of violating academic integrity will be handled according to established student discipline procedures published in the Catalog and the Student Handbook.

Incomplete Grades:

An incomplete grade will be given in a regular course only for legitimate deficiencies due to illness, emergencies or other extraordinary reasons acceptable to the professor, and not because of neglect on the student's part. The instructor will give a regular grade if all requirements for the course are submitted by the end of the following semester. If all work is not submitted by the end of the following semester, a grade of FX will be posted automatically. The FX shall be counted as an F in the computation of the GPA.