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Public Affairs 874, Fall 2009
Office Hrs.: 1:30-3:00 M
By Appointment

TA: Dave Nelson(denelson3@wisc.edu) Course Class List: pubaffr874-1-
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THE POLICYMAKING PROCESS

This is a graduate seminar on the policymaking process. The policymaking process is considered in a very broad context – from evolution of an idea, to enactment of legislation, to program implementation and evaluation. The emphasis is on the national level but there will also be considerable discussion of policymaking in a federalist environment. Thus the states will not be neglected and when we get to the policy section of the course, the national-state-local linkages will become very important. Given the globalization of public policy, international perspectives may also be introduced.

Courses can be categorized as “tools” courses, where the objectives are primarily skills, or as “knowledge” courses, where the objective is to impart knowledge and understand of a subject area. This course falls mostly in the latter category. The course also serves as a “gateway” La Follette course in that it serves as a brief introduction to a number of areas in which there are advanced La Follette courses (e.g. policy evaluation and analysis, budget and tax policy).

The objectives of the course are: (1) to understand decision and policymaking theories; (2) to insure that students know and understand the institutional and political organization of the policymaking process at the national level, and the subsequent interactions at the state and local levels; (3) to describe and analyze the stages in that process; 4) to introduce students to critical tools including policy analysis and evaluation; and (5) to exemplify these theories and processes through a set of currently debated policy case studies. To these ends the course is presented in four sections: theories of the policy process, institutions, critical processes, and policy examples.

We will also be emphasizing writing skills exemplified by two different types of papers. The first will be a “team-memorandum” of approximately 8 pages on balancing the next Wisconsin budget. The second will be an individual term paper of the student’s choosing or on a topic from a distributed list.

The style of the course will be a combination of "seminar lectures" and discussion. It is expected that the readings be done in advance of the class to facilitate careful analysis of concepts and individual readings. Since the readings are not perfectly distributed between sections, I strongly suggest that you look ahead and judiciously use your time. Much of the readings are in the two books, but there are also a number of readings that will be available on the class *Learn UW* website.

Course Requirements

1. An approximately 8-page team-based *policy memo* that will be due **November 2**. Three person teams will be selected by random draw on the first class day. A description of the problem will also be handed out that day and posted on the class website.
2. A *term paper* of approximately 15 pages. This paper may be written in response to a set of paper topics that will be distributed in class or, with permission of the teaching assistant, a paper topic of the student's choosing. The paper will be handed in two parts. The first part, approximately the first half, will be due on **November 23**. It will be edited for writing issues and returned to the student on **November 30**. The edited portion will not be graded. The final paper will be due on **December 14th**.
3. A "check-out," take home *final examination* on **Thursday, December 17**. Students will have two-hours to complete the exam on a computer using course materials. Procedures for the final exam will be distributed later in the course.
4. Final grades will be determined according to the following weights:

Policy Memo	25%
Term Paper	35%
Final Exam	30%
Participation	10%

Course Outline and Readings

The following books have been ordered for purchase at the University Bookstore and perhaps other stores and online.

Stella Z. Theodoulou and Chris Kofinis, *The Art of the Game: Understanding American Public Policy Making*. (Thomson/Wadsworth, 2004). Paperback.

David Mechanic, *The Truth About Healthcare: Why Reform is Not Working in America* (Rutgers University Press, 2006).

The other required readings not in these books will be available on the class website. Please note that the readings are not evenly distributed for each week. For discussion purposes, readings must be done in advance of the scheduled session.

Course Schedule

I Foundations: The What, the Where, and the Who of Policymaking

Week 1 - September 14: Introduction to Public Policymaking

Stella Z. Theodoulou and Chris Kofinis, *The Art of the Game*, Chapter 1

Week 2 - September 21: The What and Where of Policymaking

Stella Z. Theodoulou and Chris Kofinis, *The Art of the Game*, Chapters 2 and 3

Weeks 3 & 4 - September 28 & October 5: The Who (Institutions)

Stella Z. Theodoulou and Chris Kofinis, *The Art of the Game*, Chapter 4

James P. Pfiffner and Roger H. Davidson (eds.), **Understanding the Presidency**, Pearson - Longman, 3rd edition, 2005, pp. 329-357;453-471. Articles by Schlesinger, Neustadt, Loevy, and Pfiffner.

Terry Moe, "Presidency and the Bureaucracy: Presidential Advantage," in Michael Nelson (ed.) **The Presidency and the Political System**, 5th edition, Washington, D.C.. Congressional Quarterly Press, 1998, pp. 437-468.

Douglas Arnold, **The Logic of Congressional Action** (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990) Chapters 1 and 6.

James Q. Wilson, "The Bureaucracy Problem." *Public Interest*. 1967.

II How Policy Is Made

Week 5 - October 12: Decision and Policy Theories

Stella Z. Theodoulou and Chris Kofinis, *The Art of the Game*, Chapter 5

Charles E. Lindblom and Edward J. Woodhouse, **The Policy-Making Process**, Prentice Hall, third edition, 1993, pp. 2-32.

John W. Kingdon, **Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies**, Chapter 4.

Week 6 – October 19: Problem Identification and Agenda Setting

Stella Z. Theodoulou and Chris Kofinis, *The Art of the Game*, Chapters 6 and 7

John W. Kingdon, **Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies**, Chapters 5 to 8.

Week 7 – October 26: Policy Design, Analysis, and Adoption

Stella Z. Theodoulou and Chris Kofinis, *The Art of the Game*, Chapters 8 and 9

David Weimer and Aidan Vining, **Policy Analysis: Concepts and Practice**, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2003, Chapter 1.

Week 8 – November 2: Policy Implementation and Evaluation

Stella Z. Theodoulou and Chris Kofinis, *The Art of the Game*, Chapters 10 and 11

POLICY MEMO DUE NOVEMBER 2.

III Policy Examples

Weeks 9 & 10 - November 9 and 16: Healthcare Policy

David Mechanic, *The Truth About Healthcare*

Summary of pending legislation. To be added.

Weeks 11 & 12 - November 23 and 30: Immigration Policy

Dowell Mayers, *Immigrants and Boomers*, chapters 1, 3, and 12.

Ben Marquez and John Witte, “Immigration Reform: Is the Best Strategy an Incremental or Comprehensive Approach?”

Summary of pending legislation. To be added.

FIRST HALF OF THE TERM PAPER DUE NOV. 23, RETURNED NOV. 30.

Weeks 13 & 14 - December 7 and 14: Education Policy

John Witte, Patrick Wolf, Joshua Cowen, David Fleming, and Juanita Lucas-McLean, “The MPCP Longitudinal Educational Growth Study Second Year Report.” School choice Demonstration Project, University of Arkansas, <http://www.uark.edu/ua/der/SCDP/Research.html>. March, 2009.

Douglas Harris, “The Policy Uses and Policy Validity of Value-Added and Other Teacher quality Measures,” in D.H. Gitomer (ed.) *Measurement Issues and Assessment for Teacher Quality* (SAGE, 2009).

Summary of No Child Left Behind pending legislation. To be added.

TERM PAPER DUE DECMEBER 14

TAKE HOME FINAL EXAMINATION DECEMBER 17