This is a graduate seminar on the policy making process from agenda setting to policy formation to program implementation. We will pay particular attention to the constraints that operate on policy makers and the circumstances in which policy makers and other actors overcome constraints to change public policy.

Assignments and Grading
- Class and Section Participation – 25%  
  (Attendance and discussion)
- Class Exercise Presentations – 15%
- Section Exercises – 10%
- Midterm – 20%
- Group Presentation – 10%
- Group Paper – 20%  
  (15% from instructor and TA and 5% from peer evaluation)

Class Participation
I expect noteworthy participation from all students during each class and section. Note that I frequently call on students for both answers to my questions and to provide new questions to enhance our discussion. As a result, every student must come to class ready to participate.

If participation or attention to the course’s readings falls below an acceptable level, I will hold unannounced quizzes. Quizzes may come in short-answer form or as longer essays. Quiz scores will be factored into the overall participation grade and cannot be made up due to course absences for any reason.

Class Exercise Presentations
Discussion leaders will be assigned for most weeks (with eight total opportunities). Discussion leaders should plan a class activity that addresses the main concepts of the readings. Do not feel that you have to cover all of the material in the readings. Just pull out the primary concepts as you see them and focus on those elements. You do not need to repeat the substance of the material since everyone will have read the materials prior to class. Instead, think of applications of this material and key questions that should be considered.
I will likely assign four or five students to each exercise. The activity should be approximately 20 minutes long. You may use PowerPoint or other presentation software. You may pose questions, set up a verbal quiz, discuss new case studies, run a game show, lead and moderate a debate, or think of something far more innovative.

Class will typically begin with these exercises before delving into the far less entertaining instructor-led discussion. You will receive a short email with feedback and a team grade.

**Policy Research Report and Presentation**

We will divide students into eight groups of four or five to research a piece of national or state legislation of the group’s choosing. The group may choose any piece of legislation that was either signed or vetoed by the President or the Governor of Wisconsin within the last decade. The assignment consists of a written report, presentation, and peer evaluation.

Students will turn in one copy of the policy research report consisting of:

*Title Page:* Title, authors, class information (one page)

*Abstract:* An approximately 150 word summary of the document (one page)

*Introduction:* Describe the policy, its evolution, and importance. The introduction should also provide a “roadmap” of the report as a whole to give the reader an overview of what will follow (two to three double-spaced pages).

Note that a first draft of this introduction is due four weeks before the first group presentation. The TA and I will provide comments on this draft within one week.

*Chronological Narrative:* Next, you will provide a chronological narrative of the legislative process. In this section, answer the “who, what, when, where, and why” questions about your legislation in a descriptive and well-organized style. Be sure to describe the history of the policy and how and why it has moved on and off the policy making agenda. You may also want to attach a table listing important dates as an appendix to the report (seven to 11 double-spaced pages).

While the chronological history is important, keep in mind that this is not a history class. I am not interested in a point-by-point explanation of every step that happened during policy formation. I want the group to use the history to explain the major factors that contributed to the policy and relate them to literature from both in and out of this class.
**Analysis:** In this section, you will discuss the relevance of the course readings to understanding the policy making process for this particular policy. You will want to focus on one or more theories of the policy making process – for example, punctuated equilibrium theory or policy streams – and discuss how the readings on this stage relate to your case. If particular interest groups have played a key role furthering or blocking the policy, include that information and relate it to course readings. You will also need to go beyond the course’s assigned readings to better familiarize yourself with the facts related to the particular policy issue.

The analytical section of the report is pivotal. It requires you to critically evaluate how the course’s theoretical ideas apply or do not apply to your case (nine to 13 double-spaced pages).

**Conclusion:** This section must answer the important “so what?” question. What does this case study tell us about the American policy making process more generally? (Two to three double-spaced pages). The major points made in the conclusion should also be included in the introduction and made clear throughout the text. The conclusion restates major findings rather than surprises the reader.

**Advocacy Strategy Addendum:** Based on the class discussions, what strategies would you recommend advocates on the various sides of this issue use to advance their position (two to four pages).

**References:** You will need to document sources and provide full citations for all cited works. Bibliographic information should allow another person to replicate your research. All direct quotes should be in quotation marks with parenthetical reference format and page number, e.g., (Daphne 2009, 19) and all use of another’s work should be in parenthetical reference format, e.g., (Velma 2009). If you use websites, be very careful about knowing your source and being able to judge the veracity of the information, especially any data sources. For this project, it is best to start with government sources and then move to journal articles and scholarly books. After exhausting those sources, only then should you use Internet search engines. For style information, refer to the American Political Science Association website at: [http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocAPSA.html](http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocAPSA.html).

Additional information about your report:
- Your paper should be Times New Roman font, size 12, double-spaced.
- Reports will be turned in (online and in hard copy) on the same day as your group’s presentation.
- Only one paper per group is necessary.
- Your paper should follow the sections headers listed above. Any sub-headers may be labeled as you wish.
• Do not assume that the readers of your paper (the TA and I) are familiar with our class concepts, ideas, and theories. You will need to explain jargon or new theories within your paper.
• Include page numbers.

**Presentation:** Each group will present a synopsis of the report to the class. The first part of presentation should emphasize the analysis section of the report (not the historical narrative). The second part should focus on recommended advocacy strategies. Presentations must be well organized in order to highlight the key issues and findings of the written report. Every member of the group must participate in the presentation. The presentation will be graded based on content, communication skills, and style (professionalism, energy, and organization).

Each presentation should take approximately 15 to 20 Minutes, followed by five to 10 minutes for class Q&A.

Dress professionally and practice and time your presentations beforehand. You will be graded on both content and performance.

**Peer and Self Evaluation:** After you have completed your presentation, you will receive a peer and self-evaluation form. On this form you will rate yourself and group members on a scale, and these rankings will affect each student’s paper grade. The instructor will not reveal the names associated with particular ratings.

**Required Texts**


**Weekly Schedule**

Week One 1/17 – Introduction
• Class Goals, Format, Syllabus, and Presentation Groups
• Paper Presentation Group Selection
• Class Exercise Group Selection
• Policy Stages

No Section

Week Two 1/24 – Theoretical Foundations
• Excerpts from Hobbes’ *Leviathan.*
• Locke’s *Second Treatise on Government.*
• Madison 51 [http://www.constitution.org/fed/federa51.htm](http://www.constitution.org/fed/federa51.htm)
• Excerpts from Rawls’ *A Theory on Justice.*

Week Three 1/31 – Political Culture and Policy Paradox
• Stone, *Policy Paradox*, Introduction and Chapter 1.
• Take the World’s Smallest Political Quiz at [http://www.theadvocates.org/quiz/quiz.php](http://www.theadvocates.org/quiz/quiz.php) and come prepared to discuss your results and critique the quiz.
• Take the quiz at [https://www.ideallog.org/en/quiz](https://www.ideallog.org/en/quiz) and come prepared to discuss your results and critique the quiz.
• Class Exercise Group 1 (not on online quizzes)

No section

Week Four 2/7 – Policy Analysis
• Bardach (In its entirety – but note the light reading list for the week before)
• Class Exercise Group 2

Section Policy Analysis Exercise

Week Five 2/14 – Policy Making Theories
• Class Exercise Group 3
Week Six 2/21 – Agenda Setting – Policy Streams
- Kingdon Chapters 1-3
- Class Exercise Group 4

Week Seven 2/28 – Agenda Setting – Policy Streams
- Kindgon 2nd Chapter 4-9
- Class Exercise Group 5

Week Eight 3/7 – Midterm

No Section

Week Nine 3/14 – Policy Implementation

Week Ten 3/28 – Policy Implementation
- Thaler and Sunstein (entire book)
- Class Exercise Group 7

Week Ten 4/4 – Lobbying and Policy Making
- Godwin Chapter 1-5
- Class Exercise Group 8

Week Eleven 4/11 – Lobbying and Policy Making
- Godwin Chapters 6-10

Week Twelve 4/18 – Policy Presentations (and career discussion)

Section used for group preparation

Week Fourteen 4/25 – Group Presentations
- Group A Presentations
• Group A Papers Due

Week Fifteen 5/2 – Group Presentations
• Group B Presentations
• Group B Papers Due

As the instructor, I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus.