

Public Policy Analysis
School of Public Affairs
Arizona State University

Spring 2011

Class Hours:	Tuesday, 5:40-8:30 pm
Class Location:	Phoenix, UCENT 238
Class Website:	Blackboard (http://my.asu.edu)
Instructor:	Yushim Kim, Ph.D.
Email:	ykim@asu.edu
Office:	UCENT, Ste 445 (Phoenix)
Office hours:	Tuesday 3:00 - 5:00 pm and by appointment

Course Objectives

The objective of this course is to introduce you to policy analysis as a systematic way of thinking about public policies. Throughout the course, you will think about, discuss, and come to understand the crucial components of public policy, as well as analytical approaches to public policy. This course is designed to help you develop the skills required to define and critically analyze policy problems, articulate relevant decision making criteria for policy analysis, and evaluate alternative policy options. You are expected to learn: (1) what frameworks are available for policy analysis, (2) how a particular framework is relevant in a given context, and (3) the strengths and weaknesses of each framework. These frameworks, skills, and techniques will be applied to a wide range of substantive policy issues.

Course Format

The general format of this course includes reviews of class material, short lectures, and class discussion. Prior to each class, students are expected to read the required texts and articles listed in the syllabus. Students are responsible for content included in the readings, even if it is not explicitly reviewed in class. PowerPoint slides will be posted on the class website before each class, if necessary. Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions. Students are responsible for online discussion, assignments, presentations, and class participation. The assignments are explained in more detail below.

Readings

- [KF] Kraft, M. E., & Furlong, S. R. (2000). *Public Policy*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press
[G] Gupta, D.K. (2011). *Analyzing Public Policy*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press
[On] Check the class website (<http://my.asu.edu>) – PAF505 – Course Documents – Papers

Grading

Please keep in mind that grades are earned through hard work, quality performance on class assignments, and contributing to the class by actively participating in class discussions. If I find that your progress is unsatisfactory, I will inform you in person or via email in the middle of the semester (by March 15, 2011). No incompletes will be given, with the exception of serious unexpected events that prevent course completion. Your final grade will be based on the following assignments/exams:

1.	Three News analyses	20%
2.	Issues & controversies	10%
3.	Final paper	50%
4.	Participation	20%

A letter grade will be given for each assignment. Substantively, an A indicates excellent, B indicates average, and C indicates below average. For graduate students, grades of C and D lead to failure of the course. If you satisfy the requirements in this syllabus, you will earn a B. To earn above a B, you must present excellence beyond the minimum requirements in this syllabus.

Class Assignments & Evaluations

1. Three News Analyses [20%]

This is an individual assignment. This assignment applies concepts from the readings to an article in the newspaper or other form of mainstream media. You may follow the steps below:

- Carefully read the reading of the week and think through the concepts and frameworks discussed.
- Go to the discussion board. There are three forums entitled News Analysis. Each forum includes two or three news articles or documents. Select one for each forum. Analyze the issue in the news article you selected, applying concepts and frameworks from the readings. Questions are as follows:
 - *News Analysis #1*: What stage of the policy process (e.g., agenda-setting, policy-making, implementation, or evaluation) the policy topic is in and why? Who are key actors involving in the topic? What position are some of the key actors standing for?
 - *News Analysis #2*: Two recent laws were posted. Point out one or two potential issues that were not explicitly discussed in the article, but that need to be considered. Explain why and what are the unintended consequences of the formal policy?
 - *News Analysis #3*: Which evaluative criteria should be considered when you attempt to analyze the problem posted? Why? Discuss trade-offs of selecting certain criteria.
- Post your answers underneath the article you selected before due dates listed in page 5.

Your discussion will be evaluated when *News Analysis #3* is finished. Students can post and respond to each other's analysis. It is not a requirement. There are no limitations in length, format, or style of the posting. Directly write to the board as text messages (1-5 paragraphs) rather than attaching a word file. Keep the analysis simple and succinct. Clearly indicate your name in the post.

2. Issues and Controversies [10%]

Assignments 2 and 3 below are based on group work. Six groups that consist of 2-3 students will be formed based on policy topics and students' interests in **Week 2**. In Kraft and Furlong, Part III, there are 6 chapters that cover different policy topics. From this list, determine which policy issue you would like to examine for the semester. You will be asked to conduct assignment 2 and 3 with the same member.

The purpose of this activity is to expose students to key policy areas and issues and to provide context for class discussion. For this assignment, read the chapter that covers your policy topic and prepare a presentation with the other group members. Keep in mind that only your group, not the instructor, is responsible for delivering the content of the policy topic in the chapter. Your group must (1) briefly introduce the issues and controversies of the policy topic after reading the relevant chapter in Kraft and Furlong, and (2) lead the class discussion, discussing two questions your group selected from the "Discussion Questions" section of the chapter (e.g., the economic and budgetary policy discussion is found on pp. 224-225). Each group will have 45 minutes for this assignment in class. Students will evaluate your group's performance. I will use the information for your group's grade.

3. *Final Paper [50%]*

1) *Policy Paper (40%)*

Pick a state or local issue in Arizona within the policy area assigned to your group. For example, if your group is assigned to welfare and social security policy, then pick an Arizona issue related to that policy area. The final paper must include key components of a policy analysis as described below:

- *Defining a Problem*: Policy analysts have learned that it is extremely challenging to define a policy problem in an agreeable format. Discuss the following questions: (1) what is a problem that the policy you chose aims to address?; (2) why is it a problem and from whose perspective?; (3) what is the history of the problem and past policy attempts to solve it? Note that by saying 'a problem' I mean a community or society problem, not a problem of the existing policy. Almost every formulated policy may have some problems, but here you must focus on the problem that a state or local policy aimed to address in communities or states (i.e. homeless, energy saving, school accountability).
- *Identifying Evaluative Criteria*: Based on readings and class discussion regarding evaluative criteria (or analytical criteria), you will identify a good set of criteria to make a judgment on potential policy alternatives. In this subsection, you may discuss (1) what criteria you will use to compare policy alternatives, and (2) which criteria need to be highly weighted and why. Note that it is not necessary to list every criterion in the readings. However, you may want to discuss the limitations of your selected criteria at the end of the paper.
- *Generating Policy Alternatives*: It is inevitable that policy analysis has a qualitative aspect, especially when we think about policy alternatives and selection criteria. Your group may think about a couple of policy alternatives to address your local policy problem in addition to a 'do nothing' option. Evaluate the alternatives based on the policy criteria you selected. Be critical and clear on explaining the trade-offs. Your final paper may include a Criteria and Alternative Matrix (CAM), if you chose to do so. You can add qualitative or quantitative evaluations of the alternatives. Recommendations should be reasonable and persuasive.

The policy paper should be single-spaced, 12-point font, and no more than 3,000 words (excluding references, tables, and figures). A cover sheet should be included with your name, paper title, course number, date, and total word count. There should be a minimum of 10 references in the paper. Your

references can include government documents, peer-reviewed articles, and books. A maximum of 3 websites (I do not mean journal articles collected through the internet) will be counted as references. All in-text citations and references should follow APA citation format. At the end of the paper, you must add an acknowledgment which is signed by all the group members and explains each person's research and/or writing contribution (exclude the acknowledgment from the word count). If you send the acknowledgment via email, I do not need signatures, but your group must agree and finalize the content of the email before you send the acknowledgment.

The policy paper will be submitted by **May 7, 2011, 9:30 pm in person (UCENT 445), in my mailbox, via fax (602.496.0950), or via email (ykim@asu.edu)**. The paper will be graded on the following components: Content, Clarity, Comprehensiveness, Creativity, and Evidence.

2) *Presentation (10%)*

At the end of the semester, each group will present their policy paper in class. Each group should prepare for approximately 40 minutes of presentation and 15 minutes for questions. You may prepare PowerPoint slides, keeping in mind that it will take approximately 2 minutes to present each slide. Please limit your PowerPoint to no more than 20 slides. The presentation will be evaluated by students in class.

4. *Participation [20%]*

The participation grade consists of two parts: class discussion (10%) and attendance (10%). If you have to miss a class, please send me the date of your absence via email in advance. You will be expected to complete all required reading assignments prior to each class meeting. Your attendance, participation in class discussions, completion of class assignments, and discussions with me via e-mail or during office hours will influence your participation grade. I value a good attitude, passion, and process in the learning environment. I will consider these aspects in all assignments. If you wish to receive clarification of anything you have read or heard in class, but do not wish to ask a question in class, send me an email and I will respond to it during the following class session.

I am fully aware that speaking among a group of strangers is often an anxiety-producing experience. However, each student will be asked to contribute to the learning process through discussion. No one will be allowed the luxury of passive anonymity. I want to assure you, therefore, that your thoughts and opinions will always be treated with respect.

I also understand that some of you might be out of town during the semester. Your absences, due to your job or personal matters, will not influence your assignment grades other than the participation (attendance) component. If you miss class more than two times, the best participation grade you will earn is a B, regardless of your participation in class discussion.

Schedule of Topics and Assignments: Spring 2011

Week	Date	Topic	Assignment
1	1/18	Introduction • Syllabus	
2	1/25	Public Policy • Rationale	Assignment group formation
3	2/1	• Institutions and Actors	
4	2/8	• The Policy Process	News analysis 1 due (Feb 6, 5:00 pm)
5	2/15	Issues & Controversies (I)	
6	2/22	Issues & Controversies (II)	
7	3/1	Public Policy Analysis • Analysts - Role, ethic, & value	Final project topic due (in class, must)
8	3/8	• Defining a Problem	News analysis 2 due (Mar 6, 5:00 pm)
9	3/15	• Selecting Criteria	News analysis 3 due (Mar 13, 5:00 pm)
10	3/22	• Comparing Alternatives	
11	3/29	Analytical Tools • C/B Analysis (led by Zhong)	Final project draft (in class, optional) <i>Laptop allowed</i>
12	4/5	• Decision Three and Game Theory (led by Zhong)	<i>Laptop allowed</i>
13	4/12	• The Methods of Simple and Multiple Least Squares (led by Zhong)	<i>Laptop allowed</i>
14	4/19	• History	
15	4/26	Communication	
16	5/3	Presentation	Final project due (May 7, 9:30 pm)

Reading Assignments

Week 1 (1/18): Introduction

- [On] Syllabus
[On] Lasswell, H. D. (1951). "The Policy Orientation." In D. Lerner & H. D. Lasswell. *The policy sciences: Recent developments in scope and methods*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, pp. 3-15.
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Week 2 (1/25): Public Policy - Rationale

- [KF] Chapter 1: Public Policy and Politics
[G] Chapter 1: Reason, Rationality, and Public Policy
[G] Chapter 3: Government and the Market
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Week 3 (2/1): Public Policy – Institutions and Actors

- [KF] Chapter 2: Government Institutions and Policy Actors
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Week 4 (2/8): Public Policy – Process

- [KF] Chapter 3: Understanding Public Policymaking
[G] Chapter 4: The Policy Process
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Week 5 (2/15): Issues & Controversies (I)

- [KF] Chapter 7: Economic and Budgetary Policy
[KF] Chapter 8: Health Care Policy
[KF] Chapter 9: Welfare and Social Security Policy
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Week 6 (2/22): Issues & Controversies (II)

- [KF] Chapter 10: Education Policy
[KF] Chapter 11: Environmental and Energy Policy
[KF] Chapter 12: Foreign Policy and Homeland Security
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Week 7 (3/1): Public Analysts – Role, Ethic, and Value

- [KF] Chapter 4: Policy Analysis: An Introduction
[G] Chapter 2: The Analysts: Their Role and Their Tools
[On] Weimer, D., & Vining, A. (2005). Chapter 3: Toward Professional Ethics, *Policy Analysis: Concepts and Practice* (4th eds). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, pp. 39-53.
[On] Gupta, D. K. (2001). Chapter 15: The "Good Enough" Policy Analyst. pp., 384-387.

Week 8 (3/8): Policy Analysis – Defining a Problem

- [KF] Chapter 5: Public Problems and Policy Alternatives, pp. 120-144
- [On] Rittel, H. W. J., & Webber, M. M. (1973). Dilemmas in a general theory of planning. *Policy Sciences*, 4(2), 155-169.
- [On] Rosenhead, J., & Mingers, J. (2001). Chapter 1: A New Paradigm of Analysis. pp. 1-20.
- [On] Dunn, W. N. (2004). Chapter 3: Structuring Policy Problems. *Public Policy Analysis*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. pp. 96-120.
- [On] Coughlin, J. F. (1994). Chapter 7: The tragedy of the concrete commons: Defining traffic congestion as a public problem. In D. A. Rochefort & R. W. Cobb. (Eds.). *The politics of problem definition: Shaping the policy agenda* (pp. 138-158). Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas (**CASE**)
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Week 9 (3/15): Policy Analysis – Selecting Criteria

- [KF] Chapter 6: Assessing Policy Alternatives, pp. 146-155.
- [On] Stone, D. (2002). Chapter 2: Equity, *Policy paradox*. pp. 35-60.
- [On] Stone, D. (2002). Chapter 3: Efficiency, *Policy paradox*. pp. 61-85.
- [On] Stone, D. (2002). Chapter 4: Security, *Policy paradox*. pp. 86-107.
- [On] Stone, D. (2002). Chapter 5: Liberty, *Policy paradox*. pp. 108-130.
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Week 10 (3/22): Policy Analysis – Comparing Alternatives

- [KF] Chapter 6: Assessing Policy Alternatives, pp. 156-178.
- [On] Weimer, D. L., & Vining, A. R. Chapter 15: Goals/Alternatives Matrices: Some Examples from CBO Studies. pp. 363-379.
- [On] Schwindt, R., Vining, A., & Weimer, D. (2003). A Policy Analysis of the BC Salmon Fishery, *Canadian Public Policy*, 29(1), 73-94 (**CASE**)
- [G] Chapter 8: Sources of Data
- [G] Chapter 9: Making Sense of Numbers
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Week 11 (3/29): Analytical Tools – C/B Analysis

- [G] Chapter 14: Cost-Benefit Analysis
- [On] Gramlich, E. M. (1981). Chapter 4: Benefit-Cost analysis and Governmental Decision-Making. *Benefit-cost analysis of government programs*. Englewood cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc. pp. 41-52.
- [On] Weimer, D., & Vining, A. (2005). Chapter 17: Benefit-Cost Analysis in a Bureaucratic Setting: The Strategic Petroleum Reserve, pp. 426-451. (**CASE**)
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Week 12 (4/5): Analytical Tools – Decision Tree & Game Theory

- [G] Chapter 13: Decision Three and Game Theory
- [On] Chapter 1: Background: Some Origins of the Classical Model, In Lejano, R.P. (2006).

Frameworks for Policy Analysis. New York: Routledge. pp. 19-32.

Week 13 (4/12): Analytical Tools – Least Squares

- [G] Chapter 12: The Methods of Simple and Multiple Least Squares
 [On] Berk, R. (2010). What you can and can't properly do with regression, *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 26, 481-487
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Week 14 (4/19): Analytical Tools – History

- [G] Chapter 10: When History is Inadequate
 [G] Chapter 11: Analysis of Historical Data
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Week 15 (4/26): Communication

- [On] Dunn, W. N. (2004). Chapter 9: Communicating Policy Analysis. *Public policy analysis* (3rd eds.). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, pp. 430-449.
 [On] Tufte, E. R. (1997). Chapter 2: Visual and Statistical Thinking: Displays of Evidence for Making Decisions, *Visual explanations*. Cheshire, Connecticut: Graphics Press, LLC. pp. 27-54.
 [On] Tufte, E. R. (2006). The Cognitive Style of Powerpoint: Pitching Out Corrupts Within. *Beautiful Evidence*. Cheshire, Connecticut: Graphics Press, LLC. pp. 156-195.
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Week 16 (5/3): Presentation

Other

Late Assignments

I expect you to turn in all assignments on time. You are welcome to turn papers in early if you expect to be absent on the due date. You should plan your schedules accordingly.

Grade Appeal Policy

I take the evaluation and grading of your exams very seriously. I read each paper and exam several times before assigning a grade. In arriving at a grade for a particular project, I first assess whether it meets the basic criteria mentioned. I then compare your essay to the essays which I believe represent excellence, both in content and presentation of that content. I am happy to provide you with a copy of these essays on the class website.

If you think that you deserve a higher grade on a paper or exam, you may write a letter and explain why you would like to appeal the grade. Before making an appeal, you should re-read your paper with my comments in mind. After I receive your letter, I will re-read your paper/exam within 1-2 class periods. Depending on my re-reading, your grade may stay the same, be raised, or be lowered. This system is designed to minimize frivolous grade appeals and to ensure that you have carefully examined and reflected on the quality of your work before deciding to initiate a grade appeal.

Academic Integrity

Both the university and I take issues related to academic integrity very seriously. If you have any questions about how to cite someone else's work, please ask. Though it may be acceptable to cut and paste without attribution into documents or reports, the academic community has a different set of standards in this regard. If I find that a student has plagiarized on an assignment, the possible consequences are: failure of the assignment; failure in the course; course failure with a mark of academic dishonesty, which cannot be removed from one's transcript; or dismissal from the graduate program. If you fail a class assignment, you can restore some points by working harder in other assignments. However, *once you violate the academic conduct guidelines, there is no way that you can reverse the damage*. Please be alert to the academic integrity guidelines.

Notes

Please turn off your cell phone (blackberry, iPhone, etc) before the class starts.

No laptop use in the class except a few weeks indicated on page 5.

No email response from the instructor during the weekend.

It is your responsibility to check information on the class website.

The syllabus is subject to change by the instructor.