

Spring 2009

Thursdays 7pm – 9:40 pm

Storm Hall (SH) 147

**PA 660: Administration and Public Policy Development**

Section 1, Schedule Number 02458

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You will be most likely to reach me and receive a timely response from me if you contact me by e-mail rather than by phone. Please use an appropriate subject line for the e-mail that is directly related to the course so I do not accidentally delete your e-mail as spam.

**COURSE PURPOSE AND SCOPE:**

Description from Graduate Bulletin: “Social, political and administrative problems involved in governmental program development and change.” This course serves as a graduate-level introduction to the public policy process, with a focus on the context of the United States. Throughout the course students will examine theories, concepts, and models of public policy making, giving attention to both official and unofficial actors in the policy process. Students will consider how citizens’ and other actors’ voices are heard, not heard, and/or actively silenced in the context of American policies related to morality, social equity, immigration, energy and the environment, drugs, social and corporate welfare, and terrorism. Students will end the course by examining specific examples of policy implementation and policy failure.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

The objective of this course is for students to critically examine the role that individuals and organizations play in the policy process. Students will locate themselves as well as the formal and informal organizations in which they work, study, and socialize within the policy process, both as targets of public policy and as actors in the policy process. Students will apply theories and concepts of the policy process to real-world situations during class discussion and through analysis of text and film. Students will practice explaining the influence of public policy to a practitioner audience through a written policy memo. Students also will practice influencing formal or informal policy actors through a written policy brief.

**TEXTS**

**BLACKBOARD READINGS:** The required readings for this course can be found on Blackboard. All students are expected to do the readings prior to class and come to class prepared to discuss the readings.

**OPTIONAL TEXT:** For students who are new to public policy and feel they need more background information, an optional text will be available for purchase at the SDSU bookstore. This text is: Birkland, T. *An Introduction to the Policy Process: Theories, Concepts, and Models of Public Policy Making*. M.E. Sharpe. 2005

Students will find this text very useful for understanding the concepts discussed during class lecture.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

To the extent possible given the class size, this course will be conducted as a graduate seminar. As such, it is essential that students carefully read the course materials before class, attend class regularly, and participate actively in class discussion and other classroom activities. Your final grade will be calculated based on five course assignments: a 5-7 page policy advocacy brief (20% of final grade); a 5-7 page film or television analysis (20% of final grade); a 7-9 page internal policy memo (25% of final grade), a 10-15 minute oral presentation on the development of your policy memo (15% of final grade); and participation (20% of final grade). Your participation grade will be based on your active participation in classroom discussion and other classroom activities, and formal peer evaluations of your fellow students' policy memo presentations. The assignments, due dates, and percent of your final grade are shown in the table below.

**Course Assignments:**

<b><u>Assignment</u></b>	<b><u>Due Date</u></b>	<b><u>Percent of Final Grade</u></b>
Policy Advocacy Brief	<i>March 5</i>	20% - 20 points
Film/Television Analysis	<i>April 9</i>	20% - 20 points
Internal Policy Memos	<i>Final Exam Week- May 14</i>	25 % - 25 points
Policy Memo Presentation	<i>Throughout semester – to be scheduled by student and instructor</i>	15% - 15 points
Participation <i>(Includes active participation in class discussions and formal peer evaluations of policy memo presentations)</i>	<i>Throughout semester</i>	20% - 20 points

**Grading Scale:**

- |                  |                       |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| A+ 98-100 points | B 78-82 points        |
| A 93-97 points   | B- 70-77 points       |
| A- 88-92 points  | C less than 70 points |
| B+ 83-87 points  |                       |

**Assignment Descriptions:**

***Policy Advocacy Brief, 5-7 pages, due March 5. 20 POINTS***

Two weeks after the class session on interest groups and nonprofit advocacy, students will submit a 5-7 page policy brief that presents a particular group or organization's viewpoint on a specific new policy or policy change, with the intent of influencing the position of a particular target(s) regarding that policy. Students are free to use their actual employer as the author of this brief as long as their employer is not a government entity. Students also may adopt another existing nonprofit organization, interest group, corporation, or other non-government entity as the "pretend" author of the brief. If students work for a government organization, they may choose their own organization as the target of the brief, or students may choose another existing organization or group as the target. The policy brief will be 3-4 pages, with a 1-page introduction about the organizational context of the brief's author and target, and a 1-page addendum explaining how the content of the memo relates to the theories, concepts, and models discussed in class. Students will be provided with actual policy briefs from existing organizations as examples prior to the due date of the assignment. Additional information about this assignment will be given to students later in the semester.

***Film/Television Analysis, 5-7 pages, due April 9. 20 POINTS***

Throughout the semester we will watch movies, documentary films, and television shows related to a variety of public policy topics. Students will write a 5-page analysis that applies theories, concepts, and models of public policy to films and television shows viewed in class. Students may choose to focus their analysis on a single film/ television show, or may choose to focus on a specific theory, concept, or model as it is portrayed throughout multiple films/television shows. Other approaches may be permitted with advanced approval from the instructor. Alternatively, students will also have the choice of analyzing a *single* film or *single* TV episode of their choice that was not viewed in the classroom as long as they obtain advanced approval from the instructor. Students who make this choice must ensure that the film or television show is readily and legally available at a local video rental store or for no cost online, or in the case of harder-to-find items, the student can choose to provide the instructor with a copy of the item for viewing. Additional information about this assignment will be given to students later in the semester.

***Internal Policy Memo, 7-9 pages, due May 14. 25 POINTS***

It is assumed that most students in the class are currently employed in the public or nonprofit sector, or aspire to work in these sectors. The internal policy memo is intended to be a brief policy analysis that an employee might be asked to present to his or her manager regarding a new or changing policy that may affect the organization for which the student works. Students are free to use their actual employer as the target of this memo, or may adopt another existing public or nonprofit organization as their “pretend” employer. Students should discuss how an actual or foreseeable new policy or policy change may affect their organization, and if and how the organization should prepare for or respond to this change. The memo itself should be 4-6 pages long, with a 1-page introduction about the organizational context, and a 2-page addendum explaining how the content of the memo relates to the theories, concepts, and models discussed in class. Additional information about this assignment will be given to students later in the semester.

***Policy Memo Presentation, 10-15 minutes, scheduled throughout semester. 15 POINTS***

Throughout the semester students will give brief 15-20 minute presentations on the proposed topic and content of their policy memos. At the point that these presentations are conducted, it is assumed that the internal policy memo will still be a “work in progress”; as such, you need not worry about presenting a fully finalized plan for the memo. Instead, you should present your topic and proposed approach, and should feel free to pose questions about your topic and/or requests for assistance to your classmates and instructor. The students observing the presentation should be prepared to offer constructive feedback to the presenter. The purpose of this assignment is two-fold: to provide the student presenting with useful comments on his/her proposed policy memo, and to expose others in the class to a wide variety of policy considerations and organizational contexts in the field of public policy. Additional information about this assignment will be given to students later in the semester.

***Participation, throughout the semester. 20 POINTS***

- **Attendance and Participation:** Students are expected to have read the material and be prepared to actively participate in class discussions and other classroom activities. As part of a graduate-level seminar, students will be expected to participate frequently, actively, and thoughtfully in their own learning and the learning of their classmates in the classroom setting. The point value of students’ participation grade will in no way be tied to the number of sessions attended or missed; however, students cannot frequently and actively participate if they are absent regularly. This graduate seminar

is held only once a week; as such students should avoid missing class if at all possible for the benefit of their own performance in the course. Please inform the instructor of absences as early in advance as possible.

- **Feedback on Policy Memo Presentations:** Students will be expected to provide the instructor with feedback on their classmates' policy memo presentations *by 5pm on the Tuesday following the students' presentations*. Students will find forms on Blackboard on which they may take notes about the presentation during class, and then they will be e-mailed a link to a web-based survey where they can provide the feedback to the instructor. This should be done **by 5pm on the Tuesday following the class**. The instructor will remove all names from students' comments, and then will compile the comments and provide them to the presenter in written form during the class session following his/her presentation. While I understand that students may not be able to comment on all student presentations, particularly if they are absent from class on the day of the presentation, students must provide formal feedback on at least 75% of their classmates' presentations. Providing feedback on less than 75% of your classmates' presentations will result in a lower participation grade. Additional information about the formal peer evaluations will be given to students later in the semester.

**\*\*Note on ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES\*\***

Students are always welcome to turn in assignments early if they desire. However, in the case of some assignments, students should be aware that waiting until the designated due date may provide them with exposure to additional materials and class discussion that may be useful for their topic. **Without advance approval from the instructor or a documented emergency, 5 points will be deducted from the grade for the assignment for each day the assignment is late.**

**\*\*Note on SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS THROUGH SafeAssign\*\***

Due to unfortunate incidents of plagiarism during past semesters, I am asking students to submit assignments through SafeAssign, a plagiarism prevention tool that is built into Blackboard. My hope is that, rather than using SafeAssign to "catch" plagiarizing students, students will use the software as a preventative tool to detect possible instances of plagiarism in their own writing before submitting the final draft of their assignment.

Spring 2009 is the first semester that SDSU will be using SafeAssign, so it will be a learning experience for both students and faculty. The SDSU IT staff have been in contact with a number of universities that have already transitioned to SafeAssign, and these universities have reported that it has been a smooth process for faculty and students. However, I ask for your patience as we learn to use this software together as a class.

Students should be aware that the instructor reserves the right to investigate suspected instances of plagiarism even if they do not appear in the reports generated by Turnitin.com. Students will be given more information on what constitutes plagiarism during class, and can also refer to the following website for guidance: <http://www.sa.sdsu.edu/htc/Plagiarism.pdf>. Instances of plagiarism will be handled according to the SDSU Academic Senate policy, which can be found at the following website: [http://its.sdsu.edu/resources/turnitin/pdf/Plagiarism\\_AcadSen.pdf](http://its.sdsu.edu/resources/turnitin/pdf/Plagiarism_AcadSen.pdf).

## **ACCOMODATIONS**

Students who need accommodations of their disabilities should contact me privately to discuss specific accommodations for which they have received authorization. If you have a disability, but have not contacted Student Disability Services at 619-594-6473 (Calpulli Center, Suite 3101), please do so before making an appointment to see me.

In addition, I will make every effort to accommodate difficulties in attendance arising from religious observance. You are asked to bring any possible conflicts to my attention as soon as possible. Students should not expect, if they do poorly on an assignment/exam, to claim at that time the need for an accommodation. This statement is to preclude that problem, and allow people with a need for accommodations to be treated fairly and appropriately.

## **COURSE READING SCHEDULE (dates of readings/ assignments may be subject to change):**

### **JAN 22: Introduction to the Course/ The Study and Practice of Public Policy**

#### **JAN 29: Contexts of Public Policy**

##### Required Readings:

- Scheberle (1997). "Policy Implementation and Working Relationships- Strategies and Stories" from *Federalism and Environmental Policy*.
- Wright, (2003). "Federalism and Intergovernmental Relations: Traumas, Tensions and Trends"
- Kingdon (1999). "American Ideology" from *America the Unusual*.

##### Optional Background Readings:

- Birkland Chapter 2- The Historical and Structural Context of Public Policy Making

### **FEB 5: Official Actors and Public Policy - Legislature, Executive, and Public Servants**

##### Required Readings:

- Keiser, L.R. & Soss, J. (1998) With Good Cause: Bureaucratic Discretion and the Politics of Child Support Enforcement.
- Gilboy, J. (1992). "Penetrability of Administrative Systems: Political "Casework" and Immigration Inspections."
- Huber, J., Shipan, C. & Pfahler, M. (2001). Legislatures and Statutory Control of Bureaucracy

##### Optional Background Readings:

- Birkland Chapter 3- Official Actors and Their Roles in Public Policy

### **FEB 12: Official Actors and Public Policy- The Courts**

##### Required Readings:

- Graglia, (1994). "Do judges have a policy-making role in the American system of government?"
- Baum, (2003). The Supreme Court in American Politics
- Canes-Wrone, (2003). Bureaucratic Decisions and the Composition of the Lower Courts

Optional Background Readings:

- Birkland Chapter 3- Official Actors and Their Roles in Public Policy

**FEB 19: Unofficial Actors and Public Policy- Interest Groups and Nonprofit Advocacy**

Required Readings:

- Burstein & Hirsh, (2007). "Interest Organizations, Information, and Policy Innovation in the U.S. Congress." *Sociological Forum*.
- Thrall, (2006). "The Myth of the Outside Strategy: Mass Media News Coverage of Interest Groups."
- Reid (2006) "Advocacy and the Challenges it Presents for Nonprofits" from Boris and Steuerle (2006) *Nonprofits and Government- Collaboration and Conflict*.

Optional Background Readings:

- Birkland Chapter 4- Unofficial Actors and Their Roles in Public Policy

**FEB 26: Agenda Setting and Denial of Agenda Access**

Required Readings:

- Baumgartner and Jones (2004). "Representation and Agenda Setting".
- Barnes et.al. (2008). "Analysis of Media Agenda Setting During and After Hurricane Katrina: Implications for Emergency Preparedness, Disaster Response, and Disaster Policy."
- Selections from Cobb and Ross (1997) *Cultural Strategies of Agenda Denial: Avoidance, Attack, and Redefinition*.

Optional Background Readings:

- Birkland Chapter 5- Agenda Setting, Power, and Interest Groups

**MAR 5: POLICY MEMO PRESENTATIONS**

**\*\*\* ADVOCACY BRIEFS DUE TO SAFEASSIGN\*\*\***

**MAR 12: Social Construction of Policy Problems- Race, Gender, and Class in Drug Policy**

Required Readings:

- Schneider and Ingram's (1993) "Social Constructions of Target Populations: Implications for Public Policy." *The American Political Science Review*.
- Dinglestad et.al. (1999). "The Social Construction of Drug Debates"
- Selections from Campbell (2000) *Using Women: Gender, Drug Policy, and Social Justice*.

Optional Background Readings:

- Birkland Chapter 5- Agenda Setting, Power, and Interest Groups

**MAR 19: Distributive, Regulatory, and Redistributive Policies- The Case of Energy**

Required Readings:

- Vocino (2003). "American Regulatory Policy: Factors Affecting Trends Over the Past Century"
- Cochran Chapter 5- Energy and Environmental Policies

Optional Background Readings:

- Birkland Chapter 6- Policy Design and Policy Types

**MAR 26: Distributive, Regulatory, and Redistributive Policies- Who Is On Welfare?**

Required Readings:

- Hayes, (2007). "Policy Characteristics, Patterns of Politics, and the Minimum Wage: Toward a Typology of Redistributive Policies."
- Soss (1999) "Lessons of Welfare: Policy Design, Political Learning, and Political Action" *The American Political Science Review*.
- Abramovitz (2001). "Everyone Is Still On Welfare: The Role of Redistribution in Social Policy." *Social Work*.

Optional Background Readings:

- Birkland Chapter 6- Policy Design and Policy Types

**APR 2: CLASS CANCELLED- Spring Break**

**APR 9: CLASS CANCELLED- Southwestern Political Science Association Conference**

**\*\*\*FILM ANALYSIS DUE TO SAFEASSIGN\*\*\***

**APR 16: POLICY MEMO PRESENTATIONS**

**APR 23: Policy Design and Policy Tools- Policy Tools against Terrorism**

Required Readings:

- Stone (2001). "Part II: Goals" from *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*.
- Salamon (2002). "The New Governance and the Tools of Public Action: An Introduction." from *The Tools of Government: A Guide to the New Governance*.
- Wilcox (2005). "United States" from Alexander's (2005) *Combating Terrorism: Strategies of Ten Countries*

Optional Background Readings:

- Birkland Chapter 7- Policy Design and Policy Tools

**APR 30: Policy Implementation, Policy Evaluation, and Policy Failure**

Required Readings:

- Nakamura & Smallwood (1980). "Implementation Linkages: Policy Makers and Implementers" from *The Politics of Policy Implementation*.
- Nakamura & Smallwood (1980). "Evaluation Linkages: Assessing Implementation Scenarios" from *The Politics of Policy Implementation*.
- Selections from the 9-11 Commission Report

Optional Background Readings:

- Birkland Chapter 8- Policy Implementation and Policy Failure

**MAY 7: Models of the Policy Process**

**Required Readings:**

- Birkland Chapter 9- Putting it All Together

**MAY 14: NO CLASS. \*\*\*INTERNAL POLICY MEMO DUE TO SAFE ASSIGN\*\*\***