[revised to reflect that class is on Tuesday NOT Thursday]
This course is designed to present a doctoral-level survey of the major institutions of public policy making in the United States with particular emphasis on Congress, the Presidency, and executive branch bureaucracies. The seminar is concerned with how public preferences are translated into public policy and how governmental institutions interact in the separation of powers system. The interaction between politics and administration will be emphasized. The purpose of the course is to expose doctoral students to a broad range of the scholarly literature on the public policy process and U.S. governmental institutions.

The course will be conducted as a doctoral seminar, and thus the quality of class discussions will be critical to the success of the seminar. All participants will be expected to complete assigned readings before each class and participate actively in class discussions. Participation includes an engagement with the texts and other seminar participants in evaluating the reasoning, arguments, and evidence presented in the scholarship under discussion. Twenty five percent of the grade for the course will be based on contributions to class discussions.

**Learning Outcomes**
Students will develop the ability to use scholarly literature in professional research and writing. Practice in rigorous, analytical writing will be required. Students will emerge from the course with the ability to engage in scholarly research and analysis as they pursue their doctorate. Students will become familiar with the advantages and disadvantages of using different types of methodology in scholarly inquiry about public policy, e.g. qualitative analysis, quantitative analysis, rational choice/public choice, normative philosophy, historical analysis, and legal analysis.

**Texts**
Binder, Sarah A., *Stalemate: Causes and Consequences of Legislative Gridlock*  
Polsby, Nelson, *How Congress Evolves*  

Selections from:  
Pfiffner, James P., Power Play: *The Bush Presidency and the Constitution*  
[students do NOT need to purchase these two books; they will be provided by the instructor.]
In addition, articles and other materials will be required. Some will be available via email from
the instructor; others will be found in GMU library databases or on line.

**Evaluation**
The approximate weight of the course components will be:
- class participation: 25%
- short paper #1: 20%
- short paper #2: 20%
- research paper: 35%

**Important Dates for the Semester**
- 6 October: First paper due in class
- 10 November: Second paper due in class
- 17 November: Proposal for final paper due in class
- 8 December: Final paper due in class

**Outline of the Course and Assignments**

**No class on September 3:** I will be presenting a paper at the APSA Convention.

1. **Introduction and overview of the course.**
   (1 September)
   The field of Public Policy, the nature of the PhD, and scholarly writing.
   Assignment:
     [http://newpopulationbomb.wordpress.com/](http://newpopulationbomb.wordpress.com/)

2. **The American Political System: values and institutions**
   (8 September)
   Professional **Curriculum Vitae** emailed and hard copy in class.
   Assignment:
   - Alexander Hamilton, *Federalist No. 1*
   - James Madison, *The Federalist No. 10 and No. 51*
3. Congress: The First Branch - organization and structure  
   (15 September)  
   Assignment:  
   Recommended:  
      Walter Olezek, “The Evolving Congress,” in *The Evolving Congress*, US Senate Committee on Rules and Administration, Congressional Research Service (December 2013), pp. 3-60.

4. Congress: The Dynamics of Divided Government  
   (22 September)  
   Policymaking and political parties in Congress  
   Assignment:  

5. Congressional Polarization  
   (29 September)  
   Assignment:  

6. The Sources of Polarization in United States Politics  
   (6 October)  
   First paper Due in Class  
   Assignment:  

13 September -- No Class, Columbus Day

7. President and Congress  
   (20 October)
Assignment:

8. The Presidency: Structure and Function
(27 October)
Assignment:

9. The Dynamics of Bureaucracy
(3 November)
Assignment:
Pfiffner, "Traditional Public Administration versus The New Public Management:
Accountability versus Efficiency.”

10. The Presidency: Politics versus Administration
   (10 November)
   **Second Paper Due in Class**
   Assignment:
   - Terry M. Moe, “The Politicized Presidency,”
   - Pfiffner, “Policy Making on Torture,” Ch. 2 of *Torture As Public Policy* [email]

    (17 November)
    **One page proposal for final research paper due in class.**
    Assignment:

**November 26, No class: Thanksgiving Day**

12. The National Security and Intelligence
    (24 November)
    Assignment:
    - Pfiffner, “Decision Making, Intelligence, and the Iraq War,” in Pfiffner and Mark


13. **Research Paper Presentations**
(1 December)
Research paper must be virtually complete

14. **Research Paper Presentations**
(8 December)
Hard copy of research paper due in class and electronically via email

**Written Assignments**

**First paper: on Congress**
The first paper will be about 1500 words (5 to 7 double spaced pages) in length and will analyze how different scholars approach different aspects of congressional policy making. It will be based on the course readings (sections 1 through 7); it does not require additional research beyond the class readings, though additional readings may be included. **The purpose of this exercise is to engage the ideas of several scholars by comparing and contrasting different perspectives, frameworks, evidence, data, or methods.** You must deal with at least four separate scholars in the paper.

In this papers be sure to 1) Make direct comparisons of the authors in terms of their arguments, methods, or conclusions; and 2) develop a specific theme, or point for the overall analysis of the paper. For example, these authors use similar methods but come to different conclusions; or the method of analysis of the authors leads them to come to particular conclusions; or explain why the conclusions of some authors are more valid than those of others. **The purpose of this paper is to provide an exercise in analytical thinking, which is central to scholarly writing.**

**Second paper: Critical Book Review**

This paper is another exercise in analytical, scholarly writing. Choose a substantial, scholarly book, either from the list I will provide, or a book central to your dissertation. The instructor must approve your choice to ensure that it is challenging enough. **This is not a book report.**

The purpose of a critical book review is to analyze the main findings of a book by examining carefully the arguments the author makes and the evidence adduced to support the arguments.
Begin by explaining the purpose of the book and stating clearly its main thesis. Your audience or readership should be professional scholars who need an account of the book in order to decide if they should read it for their own research or to be familiar with the book, if it lies outside their area of specialization. You cannot cover the whole book, so choose carefully what aspects of the book are most important for your purposes; it might be the theoretical significance of the book, the way in which it challenges the conventional wisdom in the field, or the empirical data (or cases) the author uses to make the main argument of the book. You may refer to other articles or books that are relevant to your review, either in support of or critical of the author’s argument. Do not merely summarize the book.

Pay attention to the structure of your analysis. Make sure the introduction gives an overview of your review and lays out the logical structure of your analysis. Organize your analysis under one major point and 2 or 3 sub points, supporting your major argument.

Summary checklist from: Australian National University, Academic Skills & Learning Centre (https://academicskills.anu.edu.au/node/92)

“The review should not be a summary of the book. Instead it should state what the book sets out to do and assess how well the author achieves that goal. You might therefore use the following questions to engage with the book and help you form your critical analysis:

- Objectives: what does the book set out to do?
- Theory: is there an explicit theoretical framework? If not, are there important theoretical assumptions?
- Concepts: what are the central concepts? Are they clearly defined?
- Argument: what is the central argument? Are there specific hypotheses?
- Method: what methods are employed to test these?
- Evidence: is evidence provided? How adequate is it?
- Values: are value positions clear or are they implicit?
- Literature: how does the work fit into the wider literature?
- Contribution: how well does the work advance our knowledge of the subject?
- Style: how clear is the author's language/style/expression?
- Conclusion: a brief overall assessment.”

**Third Paper: Research Paper**
The third paper will be a longer research paper on a topic chosen by the student from the general areas covered in the course. It will be a substantive inquiry into public policy making rather than an exercise in analyzing scholarly writing (as the first two papers were). It will be 15 to 25 pages in length. This paper will be based primarily on the independent research of each student. This is an opportunity to explore a potential dissertation topic.

The purpose of the third paper is to prepare students to engage in a significant research and writing project as well as to prepare students for the type of work entailed in writing a dissertation proposal. The paper will include a statement of the research question and a review of the scholarly literature on the topic under investigation. A one-page proposal for the third paper must be approved by the instructor. There will be oral presentations of the final paper during the last two weeks of class. Finished copies of the final papers are due on December 10.
The paper assignments for the course must be printed in 12 point font, double spaced, with pages numbered, and submitted in both hard and electronic copy. Do not put your papers in special binders or covers; merely staple them together in the upper left hand corner. As with all written assignments, be sure to back up your work and/or mail it to yourself.

Use the standard Chicago Style Manual type of citations for footnotes or “Turabian,” NOT the APA or APSA style, in which names in parentheses refer to a list of references at the end of the paper. For examples of the required reference style, see Binder, Stalemate or Polsby, How Congress Evolves or refer to the instructions below on this syllabus.

It is not ethical to turn in the same or very similar paper in order to get credit in more than one course. If you want to use part of one of your previously written papers in a paper for this course, consult the instructor before doing so.

Use footnotes rather than endnotes.

In evaluating papers, degree-of-difficulty will be considered. Just as a perfectly executed swan dive may not receive as high a score as a slightly flawed full gainer with a twist, a paper that engages a difficult question or takes a creative approach to a public policy issue will receive more credit than a paper that takes a relatively straight-forward issue and addresses it in a competent, though pedestrian, manner.

Office Hours:

Tuesdays & Thursdays: 8:00 to 8:30 and 10:15 to 11am in room A204 Robinson Hall
Tuesdays: 2 to 3pm, 524 Founders Hall, Arlington.

Office: 524 Founders Hall; Phone: 703-993-1417; e-mail: pfiffner@gmu.edu

I am in my Founders Hall office most days every week, and I am always available via email. You do not have to come to see me during my office hours; just write to set up an appointment, and we will set up a convenient appointment.

Analytical Writing

For purposes of scholarly writing it is important to write analytically. Analytic writing is more than merely describing what others have said or describing institutions of government or public policy making (though description is often an essential aspect of analysis). Analysis involves more.

In analysis you are asking and answering questions about the causes and consequences of whatever you are examining.

You are seeking explanations for behavior.

You are developing categories and frameworks that will help us understand political behavior and generalize insights from one case to other cases.
Ask the question: **Of what is this an instance?**

**When analyzing scholarly writing:**
- Engage different ideas.
- Show how they differ and where they agree.
- Compare and contrast.
- Contrast different methods of understanding a phenomenon.
- What different types of evidence are adduced to make a point?
- Contrast different perspectives or approaches to a topic.
- Judge whether the reasoning is valid.
- Does the author’s evidence support the conclusion of the article?

**In Writing an Paper, Remember:**
- The introduction should say what the paper is about and how you will approach the topic.
- The paper should address one central question and have a thesis.
- The paper should be organized logically, with an evident structure.
- The reader should be told how each part of the paper is related to the other parts.
- Use subheadings to label different sections (except for very short papers).
- Outline your paper after it is written to see if it flows logically.
- Proofread your paper for spelling and syntax.
- Be sure to cite all of your sources and use quotation marks when you use another’s words.
  - Plagiarism is using another’s words or ideas without giving proper credit.
  - Plagiarism is a major scholarly sin; it is unethical, dishonest, and deceptive, and it has ended some people’s careers. It can easily be avoided by giving credit where credit is due. If you use more than three word of another author, cite the quote.

**Hints on Grammar**
- The singular possessive is formed by adding an ‘s (e.g. one president’s term was cut short), the plural by s’ (e.g. both presidents’ terms were cut short).
- The possessive for it is “its”: its = possessive; in contrast, “it’s” is a contraction for “it is.” If you cannot remember the rule for its, do not use an apostrophe and you will be correct. (That is, use “it is” rather than a contraction and its for the possessive.)
- Lead is in your pencil, but led is the past tense of the verb to lead.
- Effect is a noun and affect is a verb, almost always; if you do not know the exceptions, do not violate this rule of thumb.
- Cite is short for citation, site is a place (or web location), sight refers to eyes.
- Horses have reins, monarchs reign over countries, and rain falls from the sky: e.g. It often rains in London, where the Queen reigns, but the Prime Minister holds the reins of power in Parliament.

From William Strunk and E.B. White’s classic, *The Elements of Style* (NY: Macmillan, 1979), table of contents:
- “Place a comma before a conjunction introducing an independent clause.”
- “Do not join independent clauses by a comma” (use a semicolon or a period).
- “The number of the subject determines the number of the verb.”
“Use the active voice.”
“Omit needless words.”
“Make the paragraph the unit of composition.”
“Revise and rewrite.”

**Citations for Research Papers**

The purposes of scholarly citations are several:
1) To show the source for a direct quote or fact not commonly known.
2) To give credit for an idea to the author of a work.
3) To show the reader that you are familiar with other scholarship on your topic or to indicate where further information or analysis can be found.
4) You may also use endnotes to explain something in the text or comment on the source.

The intention is to give readers enough information to find the source you are using so that they can see if you have quoted it correctly, interpreted it soundly, done justice to the author cited, or so they can do further research on the topic in question themselves.

**Format:** use the standard *Chicago Manual of Style* format, also known as “Turabian.”

(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, most recent edition.)

**Books:**
author, title (place of publication: publisher, date), page number(s).

[Titles of books should be in italics.]

Example:

After the first full citation, you may use a shortened version:
e.g. 2. Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*, page number(s).

**Articles:**
author, title, name of journal (volume, number), page number(s).

[Titles of articles should be enclosed in quotation marks, names of journals in italics.]

Example:

After first full citation, you may use a shortened version:

**Chapters** in edited Books:
author of chapter (or article), title of chapter (in quotes), “in” editor of book, title of book (place and date of publication), page numbers.

Example:

**Web Site** Citations:
In addition to author, title, etc, include the following information:
Who put up the site, full URL, date of access.

Number endnotes consecutively for the whole paper, with each note referring to the number in the text with the number in superscript or parentheses. Endnote numbers should be placed at the end of the sentence containing the information being cited. A bibliography of all the sources used in the paper along with other useful sources may be useful or required. Do not use more than one footnote number per sentence (even if Wiki does). If you are referencing more than one source, combine them in one footnote.

**SPGIA Policy on Plagiarism**

The profession of scholarship and the intellectual life of a university as well as the field of public policy inquiry depend fundamentally on a foundation of trust. Thus any act of plagiarism strikes at the heart of the meaning of the university and the purpose of the School of Public Policy. It constitutes a serious breach of professional ethics and it is unacceptable.

Plagiarism is the use of another’s words or ideas presented as one’s own. It includes, among other things, the use of specific words, ideas, or frameworks that are the product of another’s work. Honesty and thoroughness in citing sources is essential to professional accountability and personal responsibility. Appropriate citation is necessary so that arguments, evidence, and claims can be critically examined.

Plagiarism is wrong because of the injustice it does to the person whose ideas are stolen. But it is also wrong because it constitutes lying to one’s professional colleagues. From a prudential perspective, it is shortsighted and self-defeating, and it can ruin a professional career.

The faculty of SPGIA takes plagiarism seriously and has adopted a zero tolerance policy. Any plagiarized assignment will receive an automatic grade of “F.” This may lead to failure for the course, resulting in dismissal from the University. This dismissal will be noted on the student’s transcript. For foreign students who are on a university-sponsored visa (e.g., F-1, J-1 or J-2), dismissal also results in the revocation of their visa.

**Academic Accommodation for a Disability:** If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the DRC before the beginning of the semester.

Very useful reviews of the literature in subfields of Political Science: *Annual Review of Political Science, GMU Library,*

[http://www.annualreviews.org.mutex.gmu.edu/loi/polisci](http://www.annualreviews.org.mutex.gmu.edu/loi/polisci)