Gender in the Policy Context
POGO 750 D11 – Fall 2020

Instructor: Bonnie Stabile, PhD
Director, Master of Public Policy Program, and Associate Professor;
Director, Gender and Policy Center, Schar School of Policy and Government,
George Mason University

Course Information

Lectures, along with recorded expert interviews, will be presented as videos available on Blackboard to watch at your convenience. For each class session, readings listed in the syllabus below should be done, and lectures and interviews viewed in advance of the date on the syllabus. Then, on the day of class sessions indicated, we’ll meet on Zoom for a discussion from 7:15pm until 8:30pm weekly, which will constitute course participation. Any student who prefers or needs to have a fully asynchronous course experience will have the option of responding to the Blackboard Discussion Board prompt for each class in a post of about two hundred words in lieu of synchronous Zoom participation on Wednesdays.

Office Hours: By appointment, via phone or Zoom
Contact: bstabile@gmu.edu

Course Description and Objectives

This class will consider gender in the policy context as it relates to varying policy outcomes, attitudes and experiences in the public sphere. It will examine differences in how women, men and LGBTQ individuals are credentialed, compensated, and represented in various political, cultural and organizational settings. Peer reviewed academic articles, white papers and popular press articles will provide the theoretical and empirical basis for the identification of gender disparities where they exist; investigation into contributing causal factors; and consideration of policy and other mechanisms for identifying and addressing associated effects.

Interviews with accomplished professionals with expert knowledge in varying policy venues, including healthcare, the military, government affairs, entrepreneurship and economic development will augment class readings and related lectures to further inform the course dialogue.

Social constructionist and intersectional frames underpin analyses, and ethical principles of equity and justice are engaged to assess issues of proportional representation and fair treatment with regard to gender and other identities as they relate to policy design, implementation and outcomes.

Learning Outcomes
• A familiarity with some important gender issues in the policy context that can have bearing on policy design implementation, outcomes and evaluation.
• An ability to analyze gender issues in the policy context based on an assessment of empirical evidence and an application of pertinent theoretical frameworks.
• An ability to write effective analyses applying appropriate frameworks and incorporating relevant empirical evidence on gender issues in the policy context.
• An ability to give effective oral presentations regarding gender issues in the policy context.
• An appreciation of how policy can influence, and be influenced by, prevailing gender paradigms in a multiplicity of policy areas in the public sphere across and within various local, state and national jurisdictions.

**Course Requirements/Evaluation**

Meaningful participation in weekly dialogue  
30%

2 Policy Briefs (10 pages each)  
40%

Midterm and Final Presentations – voice over power point 30%

See Appendices for descriptions of Participation requirements, and Policy Brief and Presentation guidelines.

A grade of **A or A-** indicates sustained excellence and outstanding performance on all aspects of the course. The grades of **B and B+** denote mastery of the material and very good performance on all aspects of the course. The grade of **B-** is given for marginal quality work that is not quite up to graduate level standards. The grade of **C** denotes work that may be adequate for undergraduate performance, but is not acceptable at the graduate level. The grade of **F** denotes the failure to perform adequately on course assignments.

All written work is expected to be of the highest quality, representing both grammatically correct and carefully considered analysis. Elements of central importance to sound analysis include adequate depth, breadth, relevance and clarity of the concepts considered.

Assignments must be submitted on time to receive full credit.

Finally, **all students are required to use their GMU email accounts** or have GMU emails forwarded to their regular email accounts, as this will be the primary means of correspondence with students regarding the class. Even if you do not regularly use your GMU e-mail account, be sure to open it and place a forwarding address to the account that you regularly use so that you can get GMU and class announcements.

Feedback from students about the course is welcome and encouraged. Course evaluations will be distributed at the end of the semester for formal feedback, but insights and opinions of students are valued and can be emailed to the course instructor at any time during the semester.

**Required Readings are all freely accessible online and/or via the GMU Library Website**
Lectures and Instructor Interviews with Gender and Policy Center Advisory Board Members are available via Blackboard.

**Weekly Readings and Assignments**

**Session 1 (August 26): Gender in the Policy Context: Introduction and Syllabus Review**

Cairney, Paul and Jonathan Pierce. “Social Construction and Policy Design.”


*Interview with Schar Gender and Policy Center Board Member Martin Tolchin, Former Congressional Correspondent, New York Times; Founder, Publisher, and Editor-in-Chief, The Hill Newspaper*

**Session 2 (September 2): Women and Public Affairs Education**


*Interview with Schar Gender and Policy Center Co-Director and Professor Emerita Toni-Michelle Travis*

**Session 3 (September 9): Networking as Gender Capital**


*Interview with Schar Gender and Policy Center Board Member Julie Herwig, Senior Vice President, Head of Governmental Affairs at New York Life Insurance Company

Session 4 (September 16): Gender and Military Recruitment, Retention and Performance


*Interview with Schar Gender and Policy Center Board Member Jackie Stennett, Vice President, Academy Women

Session 5 (September 23): Gender and Access to Healthcare


*Interview with Schar Gender and Policy Center Board Member Rebecca Dooley, Strategic Communications Advisor at Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services.

*Interview with Schar Gender and Policy Center Board Member Bonita Pennino, Pennino Public Affairs LLC; formerly Government Relations Director at American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

*Interview with Schar Gender and Policy Center Board Member Cynthia Reilly, Chief Operating Officer, Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy

Session 6 (September 30): Differential Impacts Student Loan Debt for Women and LGBTQ Individuals


*Interview with Schar Gender and Policy Center Board Member Stacie Whisonant, Founder and CEO, PYT Funds

Session 7 (October 7): Midterm Presentations of Student Research

Student presentations should be posted to the class Discussion Board on Blackboard as described in Appendix B below on pages 8 and 9.

Session 8 (October 14): Women Seeking Refuge: Displacement and Protection

*Guest lecture by Schar Gender and Policy Center Doctoral Graduate Research Assistant Aubrey Grant, MPP, speaking on the topic of her forthcoming doctoral dissertation


**Session 9 (October 21): Credentialing Women in Public Affairs and Law**


*Interview with Schar Gender and Policy Center Board Member Betsy Anderson, Anderson and Associates, LLC

**Session 10 (October 28): Sexual Harassment in the #MeToo Era**

“Glass Houses and Glass Ceilings: Congressional Ethics in the #MeToo Era” Video of Schar School’s Fourth Annual Tolchin Symposium available at https://vimeo.com/444925325


*Interview with Schar Gender and Policy Center Board Member Ally Coll, President and Co-Founder of The Purple Campaign

**Session 11 (November 4): Gendered Elements of Activism: Collective and Self Care**


*Interview with Schar Gender and Policy Center Board Member Maryam Ovissi, Founder and Director of Beloved Yoga

Session 12 (November 11): Local Government and Economic Development


*Interview with Schar Gender and Policy Center Board Member Ellen Harpel, Founder and CEO, Smart Incentives

Session 13 (November 18): Gender, Power and Language


Video of Encore Webinar on Gender, Power and Language available at https://encorelearning.net/july-2020-encore-learning-presents-videos-now-available/

Session 14 (December 2): Presentations of Student Research

Student presentations should be posted to the class Discussion Board on Blackboard as described in Appendix B below on pages 8 and 9.

Appendices:
Appendix A: Class Participation and Professionalism

Participate meaningfully in discussion on the week’s topics. This discussion will take place weekly on Zoom. Prepare by fully and actively reading the literature assigned for each session and viewing the recorded lecture and related expert interview for each session available on the course Blackboard page. Any student who prefers or needs to have a fully asynchronous course experience will have the option of responding to the Blackboard Discussion Board prompt for each class in a post of about two hundred words in lieu of synchronous Zoom participation on Wednesdays.

Students must be well acquainted with the readings for each session and be prepared to discuss them in detail. All students are expected to actively participate in and contribute to the course dialogue. To be prepared for each session’s discussion, it is suggested that class members:

1. Write a brief statement encapsulating, in a sentence or two, the overarching theme of the evenings readings, and be prepared to share it. (Not to be handed in – just to guide your discussion…)

2. Identify a quote of significance from the reading that really strikes you and that you think warrants further examination and discussion.

3. A few times during the semester, bring an article from the popular press to our attention on an issue that illustrates course themes, or might be usefully examined with course frameworks or methodologies.

4. Consider using Twitter to share articles and insights on topics of interest to our inquiry. I’m @bstabile1.

Appendix B: Policy Briefs and Presentations

Each student must write two policy briefs* of ten pages in length. Each brief will focus on a different gender issue in the policy context.

Each brief should:

1. define the issue at hand;

2. provide evidence from peer reviewed academic literature of the nature and extent of the issue;
3. identify a jurisdiction of interest in which the problem and its policy solution manifests (local, state, national, whether within the US or any other locale globally) for the purpose of this analysis;

4. apply a theoretical or analytical frame that articulates pertinent values or principles at play for the purposes of the analysis;

5. discuss a specific policy solution that has been suggested or employed for the purpose of mitigating the identified problem.

For each brief, each student must create a brief voice over power point presentation of about seven minutes (not to exceed ten minutes or be less than five minutes) in length to be posted on Blackboard on the class Discussion Board on the dates identified in the syllabus above.

*Instructions for submission of policy briefs:

- double-spaced,
- 12 pt font,
- standard margins
- submit as an email attachment
- label with student last name, course number and brief number
- references required (APSA style)
- page count does not include references, which are required
- submit to instructor at bstabile@gmu.edu

Appendix C: University and Schar School Honor Codes and Policies

No cheating, plagiarizing, or other unprofessional conduct will be tolerated. (Please see Schar School statement below.) These are defined in the University Catalog as follows:

A. Cheating encompasses the following:

1. The willful giving or receiving of an unauthorized, unfair, dishonest, or unscrupulous advantage in academic work over other students.
2. The above may be accomplished by any means whatsoever, including but not limited to the following: fraud; duress; deception; theft; trick; talking; signs; gestures; copying from another student; and the unauthorized use of study aids, memoranda, books, data, or other information.

3. Attempted cheating

B. **Plagiarism** encompasses the following:

1. Presenting as one's own the words, the work, or the opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgment.

2. Borrowing the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgment.

C. **Lying** encompasses the following:

The willful and knowledgeable telling of an untruth, as well as any form of deceit, attempted deceit, or fraud in an oral or written statement relating to academic work. This includes but is not limited to the following:

1. Lying to administration and faculty members.

2. Falsifying any university document by mutilation, addition, or deletion...

**Schar School Policy on Plagiarism: One Instance of Cheating and You Are Expelled**

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 the Schar School 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.

To help enforce the Schar School policy on plagiarism, all written work submitted in partial
fulfillment of course or degree requirements must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared with electronic databases, as well as submitted to any commercial services to which the School might subscribe. Faculty may at any time submit student’s work without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require that written work be submitted in electronic as well as printed form. The Schar School policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace it or substitute for it. (http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/handbook/aD.html)

The Schar School Statement on Plagiarism, the University Honor Code, and some valuable Resources on Graduate Research and Writing are available at http://schar.gmu.edu/current-students/masters-advising/masters-101/topic-5-graduate-research-and-writing/

Appendix D: Academic Accommodation for a Disability

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the DRC.