PUAD 540.002 PUBLIC POLICY PROCESS
Instructor: Dana A. Dolan

*Syllabus last updated 1/24/2020

Instructor Information
Dr. Dana A. Dolan
ddolan1@gmu.edu
Response time: usually within 24 hours
Office: ARLVM 656 (Arlington campus: Van Metre Hall)
Office Hours: email me for a face-to-face or virtual appointment

General Course Information
PUBP 540.002 – Public Policy Process
Semester: Spring 2020
Class time: Wednesdays, 7:20-10pm
Classroom: ARLVM 318 (Arlington campus: Van Metre Hall)
Credits: 3
CRN: 21846
Prerequisite: PUAD 502 - Administration in Public and Nonprofit Organizations

Course Description & Goals
This course introduces students to the dynamic processes of making public policy in the United States, including detection of public issues, consideration of alternatives, and adoption and implementation of solutions, as well as the major governmental and non-governmental actors that play roles in policymaking.

Course Format
In this seminar course, you should anticipate an interactive class experience that builds on course readings, encourages critical discussion, and applies emerging knowledge to current events. You are expected come to class each week having read and thoughtfully considered each week's assigned readings, prepared to raise questions of your own. All students are required to attend the “Capitol Hill Day” session organized by the department.
Student Learning Outcomes

This course is designed to meet the second element of the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA)’s Standards for Student Learning (Standard 5.1: Universal Required Competencies): to enable students to participate in and contribute to the policy process. Specifically, upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Recognize the ways in which a wide variety of participants, from both inside and the government and beyond, take part in the policy making process and influence public policy decisions
- Understand that a variety of factors (including ideas, interests, routines, uncertainty, ambiguity, and budgetary constraints) interact to influence public policy decision making
- Apply policy process theory to understand how government interventions are justified, designed, and implemented in particular policy areas
- Apply policy process theory to make sophisticated inferences about the potential for specific policy solutions to be formally adopted
- Understand the strengths and weaknesses of alternative approaches for analyzing the context and process of public policymaking
- Write and present a policy memo, taking peer feedback into account

Course Materials & Technology Requirements

Required Reading List

The following books are available at the campus bookstore, and on Course Reserves at the Arlington Library:


All other reading materials will be available via Blackboard (Bb), on the Internet, or through Mason Libraries. **NOTE:** For articles from *CQ Researcher*, focus on the *Introduction, Overview, Background, Current Situation, and Outlook* sections. If you have any difficulty obtaining a required reading, please contact me as soon as possible.
Recommended Reading List

If you feel you need a refresher on the American political system, I recommend consulting an introductory politics textbook. You do not need the latest edition; used older editions are fine and much less expensive. For example:


Use of Blackboard (Bb)

I will post class materials and send updates and announcements through Bb, and you will submit course assignments through Bb and use various other tools, such as Discussion Forums. To access Bb, go to http://mymasonportal.gmu.edu and log in using your Mason email username (without the ending “@masonlive.gmu.edu”) and password, then click on the “Courses” tab. If you are registered, you will find our course and section in the list. Please contact IT support (see below) if you need help.

WordPress Course Blog

Some of the assignments for this class involve POSTing and REPLYing to GMU’s Bb-integrated WordPress CourseBlog site. The benefits of incorporating this collaborative, asynchronous technology include: developing technical literacy, strengthening accountability to the learning community, considering the needs of authentic audiences, and bridging the time between face-to-face class meetings. You must access the blog through Bb to view or contribute. It’s best to use a laptop or desktop; smart phone functionality may be limited.

University Email

All official communications from me will be sent to your university email account, which you are expected to check regularly. Many people find it helpful to set up automatic forwarding to their primary email account. Please contact IT support (see below) if you need help. To ensure your email to me receives prompt attention, be sure to send it from your university e-mail address to mine, and include our course number and session at the start of the subject line. Please be sure to include your full name either in your email headers, the body of your email, or in your signature block. This will help me respond promptly. If I have not replied within 48 hours, feel free to send a gentle reminder.

TIP: If you are unsure how to compose an email to a professor, please review this advice: https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2015/04/16/advice-students-so-they-dont-sound-silly-emails-essay.
Grading and Assessment

Course Participation Guidelines

Outstanding participation grades are not an entitlement; they must be earned. While other graded assignments assess student mastery of the course material, participation grades reflect your contributions to the class as a learning community. To demonstrate outstanding participation, you must:

- **Prepare for each class** by doing the assigned readings and homework, developing one or two questions to ask or observations to share, and contributing to the Course Blog.

- **Follow through on commitments you make**, whether to the instructor or to classmates. This is particularly important for group assignments where the success of other students depends on each group member’s contributions.

- **Refrain from checking texts, email, social media, or other distractions** during our brief class period. In the event you absolutely must answer an emergency message, please leave the room with as little distraction to others as possible, and return as soon as you are able.

- **Attend class regularly, arrive on time, and stay the entire period.** Given the points listed above, it should be obvious why attendance is critical for participation. While I do appreciate advance notice of any planned absences, I will not differentiate between “excused” and “unexcused” absences, but instead will take your overall participation into account when determining your participation grade.

- Participation on the first and last days of the course as well as on Capitol Hill Day is particularly important. Do not miss these days.

If you have any questions or concerns about your ability to successfully meet these expectations, please make an appointment to discuss potential alternatives with me.

Assignments

Final grades for this course will be based on course participation (as explained above) and several assignments. All graded assignments will have detailed instructions with grading rubrics posted on Bb and reviewed in class. Other items on the Course Calendar are not graded, but will contribute to your participation grade.

- Due dates for individually graded assignments are shown in **bold** in the Course Calendar. These assignments must be uploaded to Bb **before the start of class** on the specified due date, unless otherwise noted on the syllabus. Bb submission timestamps will be used to determine the applicability of any late penalties.

**Course Blog Contributions.** We will be using the course blog to kick start our in-class discussions on course readings and build our class learning community. You will be randomly
assigned to one of three groups (A, B, or C). As specified on the Course Calendar below, individuals in one group will *POST* to our course blog 2 days prior to class, while the other two groups will *REPLY* to their classmates 1 day prior to class. Blog contributions will be graded as a set at the end of the course.

**Two Short Essays.** You will write two essays, each 3-4 pages long. The Reflective Essay asks you to reflect on your experience on Capitol Hill Day, while the Analytic Essay asks you to apply the theories you’ve learned to analyze a policy issue.

**Group Presentation.** You will be assigned to a team to analyze one of the policy issues listed in Week 11 and present a creative “lesson” to share what you learned with your classmates.

**Draft and Final Policy Memo.** For your final assignment, you will draft, present, revise, and finalize a 12- to 14-page policy memo on a topic of your choice. As members of a learning community, you will receive constructive feedback and suggestions for improving your policy memo. *As part of your participation grade, you will also be responsible for providing constructive feedback to others.*

*Notes on Formatting Essays and Memos:* written assignments should be submitted in Microsoft Word or PDF format, double-spaced, using 1” margins, and 12-point Times New Roman font. For *policy memos:* I will provide you with a template to correctly format your memo. For *research papers:* When page counts are given, these refer to the *body* of the paper only; exclusive of any cover sheets, abstracts, figures, tables, endnotes, references, or extraneous white space. Please choose a relevant style guide and use it consistently. *APSA Style* is a good option for those who hope to pursue publication in a political science journal. For a simpler option, follow the basic requirements of the APA Style Guide that are outlined on *Purdue OWL’s APA Style classroom poster,* and load the basic APA Style template into MS Word (by choosing File>New>Search on “APA Style”). I highly recommend *Zotero* for organizing your references, cite them in your Word document, and automatically create your bibliography. Remember to give your paper a creative and informative title.

**Final Grade Calculation**

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<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Course Participation</td>
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<td>2. Blog Contributions</td>
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<td>3. Reflective Essay</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>4. Analytic Essay</td>
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<td>5. Group Presentation</td>
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<td>6. DRAFT Policy Memo</td>
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<td>7. FINAL Policy Memo</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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I use a standard grading scheme, where: 94 to 100 = A; 90 to 93.9 = A-; 87 to 89.9 = B+; 84 to 86.9 = B; 80 to 83.9 = B-; 77 to 79.9 = C+; 74 to 76.9 = C; 70 to 73.9 = C-; 67 to 69.9 = D+; 64 to 66.9 = D; 60 to 63.9 = D-; 0 to 59.9 = F.

Course Calendar

I may modify this syllabus during the semester in order to adapt to changing course needs. If this happens, I will provide timely notification of any pending changes during class and via Bb’s announcement + email feature. Key to icons: 📚 = readings from a course textbook; Ⓥ = Policy brief or memo; 📚= academic analysis using Kingdon’s multiple streams framework; 🌐 = media/news article; Ⓠ = academic blog; Ⓟ = video or audio clip.

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<th>January 2020</th>
<th>February 2020</th>
<th>March 2020</th>
<th>April 2020</th>
<th>May 2020</th>
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Week 1 [Wed. 1/22] Course Overview. What is Public Policy?

Before class: Course Syllabus – read carefully so you can raise any questions.

A Cairney, Paul, 2014. "What is Policy?" [link]

During class: We’ll have an interactive exercise that counts toward your class participation grade, and introduces you to the course, class format, and your classmates.

Week 2 [Wed. 1/29] Understanding the Public Policy Process

A Cairney, Paul, 2013. "Policy concepts in 1000 words: The policy cycle and its stages." [link]

K Cairney, Ch 1: How does an Idea’s Time Come?

K Stone: Intro; Ch 1; select one chapter from Part II (Goals)

Week 3 [Wed. 2/5] Constructing Public Problems

K Cairney, Ch 5: Problems

K Stone, Part III: Problems


Week 4 [Wed. 2/12] Policy ‘Solutions’

K Cairney, Ch 6: The Policy Primeval Soup

K Stone, Part IV: Solutions


Activities & Assignments

Introduce yourself on the Course Blog with a brief public bio.

Group A Posts; Others Reply

Group B Posts; Others Reply

Group C Posts. Others Reply
| *Friday 2/14* | **CHD - meet in DC.** | **Capitol Hill Day.** Logistics to be circulated. Reflective Essay due in approximately 1 week. | (none) |
| Week 5 [Wed. 2/19] | Policymakers, Politicians, and Bureaucrats | ▪ Kingdon, Ch 2: Participants on the Inside of Government  
▪ Kingdon, Ch 7: The Political Stream, pp. 153-159 (Government in the Political Stream)  
| Week 6 [Wed. 2/26] | Interest Forces and Interests Groups | ▪ Kingdon, Ch 3: Outside of Government, But Not Just Looking In, pp. 45-57  
▪ Kingdon, Ch 7: The Political Stream, pp. 150-153 (Organized Political Forces)  
Group B Posts. Others Reply. |
▪ Kingdon, Ch 7: The Political Stream, pp. 153-159 (The National Mood)  
▪ Kingdon, Ch 8: The Policy Window; and Joining the Streams. (optional) Kingdon, Ch 9: Wrapping Things Up.  
Group A Posts, Others Reply. |
| Week 10 [Wed. 3/25] | Pathways of Power | ▪ Conlon, Posner, and Beam, Ch. 1, Ch. 6-9 | Group B Posts, Others Reply. |
| Week 11 [Wed. 4/1] | Pluralist, Partisan, Expert, and Symbolic Pathways | ▪ Conlon, Posner, and Beam, Ch. 2-5  
Each GROUP will be assigned ONE of the following readings. Which of the pathways best describe the policy trajectory? Which other pathways are relevant, if any?  
University & Class Policies

Academic Integrity

Faculty in the Schar School have zero tolerance for academic dishonesty and will strictly enforce Mason’s honor code:

At George Mason University, Academic Integrity is demonstrated in our work, community, the classroom and research. We maintain this commitment to high academic standards
through Mason’s Honor Code. It is an agreement made by all members of our community to not “cheat, steal, plagiarize, or lie in matters related to your academic work.” Students sign an agreement to adhere to the Honor Code on their application for admission to Mason and are responsible for being aware of the most current version of the code.

The Student Honor Code Pledge reads as follows:

To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University Community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set for this Honor Code: Student Members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.

For more information, including a link to “What is Plagiarism?” visit https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/

Late Work Policy

You are expected to schedule and complete all course assignments on time; however, life doesn’t always cooperate. Occasionally, illness, time management issues, technology failures, or other unexpected events might mean you need more time to submit an assignment. To encourage you to do your best possible work on all assignments, you may turn in late assignments for partial credit. See the chart below; no exceptions will be made without relevant, official documentation of an extra-ordinary situation. This late policy should be used by exception only; a habitual pattern of late assignments will affect your participation grade. *Please do NOT submit late assignments during our class time.

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<th>Partial Credit Granted for Late Assignments</th>
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<tr>
<td>Between 1 second and 4 hours late*</td>
<td>95%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Less than 24 hours late</td>
<td>90%</td>
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<td>Less than 36 hours late</td>
<td>75%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Less than 48 hours late</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>48 hours or more late</td>
<td>0%</td>
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“Revise & Resubmit” Option

To encourage you to explore, experiment, and even enjoy your own unique learning journey, I may allow you to revise and resubmit an assignment if you are dissatisfied with your score. This option is only available for assignments that you submit on time. You must request a conference to discuss this option within 3 calendar days of receiving your score. Requests are not automatically granted; my decision will be based in part on your existing efforts, class participation, prior history of timeliness, and the revision plans we jointly develop in our conference.
Sharing of Course Content

Unauthorized downloading, distributing, or sharing of any part of a recorded lecture or course materials, as well as using provided information for purposes other than the student’s own learning may be deemed a violation of Mason’s Honor Code. Students are not permitted to make visual or audio recordings, including live streaming, of any course related content without the express consent of the instructor and all students in the course. Course materials (e.g., lecture notes, handouts, or otherwise) whether printed or electronic are intended solely for the educational use of students registered in the course, even after the end of the course. All other uses are prohibited and subject to enforcement under U.S. copyright laws. Exceptions can only be made through an official Accommodation letter from the Disability Resource Center.

Statement on Special Needs / Reasonable Accommodations

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the DRC. https://ds.gmu.edu/

Additional Student Support Services


Religious Observances

Students should notify the instructor during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance.

Use of Student Work (FERPA)

The course instructor may use anonymized academic work that you complete during this semester for educational purposes. Unless you request otherwise in writing, your registration and continued enrollment constitute your consent.