

POLITICAL SCIENCE 3115:

INTRODUCTION TO THE PUBLIC POLICY PROCESS

Tuesday and Thursday, 2:20 p.m. to 3:40 p.m.

Orton Hall 0110

Spring 2014

Professor Vladimir Kogan

Office: Derby Hall 2004

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 9 to 11 a.m., and by appointment

E-mail: kogan.18@osu.edu

Teaching Assistant: Sergio Diaz Sierra

E-mail: diaz-sierra.1@osu.edu

Course Description:

This course provides students with an introductory overview of the policy-making process, paying particular attention to the actors who play a pivotal role in crafting public policies and the institutions through which they interact. Note that this is *not* a course on policy analysis. Rather, it is a course about the *politics* behind successful policy change (and the pitfalls of policy failure). The objective of the course is to encourage students to think like strategic political operatives, who can take idealistic policy goals and design strategies to translate these goals into law.

Introduction to the Public Policy Process is designed for undergraduates with interests in political science, economics, and public policy, although students from any background who have an interest in public policy stand to benefit from taking it. It is part of the College of Arts and Science's Minor in Public Policy program (<http://polisci.osu.edu/undergraduate/declaring-major-minor/minor>).

Course Goals:

Upon successful completion of the course, students will have learned about:

1. Political actors who design public policies and the institutions in which such decisions are made.
2. The role of public opinion in the policy-making process and the forces that shape it.
3. Why many contemporary public policies diverge from "socially optimal" alternatives that would be chosen by an enlightened dictator or a benevolent social planner.
4. How to identify policy allies, work with them to design effective political strategies, and build successful coalitions for policy change.

Required Materials:

1. *All required readings are posted on Carmen*

2. *Students are required to bring a clicker (Turning Technologies) to class daily*
Clickers can be rented or purchased at the OSU bookstore. You can purchase the cheapest model available. Note: The software-only “Response Ware” *will not* work in this class. Instructions for linking a clicker to your student account are posted on Carmen.

Assignments:

1. **Class Participation (10% of Overall Grade)**

Students can earn participation points by using their clickers to respond to questions incorporated into the course lecture, by taking part in class discussions, and by working in groups to complete in-class assignments. Participation grades will be calculated using a “curve,” with the highest 10% of the scores discarded, and the top remaining score used as the denominator for this grade category. I will e-mail progress reports about your current participation grades: (1) at the time of the midterm exam; (2) at the beginning of spring break.

2. **Daily Reading Quiz (20% of Overall Grade)**

Students are required to complete the assigned readings prior to the start of class. In the beginning of each lecture, students will use the clickers to complete a short quiz testing basic comprehension and recall of major facts from the readings assigned for that day (i.e., there will be no trick questions). *Quizzes missed due to absences cannot be made up, but the lowest four quiz scores will be dropped prior to the calculation of the final grades.*

3. **Midterm (15% of Overall Grade)**

The midterm will consist of two parts. Two take-home essay questions will be distributed Tuesday, Feb. 4 and are due at the beginning of class on Tuesday, Feb. 11. On Feb. 11, students will also complete an in-class multiple choice exam. Students will have previously seen at least of half of the multiple choice questions during regular lecture, either in the form of the daily reading quizzes or the discussion questions.

4. **Short Paper Assignments (25% of Overall Grade)**

During the course of the semester, students will work in small groups to research a policy question or challenge of their choice. Using this research, students will also *individually* complete a series of five short paper assignments. Each assignment should be approximately *three-pages long* (double-spaced, standard formatting). Additional information about each assignment will be distributed during the second week of class. Due dates for each of the paper assignments are as follows:

Assignment 1: Problem Definition and Policy Alternatives (Jan. 28)

Assignment 2: Overview of Political Context (March 6)

Assignment 3: Allies and Opponents (March 20)

Assignment 4: Assessing Public Opinion (April 3)

Assignment 5: Political Strategy Memo (April 17)

5. **Group Research Presentations (10% of Overall Grade)**

Working as a group, students will prepare a presentation to summarize the findings from their research with the class. *Each student must participate in one major speaking role during the presentation. One presentation grade will be assigned to all group members.*

6. Final Exam (20% of Overall Grade)

The final exam will have the same format as the midterm. Two take-home questions will be distributed on Thursday, April 17. They are due at the beginning of the assigned final exam time on Wednesday, April 23, when students will complete the multiple choice portion of the exam in class.

*****All written assignments and exam essay questions must be uploaded to the appropriate dropbox on Carmen. Physical copies of assignments are not required, nor will printed copies be accepted in lieu of electronic submissions. Assignments will be considered late and assessed a late penalty unless they are uploaded by the beginning of the class when they are due.***

Academic Integrity:

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>.

Students are required to upload their papers and written exams to Carmen, which utilizes Turnitin.com for plagiarism detection. This online service analyzes student submissions for plagiarism from published or online sources and from other students (including students who have taken the course in earlier years). To avoid plagiarism charges, students must cite all sources from which they get their information and use quotation marks when quoting directly from these sources. **Students are responsible for knowing how to correctly cite their sources; ignorance about proper citation standards will not be accepted as an excuse for plagiarism.**

Late and Make-Up Policy:

All assignments and take-home exams are due at the beginning of the regular class time (2:20 p.m. on the due date). Assignments submitted more than 15 minutes after the class has begun will be assessed a 5 percent late penalty. There will be an additional 10 percent penalty for each subsequent day that the assignment is late. *No assignments will be accepted more than one week late.*

Make-up exams and extensions will be approved only in the event of a medical or family emergency or a University-sanctioned event. Extensions must be arranged ahead of time. You must have documentation of your emergency (for example, a doctor’s note) to be able to take a make-up exam or get an extension. After you provide this documentation, a decision will be made regarding whether and when you may take a make-up exam/get an extension. Similarly, any request for an incomplete must be accompanied by written medical documentation.

Grade Appeals:

You have one week from when the exam and assignment grades are posted on Carmen to appeal the grade. You must submit a typed, double-spaced statement to the teaching assistant explaining why you are appealing your grade and justify it with evidence from your paper, exam, readings, lectures, and answer keys. If you choose to appeal your grade, I reserve the right to decrease the existing grade if the teaching assistant determines that the original grade was erroneously high.

Accommodations for Disabled Students:

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

Course Overview and Schedule:

Week 1

Tuesday, January 7: **Campus Closed**

Thursday, January 9: **Introduction and Course Overview**

Week 2

Tuesday, January 14: **Case Studies in Policy Failure**

Handout short paper assignments

Reading:

- Thomas M. Buron, "Hormone Conundrum: Increased Risks Prompt Researchers to Halt Study," *Wall Street Journal*, July 10, 2002.
- U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, 2012, "Screening for Prostate Cancer: U.S. Preventive Services Task Force Recommendation Statement," *Annals of Internal Medicine* (Vol. 1, No. 2): pp. 120-134.

Thursday, January 16: **Problem Definition**

Reading:

- Deborah A. Stone, 1989, "Causal Stories and the Formation of Policy Agendas," *Political Science Quarterly* (Vol. 104, No. 2): pp. 281-300.

Week 3

Tuesday, January 21: **Policy Windows**

Reading:

- John W. Kingdon, 2003, *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policy, Second Edition* (New York, Longman): Chapter 8 ("The Policy Window, and Joining the Streams").

Thursday, January 23: **Cost-Benefit Analysis**

Reading:

- Ted Gayer and Emily Parker, 2013, "Cash for Clunkers: An Evaluation of the Car Allowance Rebate System," Brookings Institution.

Week 4

Tuesday, January 28: **Campus Closed**

Problem Definition and Policy Options Due

Thursday, January 30: **Collective Action and Policy Entrepreneurs**

Reading:

- Jocelyn Elise Crowley, 2003, *The Politics of Child Support in America* (New York: Cambridge University Press): Chapter 1 (“The Limits of Studying Entrepreneurial Episodes”) and Chapter 5 (“Conservatives as Challenger Entrepreneurs”).

Week 5

Tuesday, February 4: **Agenda Setting and Social Choice**

Take-home midterm questions handed out

Reading:

- William H. Riker, 1986, *The Art of Political Manipulation* (New Haven: Yale University Press): Chapter 3 (“The Flying Club”) and Chapter 11 (“Exploiting the Powell Amendment”).

Thursday, February 6: **Public Opinion**

Reading:

- George Lakoff, 2004, *Don't Think of an Elephant! Know Your Values and Frame the Debate* (White River Junction: Chelsea Green Publishing Company): Chapter 1 (“Framing 101: How to Take Back Public Discourse”).

Week 6

Tuesday, February 11: **MIDTERM**

Thursday, February 13: **Congress**

Reading:

- Mayhew, David, *Congress: The Electoral Connection, Second Edition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974): Part I.

Week 7

Tuesday, February 18: **Guest Speaker — Dale Butland (Communications Director, Innovation Ohio)**

Thursday, February 20: **Legislative-Executive Relations**

Reading:

- David W. Brady and Craig Volden, 2006, *Revolving Gridlock: Politics and Policy from Jimmy Carter to George W. Bush, Second Edition* (Boulder: Westview Press): Chapter 1 (“The Origins of Revolving Gridlock”) and Chapter 2 (“Theoretical Foundations”).

Week 8

Tuesday, February 25: **Courts and Administrative Agencies**

Reading:

- Elizabeth Garrett, 2011, “The Story of *TVA v. Hill*: Congress Has the Last Word,” in *Statutory Interpretation Stories*, edited by William N. Eskridge, Jr., Elizabeth Garrett, and Philip P. Frickey (New York: Foundation Press).

Thursday, February 27: **Direct Democracy**

Reading:

- Elisabeth R. Gerber, 1999, *The Populist Paradox: Interest Group Influence and the Promise of Direct Legislation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press): Chapter 1 (“What is the Populist Paradox”) and Chapter 4 (“Group Characteristics and Resources”).

Week 9

Tuesday, March 4: **Interest Groups**

Reading:

- Trevor Rubenzer, 2011, “Campaign Contributions and U.S. Foreign Policy Outcomes: An Analysis of Cuban American Interests,” *American Journal of Political Science* (Vo. 55, No. 1): pp. 105-116.

Thursday, March 6: **Guest Speaker — Rob Eshenbaugh (Associate Director, American Petroleum Institute Ohio)**

*** Overview of Political Context Due***

Week 10

Spring Break

Week 11

Tuesday, March 18: **Policy Persistence**

Reading:

- Eric M. Patashnik, 2008, *Reforms at Risk: What Happens After Major Policy Changes are Enacted* (Princeton: Princeton University Press): Chapter 1 (“Introduction: General-Interest Policymaking and the Politics of Reform Sustainability”), Chapter 2 (“Policy Reform as a Political Project”), and Chapter 4 (“Reforming the Agricultural Welfare State: The Mixed Case of the Freedom to Farm Act”).

Thursday, March 20: **NO CLASS**

*** Allies and Opponents Due***

Week 12

Tuesday, March 25: **Case Study — Airport Security**

- Mark G. Stewart and John Mueller, 2008, “A Risk and Cost-Benefit Assessment of United States Aviation Security Measures,” *Journal of Transportation Security* (Vol. 1, Issue 3): pp. 143-159.
- Jeffrey Goldberg, 2008, “The Things He Carried,” *Atlantic Monthly*.

Thursday, March 27: No Class

Week 13

Tuesday, April 1: **Case Study — Arsenic in Drinking Water**

Reading:

- Cass R. Sunstein, 2002, *Risk and Reason: Safety, Law, and the Environment* (New York: Cambridge University Press): Chapter 7 (“The Arithmetic of Arsenic”).

Thursday, April 3: **NO CLASS**

*** Assessing Public Opinion***

Week 14

Tuesday, April 8: **Guest Speaker — Dr. Howard Fleeter (Fleeter & Associates)**

Thursday, April 10: **Case Study — Locally Grown Food**

Reading:

- Pierre Desrochers and Hiroko Shimizu, 2012, *The Locavore’s Dilemma: In Praise of the 10,000-Mile Diet* (New York: PublicAffairs): Chapter 3 (“MYTH #2: Locavorism Delivers a Free Economic Lunch”) and Chapter 4 (“MYTH #3: Locavorism Heals the Earth”).
- David H. Freedman, 2013, “How Junk Food Can End Obesity,” *Atlantic Monthly*.

Week 15

Tuesday, April 15: **Case Study — Ethanol**

Reading:

- Dina Cappiello and Matt Apuzzo, 2013, “The Secret Environmental Cost of U.S. Ethanol Policy,” *Associated Press*.
- Robert Lawrence, 2010, “How Good Politics Results in Bad Policy: The Case of Biofuel Mandates,” Harvard Kennedy School Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs.

Take-home final exam questions handed out

Thursday, April 17: **Guest Speaker — Eric Poklar (Gov. Kasich’s Director of Legislative Affairs)**

Friday, April 18

Political Strategy Memo Due

****FINAL EXAM: Wednesday, April 23, 2 to 3:45 p.m.****