

P0245: The Art and Science of Policy Design

Wilfrid Laurier University

Winter 2017

Instructor: Dr. J.A. Sandy Irvine

Lecture: Tuesday and Thursday 5:30-6:50 p.m.

Classroom: Bricker Academic 202

Email: sirvine@wlu.ca

Office Hours: Tuesdays 2:45-3:15 p.m. and Thursdays 4-5 p.m. (or by appointment)

Office: DAWB 4-105A

*Wilfrid Laurier University uses software that can check for **plagiarism**. Students may be required to submit their written work in electronic form and have it checked for plagiarism.*

*Students with disabilities or special needs are advised to contact Laurier's **Accessible Learning Office** (<https://www.wlu.ca/accessible-learning/index.html>) for information regarding its services and resources. Students are encouraged to review the Academic Calendar for information regarding all services available on campus.*

Additional information on Foot Patrol, Counselling Services the WLUSU Food Bank can be found on the last page out this outline.

Course Description

This course introduces students to the process of public policy-making, from the perspective of both the academic and practitioner. The course begins by exploring what public policy is and introducing theoretical approaches used to explain public policy-making. It then turns to

identifying and exploring various stages of the policy cycle such as agenda-setting, decision-making, implementation and evaluation. The course will explore these subjects in the context of contemporary policy-making in Canada and abroad. Practical skills required of policy-makers will also be introduced. Classes will include lectures but will also rely on student engagement in group discussions and activities (where knowledge and policy skills are applied to contemporary cases). The course will also feature guest lectures from public policy practitioners.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course students should:

1. Be able to identify and assess the strengths and weaknesses of competing approaches used to explain public policy-making.
2. Be able to identify and detail the role of key actors and communities involved in the policy-making process.
3. Be able to identify the stages of the policy cycle and different challenges of public policy-making in each.
4. Be able to apply this knowledge to the processes of policy-making in contemporary cases
5. Have been challenged to think critically about public policy-making.
6. Be able to identify and develop important key professional skills necessary for a career in public policy
7. Have strengthened their academic foundation and core academic skills for further study of public policy.

Required Text

1. Howlett, Ramesh and Perl, *Studying Public Policy: Policy Cycles and Policy Subsystems* (Oxford, 2015)

2. All other readings are available online. Most are available through the WLU library webpage.

Course Evaluation

Assignment	Due Date	% of course grade
Attendance, Participation and Group work	Ongoing - see reading and lecture schedule	15%
Policy Backgrounder	February 6, 2017	25%
Policy Evaluation Paper	March 13, 2017	25%
Final Exam	(scheduled by Registrar in final exam period)	35%

Attendance, Participation and Group work

P0245 uses an active learning model. Students build their academic and professional skills as well as knowledge of course content through active work using a variety of formats. Students will have more success in the course if they attend all lectures. Most classes will include student discussions. Students' participation is expected to demonstrate a high standard of critical engagement with the readings as well as high quality communication skills. Communication skills include, but are not limited to, the ability to convey complicated ideas in an organized manner; the use of appropriate professional language; the ability to listen and respond to other participants effectively.

Students will earn their attendance, participation and group work grade by attending and responding to two guest speaker presentations (5% each for 10/15%) and by their contribution to two set group-work assignments in class (2.5% each for 5/15%). For the two guest speaker presentations students must attend the talk and then submit a 150 word response paper tying the speaker's presentation to issues that we have discussed in the course. An electronic copy must be submitted one week after the class in which the guest speaker presented. Student responses will be graded pass/fail. A pass will earn the full 5% for each speaker response. Failure to submit a response one week after the speaker's presentation will result in a fail. Further details will be provided in class. In class group work will require students to attend and participate in two scheduled group work classes. Students must sign-in to their group on the day to receive credit. Although group work will take place across the course – students can only gain credit in the two specifically scheduled days.

In class group work for credit and guest speaker presentations will be scheduled at the earliest possible point and no later than two weeks before the talk or group work. Further details will be given in class.

Policy Backgrounder

In this assignment students will provide a backgrounder to a particular policy area assigned by the instructor using a format / structure discussed in class. Additional research will be required. This assignment must be 1000 words (+/-10%). Please include a word count on your cover page. Please see submission guidelines detailed below. Further details will be given in class. The assignment is due February 6, 2017.

Policy Evaluation Paper

In this assignment, using tools developed in the course, students will present their evaluation of a government policy. Additional research will be required. The policy to be evaluated will be set

by the instructor. Further details will be provided in class. This assignment must be 1000 words (+/-10%). Please include a word count on your cover page. Please see submission guidelines detailed below. The paper is due March 13, 2017.

Final Exam

This exam is cumulative, covering all topics from across the course. It will use a multiple choice, short answer and essay format. To be held in the University scheduled examination period – April, 2017. Further details will be provided in class.

Course Policies

Academic Misconduct and the Need for Academic Integrity:

Academic integrity is greatly valued in this course. Academic misconduct occurs in a variety of forms. Students are required to familiarise themselves with the University policies on Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty as well as the associated penalties which can be severe.

Plagiarism:

According to the Academic Calendar (2016-17), plagiarism “involves using the thoughts, ideas, or writings of another person and passing them off as your own (adapted from the Oxford English Dictionary definition). It can involve taking credit for ideas that were not your own or using the words of others without properly citing them.” Further information can be found at <https://students.wlu.ca/academics/academic-integrity/index.html>. Should you have any questions about these issues please feel free to discuss them with me.

Submission:

Written work should be presented in a scholarly fashion, double spaced with one inch margins using a 12pt. Times New Roman font or equivalent. Work must be submitted as both an electronic

and hardcopy. Electronic copies must be submitted by midnight on the date the assignment is due. Papers submitted after this will incur late penalties. Late penalties will be based on the date and time of electronic submission through the correct drop box on the course webpage in mylearning space (which will use Turnitin). A hardcopy, identical to the one submitted through my-learning space, must be submitted as soon as possible – either through my mailbox in the department or in class, the next time we meet. Please keep a copy of all papers submitted for the course.

Succinct and lucid writing is a skill. Papers that substantially exceed the page limit will be subject to penalty.

Late penalties:

Late penalties for written work will be assigned at 2% (of the 100% value of the assignment) per day, including weekend days, with a midnight cut-off for each day. To stop late penalties you must submit work through the appropriate drop box on the course webpage in mylearning space. An identical hard copy must be submitted as soon as possible – either through my mailbox in the department or in class, the next time we meet.

Communication:

An active WLU e-mail account is required as a means of communication. Please ensure that your account is active and check it regularly. The course uses a mylearning space webpage – important messages will be posted here. Students should be enrolled in the webpage and check it regularly. I encourage students to come and see me in office hours with specific questions or more general issues. If you require clarification on any aspect of the course please arrange to see me. Please also feel free to set up a meeting outside of regular office hours.

Accommodations:

Accommodations, including for emergencies, serious illness or religious observances will be made for both class attendance and written work. Documentation may be required. Where possible – such as in the case of religious observances - it is expected that I be notified in advance. Should you feel uncomfortable discussing the need for accommodation with me directly please feel free to contact accessible learning to discuss your situation.

University Resources:

The University provides a large selection of professional, academic and personal support services to assist students to succeed in their academic careers. Please consult the University website for available resources.

Lecture Outline and Required Readings

Lectures:

Lectures are an important part of this course. Many concepts and ideas introduced in the lecture are not found in the course readings. In order to succeed in the course students must attend lectures regularly. If you miss a lecture ask a reliable colleague to provide you with course notes. Lecture slides act only as a partial guide to lecture materials and will not be distributed to students

Required Readings:

It is important that students read and think critically about the course readings. These readings have been selected to supplement lectures and provide the basis for the discussion held in class. They also assist in meeting a number of the key objectives of the course. These include providing:

an overview of each topic; discussion of relevant approaches and critiques of those approaches; an introduction to key readings and authors in a particular field; and examples of the application of these approaches to key issues raised in the course. In addition to these readings students are encouraged to explore other material on the topics covered in the course and to keep up-to-date on relevant current affairs.

A complete reading schedule for all 12 weeks will be provided in the first week of class and posted on the course webpage.

Weekly Schedule:

Week 1: Introduction: What is Public Policy? An Art? A Science? (January 3 and 5)

- Textbook, Chapter 1 - "Introduction: Why Study Public Policy?"

Week 2: Approaches to Public Policy-Making (January 10 and 12)

- Textbook, Chapter 2 - "Understanding Public Policy: Theoretical Approaches"
- Textbook, Chapter 3 - "The Policy Context"
- Grace Skogstad, "Who governs? Who should govern? Political Authority and Legitimacy in Canada in the Twenty-First Century." *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 36:5 (Dec. 2003)

Week 3: Problem Definition, Framing and Agenda-Setting (January 17 and 19)

Week 4: Policy and Political Communication (January 24 and 26)

Week 5: Guest Lecture and In Class Group Work (January 31 and February 2)

Week 6: Decision-making and Policy Design (February 7 and 9)

Week 7: **Policy Evaluation, Learning and Change** (February 14 and 16)

---Reading Week: No classes February 21 and 23---

Week 8: **Policy Research and Analysis** (February 28 and March 2)

Week 9: **Policy Instruments, Implementation and Capacity** (March 7 and 9)

Week 10: **Guest Lecture and In Class Group Work** (March 14 and 16)

Week 11: **Policy-making in a Globalized World** (March 21 and 23)

Week 12: **Review / Careers in Public Policy** (March 28 and 30)

Copyright:

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On behalf of WLUSU (wlusu.com)

Foot Patrol Walk Home Service:

1.519.886.FOOT x3668

Foot Patrol is a volunteer operated walk-home service, available daily during evening hours. Male-female, radio-dispatched teams trained in Emergency First Aid are available on request to escort students to and from campus as well as to off-campus destinations, either by foot or by van.

Counselling Services and Peer Help Line:

1.886.281.PEER x7337

Counselling Services are available to help students deal with emotional, psychological and social challenges of university. Counselling, consultation or referrals are available at the Student Wellness Centre. Peer Help Line, a confidential listening, referral, information and support line, is available during evening hours to provide support.

Student Food bank

All Laurier students are eligible to use the Student Food Bank. Anonymous requests can be made online at wlusu.com under the Services tab. All dietary restrictions are accommodated, and food hampers typically last up to a week.