Public Policy: 
Theories, Traditions and Transitions

Core Course, Public Policy Track 
Doctoral Program in Political Science 
Fall/ Winter Term AY 2012-13

Lecturers: Andreas Goldthau (FT) and Diane Stone (WT)
Seminars: Fall Term: Tuesdays 03.30 – 05.10 pm; 
Winter Term: TBA

Course Objectives

The main objective of this course is to develop an advanced understanding of theoretical approaches to the study of public policy. The concern is to identify and analyse:

1. some scholarly currents and traditions of public policy
2. core concepts in policy analysis
3. enduring theoretical questions and new dynamics

Course Requirements

Each term, you will be required to
• actively participate (20%)
• give 1 presentation (20%)
• produce 1 comment/ article review or similar (20%)
• author 1 written paper (40%)

Assignments detail as follows:

1. Seminar participation
You are expected to attend each seminar and regularly participate in discussions. Participation is graded as follows: attendance (but no participation) will merit a C+; good faith efforts at participation will get you into the B/B+ range; valuable contributions will get you into the B+/A range. We expect attendance at seminar discussions throughout the semester. An absence must be reported in advance.

Each week you are required to come prepared with a critical understanding of the mandatory reading. We have kept reading to a minimum in order to have an in-depth discussion of the subject of a seminar. The ‘further reading’ is an indication of useful literature for essays but you should go beyond and find additional relevant sources.

2. Presentation
Presentations are intended to provide a short (i.e. no longer than 15 minutes) and distinct introductory input to a session. They are guided by the main questions provided in the syllabus. Presentations critically assess indicated readings and provide a clear added value to the audience, beyond the arguments/facts provided in the specified literature. Own
research on the topic is certainly encouraged. Presentations can be supported by presentation tools such as power point. They also include starting points for further discussion in class. Presentations are evaluated upon clarity and quality, and upon the presenters’ ability to master the topic.

3. Comment/ peer review
You will be asked to review a scholarly article or comment on an ongoing debate in the public policy literature. Reviews or comments provide for substantiated critiques and take a position within a given debate or towards a scholarly contribution.

4. Term Paper
The term paper is a scholarly piece on a subject of your choice. It embeds the research question in the larger academic context, defines a framework of analysis, is empirically rich and follows standard models of research design/ inquiry. You are strongly encouraged to pick one particular theory or model to inform your analysis. Term papers are 4.000 words of length. The term paper is due at the end of the Term.
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General Reading List


# FALL TERM (SEPT – DECEMBER 2012)

## 1. Introduction and Organization

- Organization of the course
- Deadlines, assignments, Q&A

**Recommended readings:**

## 2. Public Policy as a field of study

**Key guiding questions:**
- What is public policy?
- How do we study it?
- What are the rationales and motivations for public policy?

**Required readings:**

**Recommended readings:**

## 3. (Whose) History of Policy Studies I: From Weber to NPM

**Key guiding questions:**
- Driver or driven? Changing models of public administration and management
- What role did various scholarly disciplines play in advancing PA to PM models?
- What role did political events play in all this?

**Required readings:**

**Recommended readings:**
• J. E. Lane, *New Public Management* (Routledge 2000) especially chapter 2 on practical relevance [350 LAN]

### 4. (Whose) History of Policy Studies I: From NPM to Governance

**Key guiding questions:**
- What factors led to further advancing models of public administration and management?
- What does 'governance' bring to the study of public service/ public goods provision?
- What role did political events play in all this?

**Required readings:**

**Recommended readings:**

### 5. Rational Choice and Agency

**Key guiding questions:**
- What insights does Rational Choice add to public policy analysis?
- What insights does Public Choice add to public policy analysis?
- What are its limits?

**Required readings:**

**Recommended readings:**

6. Motivation and Agency

Key guiding questions:
• What insights does an institutionalist perspective add to public policy analysis?
• What insights do egocentric and altruistic motivations add to public policy analysis?

Required readings:

Recommended readings:

7. Excursus: making sense of peer reviewing

Key guiding questions:
• What is the scope and purpose of peer reviews, and why does it matter?
• Is there any difference between peer reviewing in public policy and other fields or disciplines?

Required readings:

Recommended readings:

8. Welfare and public goods

Key guiding questions:
• What are public goods?
• To what extent do they call for public action?
• Who should supply public goods?
Required readings:

Recommended readings:

Note: written assignment 1 (review) due

9. Market Failure and beyond

Key guiding questions:
- What does a purely economic lens tell us on the call on public policy?
- What are the limits of such an approach?
- Who should fix market failure?

Required readings:

Recommended readings:

10. Government Failure and Policy Fiascos

Key guiding questions:
- What problems may representative governments encounter in the provision of public policy?
- Do governments tend toward oversupply of public policy?
- What factors contribute to policy fiascos?

Required readings:

**Recommended readings:**

### 11. Policy Cycle – Criticisms and Departures

**Key guiding questions:**
• What is wrong (and right) with the Policy Cycle idea?
• What avenues of inquiry does it offer, and what are the limits?

**Required readings:**

**Recommended readings:**

### 12. From Western (EU & US) policy studies to Post-Communist Transitions

**Key guiding questions:**
• Are policy studies different in Europe (or the EU) compared to the US?
• How does the post-communist context inform (if at all) the scholarly development of policy studies? (For example, assess the contributions and ‘added value’ of the new NISPAcee journal).

**Required readings:**

**Further Reading:**


Note: written assignment 2 (term paper) due
WINTER TERM (JANUARY – MARCH 2013)

The same apportionment of assessment applies in Semester 2 as was the case in Semester 1. Further details will be provided at the beginning of Semester 2.

In most cases, two readings have been listed for pre-seminar reading each week. Choose one additional reading from the list provided to read prior to the seminar. That is, you are expected to read a minimum of three items for seminars.

13. Incrementalism and ‘Muddling through’ in Policy

Key guiding questions:
- What is the rational-comprehensive method of policy and its difference to ‘satisficing’?
- Is policy simply a process of ‘muddling through’?
- How do we determine when policy change is non-incremental?

Required readings:

Further Reading:

14. Garbage Cans and Policy Streams

Key guiding questions:
- What are the insights from the garbage can decision making model concerning organisational change?
- What are ‘policy entrepreneurs’ and how can they manipulate ‘windows of opportunity’
15. Networked Governance

Key guiding questions:
- What is ‘governance’?
- Is network governance a form of policy coordination or policy fragmentation?
- How can we conceptualise and categorise network ideas? Consider:
  - Classic concepts: Iron triangles, issue networks and policy communities
  - Contemporary concepts: advocacy coalitions, epistemic communities, etc

Required readings:

Further Reading

16. Global Public Goods

Key guiding questions:
• What is the global commons?
• If public goods are to be global, or inter-generational, what criteria must they meet?
• What are the impediments to the delivery and/or financing of GPGs?

Required readings:
• Inge Kaul, Pedro Conceição, Katell Le Goulven, and Ronald U. Mendoza,’ Why Do Global Public Goods Matter Today?’, Available at: http://www.cie.nyu.edu/internationalsecurity/docs/Global%20Challenges%20SUMMARY%20OCT%202010%2006%20En%5B1%5D.pdf

Further Reading:

Related Websites:
International Taskforce on global public goods:
http://www.gpgtaskforce.org/bazment.aspx
UNIDO Project on International Public Goods for Economic Development:

17. Global Public Policy

Key guiding questions:
• Is there a global ‘public sphere’ in which policy is made?
• What are the challenges to state sovereignty that come with notions of ‘transnational administration’ or global governance?
• How do states re-configure sovereignty over policy?

Required readings:

Further Reading:
• Bob Deacon, Global Social Policy and Governance, Sage, 2006
• Anne Marie Slaughter, A New World Order, Princeton, Princeton University Press., 2004

Related Web-sites: Global Public Policy Institute: http://www.gppi.net/
18. Policy Transfer and the International Diffusion of Models and Norms

Key guiding questions:
- What are the core differences between ‘Policy Transfer’ and ‘Diffusion’?
- How, When and Why are Ideas, Norms and Values as well as ‘best practice(s)’ and international standards spread?

Required readings:

Further Reading

19. Monitoring, Evaluation and Termination

[To be developed]


20. ‘Speaking Truth to Power’?

Key guiding questions:
- How are the results/recommendations of policy analyses used?
- What constitutes evidence? Is ‘evidence-based policymaking’ a return to rationality?
- What are the constraints on ‘knowledge utilization’?

Required readings:
• Robert Hoppe, Rethinking the science-policy nexus: from knowledge utilization and science technology studies to types of boundary arrangements’, Poiesis Prax (2005) 3: 199–215

Further Reading

• Frank Fischer, Democracy and Expertise: Reorienting Policy Inquiry, Oxford University Press, 2009
• Carol Weiss, Organizations for Policy Analysis: Helping Governments Think, Sage 1992

Related Web-sites

• The Evidence Network: http://www.evidencenetwork.org
• RAPID – Research and Policy in Development: www.odi.org.uk/rapid

21. The Public Domain

Key guiding questions:
• How is the idea of ‘the public’ to be understood and conceptualised?
• What are the distinctions between, and commonalities, in terms such as public domain, public opinion, the public interest, public-private partnership and the public-private continuum
• How are the boundaries between the public and the private negotiated, defined and administered?

Required readings:

Further Reading:
22. Policy Studies and the Profession

Key guiding questions:
- What does a career in policy studies entail?
- Why teach public policy?
- What are the contributions of professional associations to individual careers and institutional development?
- What is the future of ‘public policy’ in the academy? And beyond?

Required readings:

Further Reading
Key guiding questions:
1. What are the prospects for deliberative policy making?
2. What are the prospects and practices for transparency, accountability and representation in policy at local, national and international levels of policy development?
3. Will public policy always be an elite endeavour?

Required readings:

Further Reading:

Endnotes