

PPC 602  
Public Policy Seminar, Spring 2012  
Instructor: Susan M. Chandler  
Monday 5:00-7:30

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Overview

This course is the final requirement of the Graduate Certificate in Public Policy. It serves as the culminating experience for students who have completed their course requirements and field internship. The objectives of the certificate are to develop people with the capacity to think analytically and systematically about public policy issues; to learn how to apply appropriate skills and technologies to policy problems and communicate persuasively in speech and writing.

Students will bring to the class, their experiences from their field-based internship, as well as other policy-related experiences. In the seminar, each student will follow a structured approach to policy analysis applying these steps to a policy issue of their choice. The course will be organized in eight modules following Eugene Bardach's 4<sup>th</sup> edition, A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis. The Eightfold Path to more Effective Problem Solving.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will:

1. Be knowledgeable about critically important public policy issues and the theoretical constructs that frame them;
2. Understand the political, social and economic environment in which policy analysis takes place, is successful (or not) and implemented (or not);
3. Master the skills necessary to engage in critical thinking and policy analysis and understand the multiple perspectives essential for policy discourse;
4. Conduct a policy study and produce a policy analysis "white paper" on a substantive policy problem, and
5. Present the major policy findings and recommendations to the relevant policy maker

Course Assignments

There is one major written assignment (divided into several parts) and one major oral presentation, with practice presentations in the class. There are several benchmarks with specific deadlines along the way. Each assignment matches one or more of the learning objectives stated above. The purpose of this class is to develop (or hone) policy analysis skills with a goal of producing a great policy analysis paper. Deadlines must be adhered to, just like a

professional policy analyst and practitioner. You can not be late to a legislative hearing or to a meeting with the Governor, so you can not turn in late materials.

Assignment One: (25 points) By Week 4, each student will have selected a policy problem or issue for his or her paper assignment. Each student will present in writing and present to the class orally, his or her understanding of the public policy problem selected and how the problem is being defined for the issue analysis. The other students in the class will critique the problem statement and the presentation and provide feedback and assessment. Each student will then have one week to revise, repair, improve and re-submit for a grade. N.B. This is the MOST important part of any policy analysis.

Assessment and Evaluation Metric: This task will be evaluated by the student's ability to describe the relationship of the problem definition to the subsequent policy perspectives. The paper and presentation should explain the nature, scope, history and magnitude of the problem and the dimensions of the policy perspective being designed.

10 points (paper)  
10 points (oral)  
5 points (feedback)

Assignment Two: (25 points) By Week 8, each student will have presented to the class, his or her understanding of the political, social and economic environment surrounding the problem and past policy solution attempts. A draft paper covering steps 1-4 of the Bardach analytic framework will be presented

Assessment and Evaluation Metric: The paper will be evaluated based on the evidence of critical thinking, the depth of the analysis, the overall writing, organization and responsiveness to the analytic framework.

20 points (paper)  
5 points (oral)

Assignment Three: (30 points) By the middle of Week 14, a draft of the final paper is due. The written paper will be distributed to the instructor and to the students in the class.

20 points (paper)  
10 points (critiques)

Assessment and Evaluation Metric: The paper will be evaluated based on the evidence of critical thinking, the depth of the analysis, the overall writing, creativity, citations, organization and responsiveness to the analytic framework.

Assignment Four: (20 points) Weeks 14 and 15 will be devoted to in-class student presentations and discussion, as well as preparation for the community presentation.

20 points

## Course Schedule, Topics and Required Readings

### Week 1 (January 10)

Course Overview  
Introduction to the “rational” policy making process  
Discussion of Course Objectives  
Discussion of Semester Assignments  
48 hour “quickie”

### Weeks 2 and 3 (January 17 and 24) *Defining the Problem*

Readings. Bardach (Text) *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis*. Introduction and Part 1, pp. 1-78.  
Charles L. Cochran and Eloise F. Malone (1999). *Public Policy. Perspectives & Choices*. Boston: McGraw-Hill College. Chapter 2 (handout) and  
Neil Gilbert and Paul Terrell (2006). *Dimensions of Social Welfare Policy*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition. Boston: Pearson. Chapter 3 (handout)

### Week 4 (January 31) *Working the Problem*

Student Oral Presentations

### Week 5 (Feb 7) *Assembling the Evidence*

Readings: Bardach (Text), Part II.  
Rebecca A. Maynard. Presidential Address- Evidence-Based Decision Making: What will it take for Decision-makers to Care? (2006) *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*. Vol 25 (2), 249-265. Handout

### Weeks 6 and 7 (February 14 and 21) *Constructing Policy Alternatives, Best Practices and Use of Stakeholders*

Readings: Bardach (Text), Part III.

### Week 7 (February 28) *Evaluative Criteria*

Readings: Bardach (Text) Appendix A

### Week 8 (March 6) Initial Policy Analysis

Student Oral Presentations

### Week 9 (March 13) *Projecting Outcomes and Impact*

Readings: Bardach (Text) Appendices B and C  
Henry J. Aaron. Presidential Address – Seeing through the Fog: Policymaking with Uncertain Forecasts. (2000) *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*. Vol. 19(2), 193-206. Handout

### Week 10 (March 20) *Implementation and Unintended Consequences*

Readings: Sabatier and Mazmanian (handout)

Week 10 (March 27) SPRING BREAK No class

Week 11 (April 3) *Selecting the Best Option*

Week 12 (April 10) *Monitoring Policy Outcomes and Evaluating Policy Performance*

Week 13 (April 17) *How to tell the "story"*  
Readings: Bardach (Text) Appendix D

Week 14 (April 24) *Student Presentations*

Week 15 (May 1) *Community Presentations Feedback  
Integration and Class Evaluation*

Reading Assignments:

TEXT: Eugene Bardach (2012). A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis. The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving. 4th edition. Los Angeles: Sage CQ Press.

Other readings will be made available as the course goes on and the specific policy topics selected by students are finalized.

**Grade Scale:**

The semester grade will be determined as follows:

A+ 98-100	A 93-97	A- 90-92
B+ 88- 89	B 83-87	B- 80-82
C+ 78-79	C 73-77	C- 70-72

All assignments are due on the date assigned. No late papers or assignments will be accepted, without a valid reason. Class participation is expected. If you cannot attend class for a good reason, call the instructor before the class.