Syllabus

PSCI 3040: Introduction to Public Policy (CRN 41936)

Fall 2017

Professor: Susan Hoffmann
Office: 3414 Friedmann Hall
Phone: 269-387-5692
Email: susan.hoffmann@wmich.edu
Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 3:30-5:30pm; and by appointment

Teaching assistant: Naomi Bick
Office: 3453 Friedmann
Email: naomi.a.bick@wmich.edu
Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10am-12:00.

Class meetings: Mondays & Wednesdays, 2-3:15pm, Dunbar 2204

Course description: This course provides an introduction to the process of public policymaking in the United States and to the substance of policy in selected areas, and includes a significant undergraduate research experience. My goals are to help you learn to: 1) analyze the policymaking process, 2) develop substantive policy expertise in an issue area, 3) participate effectively in the policy process, 4) conduct secondary and primary research, and 5) write a social science research paper using a theoretical model to guide research and frame case description, 6) communicate clearly in a professional setting in writing and orally, and 7) collaborate effectively in a professional setting. You are expected to be active participants in class and active researchers. You will read, discuss, research, write, present and teach. Tests and interim assignments will build toward a final product – a research paper in which you demonstrate understanding of the policy process and the substance of policy in an issue area of your choice.

Reading:
- E-learning: Some readings will be on e-learning as pdfs and/or links; these readings are designated with an “*” on the schedule.
- Please do the reading listed in the schedule before we discuss it in class.
- Please notice that the assigned reading load is light for an upper division course. This is because you will do a significant research project during the semester and will need time for your own reading and research.

Participation and attendance:
Some participation in class discussion is expected. You do not have to say something every time we meet, but please speak up with a considered opinion or good question at least occasionally.

Attendance is required. You need to be in class because not everything we discuss is in the reading and because interaction is an important part of learning about the public policy process. Two points will be deducted from the “participation and attendance” component of the grade for each unexcused absence from a regular class meeting. Four points will be deducted for each
unexcused absence from a roundtable class. If you need to miss class in keeping with the WMU Faculty Senate’s religious observance policy (available at [http://www.wmich.edu/facultysenate/downloads/MOA0702_religious_observances_final.pdf](http://www.wmich.edu/facultysenate/downloads/MOA0702_religious_observances_final.pdf)), or due to a serious personal or family situation, please discuss this with me ahead of time so we can make arrangements. (Of course, sometimes an emergency is unanticipated; in such cases, please talk to me as soon as possible afterwards.)

**Ground rules for the classroom:**

1) Please silence your cell phones and put them away.

2) You may use laptops to take notes and look at class materials. But if folks are doing email, surfing the web, or other activity unrelated to our work of the day, I will ban laptops in the classroom. Please don’t preempt this privilege from classmates by irresponsible behavior.

3) One person at a time will have the floor. When someone – including your teacher – has the floor, please don’t chat.

4) We want to hear your viewpoints. There will likely be strongly divergent views among us, and that’s a plus for deliberations about public policy. Let’s be respectful in the deliberation. The aspirational Civility Statement approved by WMU’s Faculty Senate, provost, and president in May 2016 offers guidance here; it is available at [http://wmich.edu/sites/default/files/attachments/u370/2016/Civility%20Stmt.7-27-16_0.pdf](http://wmich.edu/sites/default/files/attachments/u370/2016/Civility%20Stmt.7-27-16_0.pdf)

5) I understand that it is convenient for students to ask me questions of individual concern in the classroom rather than come to office hours. Accordingly, I’ll stay after class as long as it takes for everyone with a question to ask. Before class, I like to focus on setting up the technology and starting on time, so please hold your individual questions until after class. Thanks!

**Tests:**

Three tests on reading and lecture material are intended to motivate you to keep up with the reading, attend class, and integrate ideas and information as we proceed.

**Course paper:**

A solid understanding of the policy process and of substance in one policy area of your choice, demonstrated in a 10-12 page paper, is the achievement toward which the course builds. The paper is detailed in a separate handout. Several interim assignments are building blocks toward the course paper and are also detailed in the handout.

**Grading:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Final grade components and their weights:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A 93-100</td>
<td>Participation &amp; attendance 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA 88-92.99</td>
<td>3 tests (10% each) 30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B 83-87.99</td>
<td>Interim assignments:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CB 78-82.99</td>
<td>Library assignment 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C 73-77.99</td>
<td>Proposal 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC 68-72.99</td>
<td>Annotated bib 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 58-67.99</td>
<td>Policy community 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E &lt;58</td>
<td>Roundtable 6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total for interim assignments 30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Course paper 30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Academic honesty:**  Academic honesty is, of course, required. You are responsible for making yourself aware of and understanding the policies and procedures in the Undergraduate Catalog pertaining to academic honesty. These policies include cheating, fabrication, falsification and forgery, multiple submission, plagiarism, complicity and computer misuse. (The policies can be found at http://catalog.wmich.edu/content.php?catoid=24&navoid=974.) If there is reason to believe you have been involved in academic dishonesty, you will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. You will be given the opportunity to review the charge(s) and if you believe you are not responsible, you will have the opportunity for a hearing. If you are uncertain about an issue of academic honesty, please talk with me *before* submitting an assignment or test.

**The schedule:**  The following schedule is my best effort at precision, but it is subject to small changes as we proceed through the semester. I may add some readings as we go along and I find timely material. I may also seize some opportunity – such as a visiting lecturer or videoconference – that presents itself, or reschedule topics a little.
## Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topics and reading assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1: Sept 6 | **Introduction:**  
- Look over the syllabus: What will we cover? What will you learn to do?  
- What is public policy?  
- A framework for studying public policy  
- Introduce paper  
| 2: Sept 11 | **“Public philosophy” in the policy process/ Liberal public philosophies**  
*Excerpts from Hoffmann, Susan. 2001. *Politics and Banking*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins:  
- Ch 1, pp 8-14 on “Public philosophies”  
- Ch 6, pp. 142-147 on “Progressivism”  
- Ch 7, pp. 181-190 on “Populist” public philosophy  
- Ch 4, p. 139 on “utilitarianism” |
| Sept 13 | **Liberal public philosophies (cont)**  
| 3: Sept 18 | **Conservative public philosophies**  
| Sept 20 | **Proposal due on Wednesday, Oct 4**  
| 4: Sept 25 | **Test 1** on Part I / Discussion of the policy area you are thinking of studying  
Come to class with an idea of what policy area you want to study for your research paper. You don’t have to write this up yet, but you need an idea to get started with your research |
| Sept 27 | **Official (formal) actors in policymaking: Congress**  
| 5: Oct 2 | **Library instruction session:** Meet in Waldo library, Classroom A (room 1050)  
**Library assignment is due in the library on Oct 2.** This will be handed out in the library. |
| Oct 4 | **Official actors (cont): Executive, agencies, courts**  
Anderson, in Ch 2 please read “The Executive,” (pp 53-57); “Administrative agencies” (pp 57-58); and “The Courts” (pp 58-61). In Ch 6, read “Administrative organization” (pp 239-243). |
| 6: Oct 9 | **Nongovernmental (informal) actors**  
Anderson, “Nongovernmental participants,” pp 61-72 in Ch 2  
| Oct 11 | **Nongovernmental actors:** Lobbyists (group representatives), campaign funders  
Guest: Greg Rosine, VP for Govt Affairs & University Relations, WMU |
| Oct 11 (cont) | Recommended (on campaign finance in the policy process):
*Lawrence Lessig. 2013. “We the people, and the Republic we must reclaim.” Available at http://www.ted.com/talks/lawrence_lessig_we_the_people_and_the_republic_we_must_reclaim?language=en#t-232835
*Center for Responsive Politics: at http://www.opensecrets.org/ |
| 7: Oct 16 | Policy communities
Anderson, “Levels of politics,” pp 73-78

| Oct 18 | Social security: the policy community and the policy
| 8: Oct 23 | Test 2 on Part II |
| Part III: Steps in the policy process |
| 8: Oct 25 | Overview of steps/ Problem definition: Is inequality a public problem
Anderson, “Policy Problems,” pp 87-95 in Ch3


Recommended:
| Annotated bibliography due on Wednesday, Oct 25 |
Anderson, pp. 95-108 in Ch 3 (sections on agendas).

Recommended:
| Nov 1 | Steps: Formulating alternatives
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Steps:</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10: Nov 6</td>
<td><strong>Policy adoption (Congress)</strong></td>
<td>Anderson. In Ch 4 on “Policy Adoption,” read the first two pages (pp 133-34) and the sections on “Decision Criteria” (pp140-150) and “The Public Interest,” pp. 150-153.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Recommended:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Policy community map due on Wednesday, Nov 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11: Nov 13</td>
<td><strong>Implementation</strong></td>
<td>Anderson, Ch 6, “Policy Implementation,” pp. 225-239. (This is from the beginning of the chapter through the section on “Who implements policy?”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 15</td>
<td><strong>Evaluation (before and after adoption and implementation)</strong></td>
<td>Anderson, Ch 7, “Policy Impact, Evaluation, &amp; Change,” 290-316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12: Nov 20</td>
<td><strong>Test 3 on Steps/ Roundtable preparation, share contact info</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 22</td>
<td><strong>NO CLASS:</strong> Thanksgiving break begins at noon on Wednesday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13: Nov 27,29</td>
<td>Roundtables</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14: Dec 4, 6</td>
<td>Roundtables</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Final paper due on Wednesday, December 6</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam period</td>
<td><strong>Thurs, Dec 14, 2:45-4:45 pm</strong></td>
<td>Roundtables will be held during the final exam period. Attendance is required.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Part IV: Substantive policy domains**

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

6