INEQUALITY AND PUBLIC POLICY
RPAD 604 / RPOS 604 – Spring 2013

Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy, SUNY Albany
Department of Public Administration and Policy

Professor Jennifer E. Dodge

Class Location: Husted 008
Class Time: Monday 5:45-8:50 pm
Office location: Milne Hall 308
Office Hours: Thursdays 2:00-3:00 pm
and by appointment
Email: jdodge@albany.edu
Office phone: 442-5274

Course Description - This course addresses the formulation and implementation of public policies that seek to end diverse inequities. Specifically, this course will explore alternative definitions of equality and their implications for public policy; the role of issue definition and agenda-setting in policy making; the troublesome challenge of measuring equality for purposes of developing or assessing policy; the causes and politics of inequality, and the dynamics of governing institutions that produce, exacerbate or ameliorate inequalities. The course will equip students with a variety of policy analytic tools to help them analyze inequalities and the various public policies used to address them.

To learn how to apply course concepts to real policy issues, the course will examine 2 policy areas in detail: poverty and environmental injustice/racism. In addition, each student, in consultation with the professor, will select a specific policy issue involving an inequity in a policy domain of their own choosing (e.g., environment, housing, homelessness, poverty, etc.). Assignments will focus on providing students with ample opportunities to apply course concepts and practice various policy analytic tools within their chosen policy domain. Class sessions will also provide opportunities for students to share and develop their analyses.

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Develop and use a vocabulary about equality and inequality;
- Identify different inequalities and inequities;
- Analyze policy problems, and the ways policy actors analyze policy problems;
- Understand alternative models and theoretical components of problem definition and agenda-setting in public policy;
- Explore the policy implications of different measures of inequality and their advantages and disadvantages;
- Compare different policy solutions and their merits and demerits;
- Apply policy analytic tools to a significant public policy question.

1 We will focus on inequities relates to class, race, and gender. There are many categories of inequity that we will not cover in course readings such as sexual orientation, physical ability, citizenship status, and so on. It is not possible to adequately cover all these topics in the course. However, students are encouraged to cover these topics in their assignments, and thus to bring them into the classroom.
Text Books
You may purchase required books through Mary Jane books at 215 Western Avenue.

Required:

Additional readings will be posted on Blackboard at https://blackboard.albany.edu/. Use the same login and password required for MyUAlbany.

Communication
Students are invited to ask questions in class, during office hours, or via email. The best way to contact me outside of class is by email. I will usually respond to emails within 24 hours. If you send an email after 6pm, I may not respond until the following day. Please write “PAD 604” in the subject line of emails. Please check your email regularly for emails from me as well.

Assignments
General Guidelines
Policy Memos:
• Due dates for policy memos are listed below under “Policy Memos” and in the course schedule. Submit all policy memos under the assignments folder in Blackboard by 11:59pm on the designated date.
• Write all assignments in complete sentences and paragraphs, double-spaced, with one-inch margins, Times New Roman 12 point font, and number the pages. I will return essays that do not meet these guidelines to be rewritten.
• The length of each policy memo is specified in separate instructions. You can provide tables and figures to support your arguments; place them at the end of the paper. Bibliographies, tables and figures do not count towards page length. Please do not include cover pages.
• All references should be cited in ASA style. Formatting instructions can be found at http://www.asanet.org/students/ASA%20Quick%20Style%20Guide%204th%20edition%20update.pdf. For further guidelines and a list of appropriate sources see Appendix A.

Short assignments:
• All short assignments are due (submitted electronically) the day before class at 2pm. You must submit your short assignment by 2:00 pm on the day prior to class or the assignment will expire (in other words, you will no longer have access to submit it).
• Short assignments should be no longer than 1 page in length.
**Policy Memos**

To assess your understanding of course materials and your ability to apply concepts to real-life cases of public policy, students write 4 policy memos throughout the course. Each policy memo will require students to use course materials to define and analyze a public policy issue within a policy domain of their choosing (e.g., environment, housing, homelessness, poverty, domestic violence, etc.). The policy memos will require students to conduct independent research. The first 3 memos will be 5 pages in length. The final memo will be 15 pages in length (and will include revised sections from the first 3 memos). Instructions for each assignment will be distributed in class and posted on blackboard several weeks before the assignment is due. These instructions will include details about the exact questions of each assignment. *For guidelines on Citations and Sources see Appendix A.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy Memo 1</td>
<td>February 24 at 11:59pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy Memo 2</td>
<td>March 24 at 11:59pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy Memo 3</td>
<td>April 14 at 11:59pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Memo 4</td>
<td>May 11 at 11:59pm</td>
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**Short Assignments**

Each student is required to submit 8 short assignments of 1 page in length that relate to class readings. The assignment for each class is listed on the course schedule. These assignments require students to do an exercise to practice some dimension of policy analysis (such as structuring policy problems). At the beginning of the course, students will select one policy issue to focus on throughout the semester. Students will use their policy issue as a case for completing each assignment. These assignments will help students prepare to write the policy memos. Importantly, the short assignments should not be summaries of or commentaries about the reading. Instead they are opportunities to apply the policy tools from the readings to real policy issues. Students should be prepared to share their short assignments in class each week. As a class, we will work together to critique some of them for the purposes of improving the analysis and students’ knowledge of how to use these tools effectively.
Grading
Student performance in the course will be determined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy memos</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>(15% for each essay)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short assignments</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>(3% for each assignment x 8 classes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>(1% for each class)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Grading Criteria
Policy memos – I will assess policy memos based on a single grading rubric attached in Appendix B and posted on Blackboard. In general, submissions will be assessed according to 1) the degree to which the student answers the assigned question in a sophisticated manner, 2) the degree to which the student illustrates a complete understanding of the course material, 3) overall organization and professionalism of the paper, and 4) the degree to which formatting and citation guidelines are followed.

Short assignments – Your short assignments will be evaluated based on the degree to which you demonstrate 1) that you have read the material and 2) that you have applied the policy tools critically and thoughtfully to your test case.

Attendance – Attendance will be measured by your presence in the classroom, and stands as a proxy for your commitment to the course. If you do not attend class, you will not receive credit for attendance that day. I understand that sometimes there are circumstances related to professional and personal obligations that will require students to be absent on certain days.

Late assignments - For every 24-hour period that an essay assignment is late, the grade will be reduced by 10%. The first 24-hour period begins at the beginning of the class in which the assignment is due.

Grading Scale
A: 93-100          B+: 87-89          C+: 77-79
A-: 90-92          B: 83-86           C: 73-76
B+: 87-89          B: 83-86           C+: 77-79
A-: 90-92          A: 93-100          B+: 87-89
D+: 67-69
D: 63-66
D-: 62-60
E: below 60

Other policies
Academic Integrity - As members of the SUNY community, we are all expected to adhere to high standards of intellectual and academic integrity. You can view our Academic Code at: http://www.albany.edu/content_images/AcademicIntegrity.pdf. This is a good resource, especially regarding integrity in writing. Violations of these standards will result in one of the following penalties: reduction in the grade for the assignment, failure of the assignment, failure of the course, or expulsion. In all cases, a Violation of Academic Integrity Report will be submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies to be placed in your university file, with copies provided to you, the department head, and the Dean of Rockefeller College.
• Students with needs consistent with the Americans with Disability Act should inform the instructor during the first week of class so that reasonable accommodations can be made.
• This syllabus serves as a general outline. The instructor reserves the right to deviate from the plan if necessary. Students will be notified promptly of any modifications.
Course Schedule

UNIT ONE: CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS

Class 1 (January 28): Introduction: Inequality, Policy and the Policy Making Process
- Case: The Marriage Equality Act of New York State and related Tax Regulations
- Parsons, W. (1995). Chapter 1: Meta Analysis, In Public Policy: An Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Policy Analysis. *** Read section 1.2-1.5 (p. 2-41) and 1.7 (p. 54-57), you may skip or skim section 1-6. Do not worry if you do not understand everything in the reading, but look for the meaning of “public,” “policy,” and “policy analysis,” and be prepared to discuss in class.

Short assignment 1 (due January 27 at 2pm): Write a 1-page statement about a policy issue involving an inequity that you would like to analyze for class assignments. Be sure to include the policy domain (e.g., immigration, housing, poverty, etc.), a description of the people impacted (e.g., women, people of color, the poor, etc.), the geographic scope (e.g., the US, South Africa, New York State, Albany, etc.), and the policy problem you would like to address (e.g., how to provide services to new immigrants, etc.). Be prepared to share with the class.

Class 2 (February 4): Conceptualizations of Equity, Equality, Fairness and Justice

Short assignment 2 (due February 3 at 2pm): Drawing on the readings for this week, and Stone (2002) if helpful, define the type of inequality that seems to be present in the policy issue that you identified last week. Discuss why you think it represents that type of inequality.

Class 3 (February 11): Policy Analysis: Between Facts and Norms

Short assignment 3 (due February 10 at 2pm): Identify a specific public policy (legislation, regulation, or policy practice) that has been implemented to address the inequity that you identified in class last week. Write a 1 page commentary that addresses the following questions: What is the policy trying to accomplish? What values does it promote? How is the policy trying to address the identified inequality? Bring a copy of your policy to class (electronic versions are fine).
UNIT TWO: POVERTY AND INEQUALITY

Class 4 (February 18): The Problem with Poverty
• Newman, ch. 1
• Mishel, ch. 1

Analytics: Structuring Policy Problems.

Short assignment 4 (due February 17): Analyze how two different actors have defined the policy problem for the issue that you have chosen to analyze in class. Drawing on Rochefort & Cobb (1994), describe three dimensions of the competing definitions and the actors who advocate for them.

Class 5 (February 25): Measuring Poverty and Supplying Evidence
• Newman, ch. 2
• Mishel, ch. 7

Recommended:

Policy Memo #1 (due February 24 at 11:59pm). Instructions will be handed out separately.
Class 6 (March 4): Explanations of Poverty
- Mishel, ch. 3

Analytics: Causal Stories and Agenda Setting.

Short assignment 5 (due March 3 at 2pm): Starting with the two problem definitions that you analyzed in short assignment 4, describe the causal stories that the different actors you identified use to embed these problems in some argument about causality. In other words, are the causes of these problems described by the relevant policy actors as mechanical, accidental, intentional or inadvertent? What are their arguments? What strategies of causal argumentation are used, if any, to push the policy problems onto the public agenda? Do the causal arguments succeed in placing responsibility for taking action on a particular individual or group? How?

Class 7 (March 11): The Great Recession and the Recovery Act
- Mishel, ch. 2, 5

*** Spring Break March 15-22 – No class on March 18. ***
Class 8 (March 25): Policy as the Problem

- Soss, J., Fording, R. C. and Schram, S.F., Chapter 1-5.
- Neoliberalism, Race, and the American Welfare State: A Discussion of Joe Soss, Richard C. Fording, and Sanford F. Schram’s Disciplining the Poor: Neoliberal Paternalism and the Persistent Power of Race, Perspective on Politics, 10 (4) 979-992. These readings are short, do not panic!

Analytics


Policy Memo #2 (due March 24 at 11:59pm): Instructions will be handed out separately.

UNIT THREE: THE ENVIRONMENT AND INEQUALITY

Class 9 (April 1): The Problems of Environmental Injustice and Environmental Racism

- Cole and Foster, Chapters 1 and 3
- Rechtschaffen et al., Chapter 1

Analytics: Equity Beyond Distribution


Short assignment 6 (due March 31 at 2pm): Building on your short assignment #2, use the readings from today to more clearly define the type of inequality that seems to be present in the policy issue that you are analyzing in class. Are there issues that go beyond distribution? What are they?

Class 10 (April 8): Environmental Justice and the Politics of Evidence

- Rechtschaffen, et al., Chapter 2.
- Cole and Foster, Chapters 4-5.

Analytics


Short assignment 7 (due April 7 at 2pm): How do the different actors in your case discuss evidence, science, and/or expertise? Identify and discuss 3 pieces of evidence that they discuss (e.g., a policy analysis, a scientific analysis, stories, or case examples), and explain what evidence do you find most compelling as a justification for a certain policy direction and why its compelling.
Class 11 (April 15): Causes of Environmental Injustice and Racism
- Cole and Foster, Chapter 2
- Rechtschaffen, et al., Chapter 3

Analytics: Constructing Categories of Inequality: Race and Ethnicity
  - Chapter 1: Constructing categories: Naming, counting, science and identity
  - Chapter 7: Public policies as identity stories: American race-ethnic discourse

Policy Memo #3 (due April 14 at 11:59pm): Instructions will be handed out separately.

Class 12 (April 22): Environmental Justice and Gender
- Rechtschaffen, et al., Chapter 6: Risk and Health

Analytics: Intersectionality

Class 13 (April 29): Environmental Justice, Climate Change and International Equality
- The New Yorker’s three part series on Climate Change
- Rechtschaffen, et al., Chapter 10B and 12 (skip part E)

Analytics: Concepts in International Distributive Justice

Short assignment 8 (due April 28 at 2pm): What are two possible policy solutions for the inequality and public policy problem that you are addressing? What are the advantages and disadvantages of these two proposals both in terms of 1) their merits for solving the problem and 2) the politics that the solution would likely generate within the policy/discourse coalition? In other words, do they have potential for getting broad political approval? Why or why not?
Class 14 (May 6): Solutions to Environmental Inequity: Citizen Action


Policy Memo #4 (due May 10 at 11:59pm): Instructions will be handed out separately.
Appendix A: Citations and Sources

Citations. Include a bibliography in each essay. Students are to cite sources in a manner consistent with academic honesty policies. I would rather you include too many citations rather than too few. As a general rule of thumb, provide a citation for something you did not know before you began your research. In-text citations and the bibliography should be formatted in ASA style. See the on-line help sheets at University at Albany's citation fox website at http://www.asanet.org/students/ASA%20Quick%20Style%20Guide%204th%20edition%20update.pdf. This reference explains how to cite references in the works cited section (bibliography) of your paper and how to cite references in the text of your essay.

Acceptable Sources. You may use primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include, but are not limited to, government reports, legislative hearings and testimonies, court decisions, and government auditor reports. Secondary sources are summaries and interpretations of primary sources. Secondary sources include, but are not limited to, articles from major newspapers and news magazines, network and cable news programs, and academic research. Blogs and Wikipedia are not acceptable sources. Be an intelligent consumer of information by evaluating secondary sources for potential political bias. If it is well known that a particular source is liberal or conservative, you must compensate for this in the paper. Acknowledge its bias and balance the information with something from a source on the other side of the political spectrum. Here are some places to start with your research, but feel free to consult other sources:

- Academic research published in public policy, public administration or political science journals such as: Journal of Public Policy Analysis and Management, Public Administration Review, Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, American Review of Public Administration, Administration and Society, American Political Science Review, American Journal of Political Science, and Journal of Politics, etc. There are likely to be policy journals that are specific to your policy domain that can also be great sources of public policy analysis.
- Congressional Research Service reports (opencrs.com and scattered elsewhere around the internet)
- Congressional testimony (available through Lexis/Nexis via the library) and reports completed by Congressional committee staff
- Agency Inspector General reports
## Appendix B: Grading Rubric, PAD 604, Prof. Dodge

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Excellent (1.5)</th>
<th>Average (1)</th>
<th>Needs Improvement (.5)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Substance</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates sharp understanding of policy theory</td>
<td>Demonstrates adequate understanding of policy theory</td>
<td>Demonstrates poor understanding of policy theory</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Applies theory so that arguments link conceptual ideas to</td>
<td>Applies theory but link between conceptual ideas and evidence</td>
<td>Does not apply theory at all or the link between conceptual</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>evidence from the case</td>
<td>from the case is unclear at times</td>
<td>ideas and evidence from the case is often unclear</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Makes arguments that are substantive</td>
<td>Makes arguments that are substantive in a majority of cases</td>
<td>Makes arguments that are superficial</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shows a sharp understanding of the complex policy questions</td>
<td>Shows an adequate understanding of the policy questions</td>
<td>Shows a poor understanding of the policy questions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provides sufficient, clear and balanced evidence</td>
<td>Provides evidence that is either insufficient, unclear or</td>
<td>Provides evidence that is insufficient, unclear or unbalanced</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>Organizes overall essay into logical sections.</td>
<td>Organizes overall essay into logical sections, although some</td>
<td>Overall essay is not well organized; sections are missing and/or</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>sections are poorly ordered.</td>
<td>are poorly ordered.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Arranges ideas within each section in a logical manner that</td>
<td>Generally arranges ideas within each section in a logical</td>
<td>Generally ideas within each section are not logically ordered,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>supports the purpose or argument.</td>
<td>manner, although some sections are confusing.</td>
<td>and many sections are confusing.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Writes without spelling, grammar or English errors from start</td>
<td>Writes with occasional spelling, grammar, and/or use of English</td>
<td>Writes with many spelling, grammar, and/or use of English errors.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>to finish.</td>
<td>errors.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Formatting</strong></td>
<td>Follows ASA formatting for citations in the text and</td>
<td>One of these conditions was not met.</td>
<td>More than one of these conditions was not met.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bibliography. Sources in the bibliography are listed in</td>
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<td></td>
<td>alphabetical order. A majority of citations are from primary</td>
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<td></td>
<td>sources.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Follows formatting instructions including length, font,</td>
<td>One of these conditions was not present.</td>
<td>More than one of these conditions was not present.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>margins, and the numbering of pages.</td>
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