

**POS 513/PAD 526: Public Policy Field Seminar
Spring 2019**

Last updated: December 31, 2018

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Office Hours: Thursdays 4-5 and by appointment.

304 Milne Hall

Class Meets: 5:45-8:30, Husted 13

Lab Meets: 8:30-9:25pm

This course introduces students to public policy and the policy process in the United States and in comparative context. In it, we focus on important *theories* of how policymaking works from pressures on legislators to make policy, adapt policy, implement it, and the effect it has on citizens' individual lives. We take a broad overview of the classics as well as look at new directions in contemporary policy research. It is a complement to policy analysis (RPAD 540) and comparative public policy (RPOS 653). This course is recommended for students who are interested American or comparative politics broadly or policy students looking for theoretical background.

TEXTS

The books listed below are available for purchase at the University bookstore or at online retailers such as Amazon.com. The versions of books listed below are what I use. In many cases, older or newer editions are quite similar (but older editions are much less expensive). **If you'd like to purchase a different edition of the book than what I use, please feel free to do so except where noted.** In addition, articles assigned will be available on dropbox.

Frank Baumgartner and Bryan Jones. 1993/2009. *Agendas and Instability in American Politics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Any edition.

John Kingdon. 1984/1995/2003/2011. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*. Boston: Little Brown. Any edition.

Jamila Michener. 2018. *Fragmented Democracy: Medicaid Federalism, and Unequal Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Domingo Morel. 2017. *Takeover: Race, Education, and American Democracy*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Barbara Nelson. 1984. *Making an Issue of Child Abuse: Political Agenda Setting for Social Problems*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Paul A. Sabatier and Christopher M. Weible. 2014. *Theories of the Policy Process*. Boulder Colorado: Westview Press. **Fourth Edition** (please get the fourth edition, which has good chapters not found in previous versions of the book).

Deborah Stone. 2002/2012. *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*. New York: Norton. Any edition.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

4 Response Papers	35%
Final Paper (Literature Review)	40%
Participation (Including reading questions and policy presentation)	25%

Response Papers: During the course of the semester you are required to write **four** response papers. These papers integrate the readings for the week and provide your own thoughtful evaluation and criticism. **Papers should be between three and four pages.** You may choose whatever weeks you wish to write your papers but you must turn in your paper at the beginning of class on the material that we are discussing for that class. You may only turn in one paper per week.

Literature Review: A literature review is due at our last class meeting. More specific instructions on how to write and structure a literature review are on dropbox and will be discussed in class.

Class Participation: There are three components to your class participation grade. First, you must submit two discussion questions to me via e-mail (pstrach@albany.edu) by midnight on Wednesday before our Thursday class. The questions should be interesting and engaging questions that you would feel comfortable leading class discussion. Second, you will each sign up for a policy presentation. In these, you will do a brief background on the policy area hitting some of the major works and key issues. **Policy presentations should be no more than 15 minutes.**

Because this is a small class, we will have an active discussion about the ideas and arguments in the reading. Your participation (and even excitement) is essential. You are expected to come to class ready to engage the reading and your fellow classmates. **The date next to the readings indicates when they should be completed. You should read the assigned readings for class on that day.**

I. Introduction

January 24: What is Public Policy?

Robert E. Goodin, Michael Moran and Martin Rein. 2009. "Overview of Public Policy: The Public and Its Policies." Robert E. Goodin (ed). *The Oxford Handbook of Political Science*. New York: Oxford University Press. (Dropbox)

Weible and Sabtier. 2018. *Theories of the Policy Process*. Introduction. The Scope and Focus of Policy Process Research and Theory.

Jacob Hacker and Paul Pierson. 2014. "After the 'Master Theory': Downs, Schattschneider and the Rebirth of Policy-Focused Analysis." *Perspectives on Politics*. 12, 3. 643-662. (Dropbox)

January 31: How Do We Study It I? Theories.

Weible and Sabatier. 2018. Part I: Theoretical Approaches to Policy Process Research

February 7: How Do We Study It II? Epistemology and Methodology

Peter A. Hall. 2003. "Aligning Ontology and Methodology in Comparative Politics." In James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge University Press. (Dropbox)

Marsh and Furlong. 2002. Epistemology a skin not a sweater. (Dropbox)

Kathryn Edin. 2014. "Special Symposium on Qualitative and Mixed Methods for Policy Analysis." *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*. 33, 2. 345-494. (Dropbox) two chapters—Tach and Henreich

****Policy Presentation: Security—**

II. Constructing Public Policy and the Policy Agenda

February 14: Framing

Stone. 2002. *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*. Part III: Problems.
Nelson. 1984. *Making an Issue of Child Abuse: Political Agenda Setting for Social Problems*.
Chapters 1 and 4.
**Policy Presentation: Housing—

February 21: Agenda Setting I

Kingdon. 1984. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*.
Paul Manna. 2006. *School's In: Federalism and the National Education Agenda*. Georgetown
University Press (Dropbox).
**Policy Presentation: Education—

February 28: Agenda Setting II

Baumgartner and Jones. *Agendas and Instability in American Politics*.
Vliegenthart et al. 2016. "Do the media set the parliamentary agenda? A comparative study in
seven countries." *European Journal of Political Research*, 55: 283-301. (Dropbox)
**Policy Presentation: Energy--

March 7: Solutions

Stone. 2002. *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*. Part IV: Solutions
Nelson. 1984. *Making an Issue of Child Abuse: Political Agenda Setting for Social Problems*.
Chapters 5-7.
**Policy Presentation: Foreign Affairs—

March 14: Classes Suspended (Conference)

III. Policy Change and Implementation

March 21: Classes Suspended Spring Break

March 28: Path Dependence, Policy Feedback, and Change

Pierson. 2004. *Politics in Time: History, Institutions, and Social Analysis*. Princeton: Princeton
University Press. Selections (Dropbox)
Eric M. Patashnik and Julian E. Zelizer. 2013. "The Struggle to Remake Politics: Liberal Reform
and the Limits of Policy Feedback in the Contemporary American State." *Perspectives on
Politics*. 11 (4). 1071-1087.
Wolfgang Streeck and Kathleen Thelen. 2005. "Introduction." *Beyond Continuity: Institutional
Change in Advanced Political Economies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (Dropbox)
Jacob Hacker. 2005. "Policy Drift: The Hidden Politics of US Welfare State Retrenchment." In
Beyond Continuity.
**Policy Presentation: Health—

April 4: Policy Diffusion

Boushey, Graeme. 2016. "Targeted for Diffusion? How the Use and Acceptance of Stereotypes
Shape the Diffusion of Criminal Justice Policy Innovations in the American States."
American Political Science Review. 110 (1). 198-214.
Simmons, Beth A., Frank Dobbin, and Geoffrey Garrett. 2006. "Introduction: The Diffusion of
Liberalism." *International Organization* 60(4):781-810. (Dropbox)

Shipan, Charles R., and Craig Volden. 2008. "The Mechanisms of Diffusion." *American Journal of Political Science* 52(4):840-857. (Dropbox)

Weyland, Kurt. 2005. "Theories of Policy Diffusion: Lessons from Latin American Pension Reform." *World Politics* 57(2):262-295. (Dropbox)

****Policy Presentation: Tax—**

April 11: Implementation

Pressman and Wildavsky, Chapter 3 "Trials of Implementation," *Implementation: How Great Expectations in Washington Are Dashed in Oakland; Or, Why It's Amazing that Federal Programs Work at All, This Being a Saga of the Economic Development Administration as Told by Two Sympathetic Observers Who Seek to Build Morals on a Foundation of Ruined Hopes*

Michael Lipsky, *Street-Level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services*, Chapter 2.

David K. Cohen, "A Revolution in One Classroom: The Case of Mrs. Oublier," *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 12 (3): 311-329.

Brodkin, Evelyn Z. "Implementation as policy politics." *Implementation and the policy process: Opening up the black box* (1990): 107-118.

Heather C. Hill, "Understanding Reform: The Street Level Bureaucrats' Resources for Reform," *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*. 13(3). pp. 265 – 282.

****Policy Presentation: Immigration --**

IV. Equality

April 18: Inequality, Citizenship, and the Welfare State

Schneider, Anne, and Helen Ingram. 1993. "Social Construction of Target Populations: Implications for Politics and Policy." (Dropbox)

Soss. 1999. "Lessons of Welfare: Policy Design, Political Learning, and Political Action." (Dropbox)

Jamila Michener. 2018. *Fragmented Democracy: Medicaid Federalism, and Unequal Politics*. Chapters 1-3.

****Policy Presentation: Welfare—**

April 25: The Politics of Inequality

Domingo Morel. *Takeover*. Selections.

Jamila Michener. *Fragmented Democracy*. Selections.

**** Policy Presentation: _____**

IV. Conclusion

May 2: Navigating Ethical Dilemmas

****Final paper due****

Frances Fox Piven. 2007. "From Public Sociology to Politicized Sociologists." *Public Sociology : Ideas, Arguments, and Visions for the Future*. Dan Clawson (et al). Berkeley: University of California Press. (Dropbox)

PS Symposium: “Pracademics’: Mixing an Academic Career with Practical Politics.” *PS* 44:2.
(Dropbox)

Andrea Louise Campbell. 2012. “Down the Insurance Rabbit Hole.” *New York Times*. April 4.

***Policy Presentation:* _____