POLITICAL SCIENCE 556:
POLICY ANALYSIS

Fall 2011             David J. Houston
W 1:25-4:25           809 McClung, 974-5278
JHB 414               M 2:00-4:30; R 1:00-2:00
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Course Goals

1. Develop an understanding of the role of policy analysis in the public policy process.
2. Develop an understanding of the techniques useful for policy research.
3. Develop an understanding of the issues involved in problem definition, policy formulation, and policy evaluation.
4. Develop an understanding of the limits of rational analysis for the formulation of public policy.

Course Requirements

The grade that a student earns will be based on his/her performance on written projects and class participation. The participation portion of a student's grade will be based on contributions to class discussions and in-class activities. The breakdown of a student's grade for the semester is given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cost-Benefit Analysis Assn.</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy issue project</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forecasting Assignment</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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Students with Disability

Students who have a disability that may require individualized accommodations should inform me of these needs at the beginning of the semester. I will make every effort to accommodate your needs. Also, please take advantage of support provided by the University.

Required Texts

Additional readings will be placed on the class Blackboard web site.
Changes to Course Requirements and Schedule

Any changes to course assignments, readings, or schedule will be announced in class.

Schedule of Topics

Course introduction

I. Theoretical Foundations of Policy Analysis

Topic #1. Introduction to Policy Analysis (8/17)

Issues:
- What is public policy?
- Public policy theories
- What is policy analysis?
- What role for policy analysis?

Readings:
- Munger, Ch. #1.

For discussion:

Topic #2: Source of Wisdom for Policy—Markets (8/24,31)

Issues:
- The market
- Market failure

Readings:
- Munger, Ch. 2-4, 7

For discussion:

Topic #3: Source of Wisdom for Policy—Expertise (9/7)

Issues:
- Policy analysis
- Limits of analysis

Reading:
- Munger, Ch. 5.
Topic #4: Source of Wisdom for Policy—Politics (9/14)

Issues:
Approaches to making decisions politically
Limits of political decision making

Reading:
Munger, Ch. # 6.

***Midterm Exam (9/21)

II. Policy Analysis Process

Topic #5: Structuring Policy Problems (9/28)

Issues:
Bardach’s Eightfold Path
Nature of policy problems
Problem definition

Readings:
Bardach, Parts I, II & Appendix A.
For discussion:

Topic #6: Designing Policy (10/5)

Issues:
Policy goals
Policy tools
Selecting criteria
Identifying policy alternatives

Readings:
Bardach, Part III & Appendix B.
Gupta, Ch. #4 (pp. 74-79).


For discussion:


**Topic #7: Assessing and Recommending Alternatives (10/12)**

**Issues:**
- Identifying trade-offs between alternatives
- Political feasibility analysis
- Making recommendations
- Implementation issues

**Readings:**
- Bardach, Appendices C & D.
- Weimer and Vining Ch. 11

For discussion:
- TBA

No Class (11/19)???

**III. Policy Analysis Tools**

**Topic #8: Cost-Benefit Analysis (10/26; 11/2)**

**Issues:**
- Identifying costs and benefits
- Valuation of costs and benefits
- Net present value
- Discount rates
- Equity

**Readings:**
- Munger, Ch. 9-11.


For discussion:

- E. S. Gruch and C. S. Saunby. Fatalities Associated with Crash Induced Fuel Leakage and Fires. Ford Motor Company, Environmental and Safety Engineering. (Ford Pinto Memo)

Supplemental readings:


**Topic #9: Forecasting (11/9)**

Issues:
- Judgmental forecasts
- Trend extrapolation
- Casual forecasts

Readings:
- Gupta, Ch. #9-12.

For discussion:
- TBA
**Topic #10: Decision Analysis (11/16)**

Issues:
- Uncertainty and outcomes
- Decision trees
- Expected utility

Readings:
- Munger ch. 9 (pp. 309-315), 11 (pp364-368)
- Gupta, Ch. #13.

**IV. Conclusion**

**Final Thoughts (11/23)**

Reading:
- Munger, Ch. 12.