



**PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION 590:  
STRATEGIC POLICY ANALYSIS AND IMPLEMENTATION**

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**Course description:**

The purpose of public policy analysis is to develop information that will help policy makers make choices with a credible expectation of the effects or outcomes of those policy choices. In a world characterized by greater complexity of political and economic relationships, it has become more difficult to predict the effectiveness of policy options relative to intended goals. This course examines key concepts and tools of policy analysis and implementation.

This course will help students develop the skills required to define and critically analyze public policy proposals, including identification of relevant decision-making criteria, identification and evaluation of likely options, development of implementation strategies, and assessment of the means and costs of implementation. These analytical techniques will be applied to a wide range of public policy issues.

The course will present strategies and techniques for effective policy analysis and skillful change interventions such as cost-benefit analysis, cost-effectiveness analysis, forecasting, understanding of statutory and administrative code, development of legal agreements, performance measurement, and use of revenues and subsidies as policy tools. Because the course focuses on real-world application of theories, concepts, and analytical techniques, there will be extensive use of experiential exercises to enhance skill development.

**Course Learning Objectives:**

By the conclusion of this course, students should be able to demonstrate, at an advanced level, the ability:

1. To critically evaluate policy development at state and federal levels;
2. To use alternative policy models for analyzing the development of public policy;
3. To understand political forces and considerations that affect public policies and, thereby, public policy analysis;
4. To read and interpret laws, regulations, and basic documents related to public finances;
5. To apply policy analysis tools to rational evaluation of policy alternatives;
6. To apply a range of policy tools in implementation of new policies;
7. To prepare concise, clear, and responsive policy communications;
8. To apply course skills in a wide range of public policies;

**Required Texts**

Bardach, Eugene (2011). **A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving**, Fourth Edition. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.  
Guess, George and Paul G. Farnham (2011). **Cases in Public Policy Analysis, Third Edition**. Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press.

### **Course Assignments:**

Students will write analyses of two case studies (7-10 pages) from outside New Mexico and will complete two short (1 – 2 pages) policy memos as well as a midterm examination. The policy memos are drawn from actual assignments to legislative and executive staff, where senior officials asked analysts for quick turnaround on policy questions. These memos focus on problem identification and generation of policy options. The case studies will call on students to use a wider range of policy analysis techniques that are introduced in this course. For the writing assignments, students should endeavor to provide clear, comprehensive, concise and quick analyses.

The midterm will be a mixture of long essay and identification questions.

### **Grading:**

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|--------------|----------|
| Policy memos | 10% each |
| Case studies | 30% each |
| Midterm      | 20%      |

### **Course Policies:**

1. *Incompletes:* Incompletes will not be approved unless circumstances beyond the student's control prevent the completion of all the course requirements. Should such a situation arise, the student is expected to contact the instructor as soon as possible and state in writing the circumstances requiring the incomplete and a plan indicating how and when the incomplete will be completed.
2. *Academic Dishonesty:* Academic dishonesty and plagiarism will not be tolerated.
3. *"Safe Space" policy—ground rules for a positive classroom environment and experience.* All classroom discourse will exhibit respect for all other persons, not only within the confines of the classroom but also in general. There will no denigration of anyone in any context (including in relation to case materials or readings, videos, or any other point of reference), on account of race, ethnicity, gender, disability status, sexual orientation, religion, political perspective, or other personal trait. Explicit statement of this policy is necessary to ensure that everyone feels comfortable and free to articulate ideas or viewpoints. Class discussion allows for disagreement; however, comments must be sustained by evidence, in particular evidence from class materials and readings. Class comments are not to be unsupported assertions of opinion, and never *ad hominem* (personal) attacks.
4. *Policy on Late Assignments:* Assignments are due on the due date. Points will be deducted from assignments turned in late – generally a half grade for each day late.

## **Preparation for Class**

Class meetings will combine lecture, discussion questions, and discussion of case studies. Students are expected to be prepared to apply concepts from course readings for the lesson to the case studies.

## **CLASS SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS**

### **I. INTRODUCTION TO COURSE June 3**

OMB Circular A-4, A-94 (revised)

<http://www.pewstates.org/projects/pew-macarthur-results-first-initiative-328069>

### **II. OVERVIEW OF POLICY PROCESS/ANALYSIS WRITING CASE STUDY PAPERS June 5**

Bardach, Introduction and Part I: The Eightfold Path

### **III. METHODOLOGIES FOR PROBLEM DEFINITION June 10**

Guess and Farnham, 42-70

Case Study:

Guess and Farnham, pp. 49 – 50, "*Fighting Crime: The Case for Emptier Prisons*"

### **IV. TYPES OF PUBLIC POLICIES; RATIONAL v. INCREMENTAL POLICYMAKING; STRUCTURE OF POWER IN THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM June 12**

Lowi, "Distribution, Regulation, Redistribution: The Functions of Government"

Lindblom, Charles E. "The Science of Muddling Through"

Truman, "Group Politics and Representative Democracy,"

Mills, The Power Elite

Heclo, "Issue Networks and the Executive Establishment"

### **V. DECISION TREE AND SENSITIVITY ANALYSIS June 17**

Stokey and Zeckhauser, "The Decision Tree: A Descriptive Model"

## **POLICY MEMO 1 DUE**

### **VI. FORECASTING OUTCOMES June 19**

Guess and Farnham, Chapter 4

Case Study:

Guess and Farnham, Chap. 5: “*Pricing and Public Policy: The Case of Cigarette Taxes*”  
Forecasting Lottery Scholarship Insolvency in New Mexico

**VII. INSTITUTIONAL IMPACTS/BUDGETING**

June 24

Guess and Farnham, Chapter 3

Case Study:

Guess and Farnham, “Washington D.C., School Reform”

**TAX COMPLIANCE CASE STUDY DUE**

**VIII. CALCULATION OF PRESENT VALUE/DISCOUNTING** June 26

Stokey and Zeckhauser, “The Valuation of Future Consequences: Discounting”  
Guess and Farnham, pp. 292-295

**IX. MIDTERM**

July 1

**X. DISCUSS TAX COMPLIANCE CASE STUDY**

July 3

**XI. COST-EFFECTIVENESS ANALYSIS**

July 8

Guess and Farnham, Chapter 6

Case Study:

Guess and Farnham, pp 272 – 284, “*Preventing Perinatal Transmission of HIV*”

**POLICY MEMO 2 DUE**

**XII. COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS**

July 10

Bardach, 91 - 105

Guess and Farnham, Chapter 7

Case Study:

Guess and Farnham, pp. 318 – 321, “*Clinton Sharply Tightens Air Pollution Regulations Despite Concern over Costs*”

**XIII. LEGAL TOOLS OF POLICY IMPLEMENTATION (STATUTES,  
ADMINISTRATIVE CODE, MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING, JOINT  
POWERS AGREEMENTS, INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENTS)**

July 15

Sample letter of agreement, memorandum of understanding, intergovernmental agreement, contract, proposed legislation

**XIV. EARMARKING REVENUES, USER FEES AND SUBSIDIES/GRANTS/  
LOANS AS POLICY/ IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS**

July 17

Bardach 141-142, 143-144

Winkler and Chapman, "Earmarked Revenues and Fiscal Constraints"

Mikesell, John, "Revenue from User Fees, User Charges, and Sales by  
Public Monopolies" in **Fiscal Administration**, 7<sup>th</sup> Ed., 2007

**XV. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT/BEST PRACTICES** July 22

Readings to be determined.

**TUOLUMNE CASE STUDY DUE**

**XVI. DISCUSS TUOLUMNE CASE STUDY**

July 24