University of Wisconsin-Madison
La Follette School of Public Affairs

Spring 2013

PA 874: Public Policy Process
Thursdays 1:20-3:15 pm; Office Hours Thursdays 12:00-1:10 pm
Class Location: Grainger 2270
Instructor: Susan Webb Yackee, Ph.D.
Phone: 608-265-6017; Office: La Follette RM 205
Email: syackee@lafollette.wisc.edu (email is the best way to contact me)
Non-Section TA: Simon Haeder
TA Email: haeder@wisc.edu
TA Office Hours & Location: Mondays 11:00-12:00 & Thursdays 11:00-1:00 in 402 North Hall

General Course Information

This is a graduate seminar on the policymaking process considered in a very broad context - from evolution of an idea, to enactment of legislation, and to program implementation. The course is also a gateway course for students pursuing a master in public affairs or a master in international public affairs. We will focus on public policymaking in the context of American political institutions, so as to illustrate important concepts. We will pay particular attention to the constraints that operate on policy makers, and the circumstances in which policy makers can overcome these constraints to change the direction of public policy.

The course has two primary learning objectives. First, we will examine the moving parts of the policy process in the United States, including the primary actors and institutions involved in the stages of the policy making process (agenda-setting, policy formulation, policy adoption, implementation) and the core theories and concepts for understanding these stages. We will explore these topics through reading and discussion of both scholarly work, books, movies, and case studies. Second, the course will provide you with some of the tools necessary to successfully negotiate the policy process. In particular, you will develop the communication skills and strategies to participate in the policy process through a combination of writing and oral presentation assignments.

Projects and Evaluation

Legislative Policymaking Process Research Report and Presentation
I will divide students into 8 groups of four or five students to research a piece of national legislation of the group’s choice. The group may choose any piece of legislation that was either signed or vetoed by the President within the last decade. The assignment consists of a report, presentation, and peer evaluation.

The Library of Congress’s THOMAS website is an excellent place to begin your research and chart your piece of legislation’s path through the congressional process. Find it at: http://thomas.loc.gov/home/thomas.php.

(1) Report
Students will turn in one copy of a legislative research report consisting of:

Title Page: Title, authors, class information (1 page)

Abstract: A 150-word summary of all parts of the document (1 page)
Introduction: Provide a description of the policy, its evolution, and importance. The introduction should also provide a “roadmap” to inform the reader with an overview of the report as a whole (2-3 double-spaced pages).

Chronological Narrative: Next, you will provide a chronological narrative of the legislative process. In this section you answer the “who, what, when, where, and why” questions of your legislation in a descriptive and well-organized style. You may also want to attach a table listing important dates as an appendix to the report (7-11 double-spaced pages).

Analysis: In this section, you will discuss the relevance of the course readings to understanding the legislative process for this particular policy. You will want to focus on one theory of the policymaking process -- for example, punctuated equilibrium theory -- and discuss how the readings on this stage relate to your case. [You will also need to go beyond the course’s assigned theoretical readings to better familiarize yourself with the general argument.] The analytical section of the report is pivotal-- it requires you to critically evaluate how the course’s theoretical ideas apply or do not apply to your case (9-13 double-spaced pages).

Conclusion: This section will highlight important findings and discusses their implications for the policymaking process (e.g. How has the policy design of the Americans with Disabilities Act affected the capacity of people with disabilities to influence public policy?). This section must answer the important “so what?” question. Stated differently, now that you have completed this legislative research, what does this legislative case study tell us about the American policymaking process more generally? (2-3 double-spaced pages).

References: You will need to document sources carefully and provide full citations for all cited works. Bibliographic information should allow another person to replicate your research. All direct quotes should be in quotation marks with parenthetical reference format and page number, e.g., (Yackee 2009, 19) and all use of another’s work should be in parenthetical reference format, e.g., (Yackee 2009). If you use websites then be very careful about knowing your source and being able to judge the veracity of the information, especially any data sources. For this project, it is best to start with government sources and then move to a search of journal articles and books. After exhausting those sources, only then should you use Internet search engines. For style information, refer to the American Political Science Association website at: http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocAPSA.html.

Here is some additional information about your report:

• Your paper should be no more than 35 pages long (including all parts detailed above but not the Works Cited page(s)). Please do not ask for exceptions on the page length.
• Your paper should be Times New Roman font, size 12, double-spaced, no extra “returns”.
• They will be turned in on the final day of class - during our regularly scheduled class meeting time. Only one paper per group is necessary.
• Your paper is to be written in a style that is tight, brief, and follows the sections headers listed above exactly. Any sub-headers may be labeled as you wish.
• Do not assume that the readers of your paper (the TA and I) are familiar with our class concepts, ideas, and theories. You will need to explain jargon or theories within your paper. Writing clearly is difficult and is prized by employers.
• Use page numbers.

(2) Presentation
Each group will present a synopsis of the report to the class. The presentation should emphasize, in particular, the analysis piece of the report. These presentations must be well organized in order to highlight the key issue and findings of the written report. The presentation will be graded based on content, communication skills, and style (professionalism and organization). Each presentation should take 15 minutes (give or take one minute),
followed by five minutes for class Q&A. All presentations will take place during our regular class meeting time. You should plan to use PowerPoint. Professional dress is appropriate. Please practice and time your presentations ahead of time!

(3) Peer and Self Evaluation
After you have completed your presentation, you will receive a peer and self-evaluation form. On this form you will rate yourself and group members on a scale and these rankings may affect a student’s paper and/or presentation grade. The peer evaluation score for each individual will be averaged based upon the peer evaluation forms from all group members. The instructor will not reveal the names associated with particular ratings.

In-Class Discussion Leaders
This class will live and die by the quality of discussion. Student participation is necessary to make it a lively and engaging educational experience. Discussion leaders will be assigned most weeks with eight total opportunities. Discussion leaders ought to coordinate with each other to plan a class activity/discussion that has students applying the concepts of the readings (or assignments). You need not repeat the substance of the material—as all people will have experienced the materials. Instead, you ought to think of applications of this material. There will be 4 or 5 students assigned to each opportunity. This activity ought to be 15 minutes (give or take one minute) in length. You may use PowerPoint, but it is certainly not required. I encourage creativity in the activity. You will receive a short email from the TA with feedback and a team grade within one week.

Individual Essays Assignments
There will be a number of smaller class writing assignments that will be completed on a near weekly basis. These will often be essay-writing assignments attached to our weekly readings and other in-class materials. The TA and/or I will review all of the essays. Some assignments will be graded on a “satisfactory” or “unsatisfactory” basis. To receive a satisfactory grade, one must complete the full assignment and expend the effort necessary in order to adequately complete it. Additionally, the TA and/or I will randomly sample six essays throughout the semester to fully grade, and thus, a letter grade will be assigned to these essays. You will also receive written feedback on the graded essays within approximately one week. A rubric capturing our standards for evaluation and other criteria for the on-line essays is posted on Learn@UW under the Week 0 materials.

Participation
I expect noteworthy discussion and participation from all students within each class meeting - even in a class of our size! Note that I frequently “cold call” on students, so do not be alarmed by this practice. As a result, every student must come to class ready to participate everyday. If participation or attention to the course’s readings falls below an acceptable level, then I will hold unannounced pop quizzes. These quizzes cannot be made up due to course absences for any reason. Participation can also be earned by providing excellent feedback other students’ presentations when requested.

Additionally, the TA and I will be evaluating your class participation through your contributions to the class discussion board. On a nearly weekly basis, there will be a question on the course discussion board. You ought to participating each week by submitting at least two substantive posts to the class discussion board. At least one of these posts ought to be “reply” to other student’s posts. The TA and/or I will review all of the posts. Additionally, the TA and/or I will randomly sample six discussion forums throughout the semester to grade. A rubric capturing our standards for evaluation of discussion participation is posted on Learn@UW under the Week 0 materials. One ought to meet the standards of the rubric in each post.

Learn@UW and On-Line Materials
Unless otherwise noted by me, the on-line essay questions and discussion board topics will be available at Learn@UW each week from Friday at 11:59 PM to Thursday at 1:00 PM (i.e. just preceding our Thursday class). Stated differently, you will have over five full days to access the on-line materials each week, with the window for access closing just before our class meeting.
Additionally, you should continually check the News section on Learn@UW, which appears on each course's Course Home page. You should always read through the News when you log back into a course site — it will contain announcements and updates. The Content section will contain the main course materials for each class: syllabus, schedule, readings, assignments, etc. We will also use the Discussions section, where you will respond to questions from me and to comments from your fellow students. Dropbox is where you will "turn in" some course assignment documents; and Classlist is where you can see who else is in the class.

There are resources on-line for students who want more information on how Learn@UW works. You may go to: https://learnuw.wisc.edu/ for instructional tutorials. Tech support for Learn@UW is thought UW-Madison's DoIT Help Desk [608-264-HELP. See DoIT's webpage for email and chat help.]

Other Course Information

There is No Section for Class
In lieu of a section each week, I expect that you’ll be spending at least an hour during most weeks honing your essay writing, Internet research, and discussion board skills on-line.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade Equivalents</th>
<th>Grading Standard</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>&gt;=94</td>
<td>On-Line Essays = 25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>90-89</td>
<td>Participation = 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>85-84</td>
<td>Group Paper = 25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>80-79</td>
<td>Group Presentation = 15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>75-70</td>
<td>Class Diss. Leader = 15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>65-60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;=58</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Credit</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Expectations for Academic Integrity
I expect a full adherence to UW’s code of academic integrity. I also expect that you will acknowledge all ideas that are not your own through proper citation. Please put all direct quotes in quotations or provide some clear form of acknowledgment. Any accepted format for citation may be used as long as it is used consistently. You may want to follow the style format of a major academic journal, such as the American Political Science Review. There is to be no cheating in this course - be it via plagiarism or some other form of falsification. I may run all student papers through the software that checks for academic violations. Students who do not adhere to the highest levels of integrity may receive zero credit on assignment or exam, fail the course, or suffer some other consequence, depending on the action.

Other Expectations
I expect that you will not show up late to class consistently. I expect that you will treat your fellow classmates and me with respect and dignity.

Disabilities
People with disabilities will be fully included in this course. Please inform me if you need any special accommodations in the curriculum, instruction, or assessments of this course to enable you to participate fully. Confidentiality of the shared information will be strictly maintained. Certain accommodations may require the assistance of the UW’s McBurney Disability Office - http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu/

Email
I will return emails from students within three business days. Do not email shortly before a class or presentation with the expectation that I will be able to respond immediately to your concern. All class email communication will be through the class (DoIT) email and class list serves.
Late Assignments and Make Up Policy
All assignments that are not provided to me at the beginning of class (or when I request them in class) will be reduced by 20% automatically. Assignments will then be deducted by another letter grade for each additional day late (beginning at 8 AM the next day). I do not accept late assignments in my mailbox or under my door. Also, I do not accept assignments via email unless otherwise indicated by me. Late presentations (or other assignments) due to illness will be handled on a case-by-case basis and may also result in deductions. Make up assignments are at my discretion and may not match the assignment provided in class.

Readings
There is a strong expectation that all assigned readings will be completed in a timely fashion and that enough time will have been spent to properly consider the text assigned. This is a graduate course, and thus, my expectations are that all students will come to class prepared. I encourage you to purchased used copies of the books (or check these books out from the local library) to reduce expenses.


5. The KSCS case studies are available for purchase at: http://hbsp.harvard.edu. Locate the appropriate case, pay the fee, and download the information.

6. All other readings and materials are available on Learn@UW or as listed below.

Class Schedule

Week 1 - 1/24  
Course Overview and In-Class Sign-Ups

Week 2 - 1/31  
Policy, Politics, and Goals

Read  
*Stone, Policy Paradox, Introduction & Chapters 1-5 (Discussion Leaders for Chapter 5)

Listen  
*Red State Blue State (Archive #478, http://www.thisamericanlife.org/)

Week 3 - 2/7  
Policy, Problems, and Solutions

Read  
*Stone, Policy Paradox, Chapters 7-12 (Discussion Leaders for Chapters 11 & 12)  
*KSCS - Breaking the "Circle of Poison": Senator Patrick Leahy and Pesticide Export Controls
Week 4 - 2/14  Overview - Public Policymaking Process Theories

Read
*Lindblom, The Science of Muddling Through
*Baumgartner and Jones, Agenda Dynamics and Policy Subsystems
*Schneider and Ingram, Social Construction

Listen

Week 5 - 2/21  A Focus on One Theory

Read
*Kingdon, Chapters 1-3 (Discussion Leaders for Chapter 3)
*KSCS: Against All Odds: The Campaign in Congress for Japanese American Redress

Week 6 - 2/28  A Focus on One Theory

Read
*Kingdon, Chapters 4-9 (Discussion Leaders For Chapters 8 & 9)

Listen
*Take the Money and Run (Archive #461, http://www.thisamericanlife.org/)

Week 7 - 3/7  Policy Formation and Adoption in Legislatures 1

In-Class Sign-Up
Final Presentation Date

Read
*Birnbaum and Murry, The Showdown at Gucci Gulch, Introduction-Chap. 6 (Discussion Leaders)

Week 8 - 3/14  Policy Formation and Adoption in Legislatures 2

Read
*Birnbaum and Murry, The Showdown at Gucci Gulch, Chap. 7-11 (Discussion Leaders)

Watch
**“The Candidate”** - a 1972 movie starring Robert Redford and directed by Michael Ritchie. This movie is available for rent (inexpensively) on-line from Amazon.com or for check out from any number of other distributors.

Week 9 - 3/21  Class Simulation: Reelection Roulette = Note Possible Class Location Change

Research
*Wisconsin State Legislature and State’s Legislative Policymaking Process

Week 10 - 3/28  No Class-Spring Break

Week 11 - 4/4  Policy Implementation 1

Read
*Furlong and Kerwin, Chapters 1-5 (Discussion Leaders for Chapter 5)

**Compare and Contrast**
*Gov. Walker’s Executive Order 50 with the Federal Gov’t Executive Order 12866

**Study**

**Week 12 - 4/11**
Policy Implementation 2 = Note Possible Schedule Change

**Read**
*Furlong and Kerwin, Chapters 6-7

**Listen**

**Week 13 - 4/18**
The Media and Public Policymaking (followed by Policy Implementation 3)

On the Media: In-Class Speaker (1:20-2:20 pm)

**Read**
*Yackee and Yackee, A Bias Towards Business (Discussion Leaders)  
*Yackee and Yackee, Is Rulemaking Ossified?

**Week 14 - 4/25**
In-Class = Presentations A

**Week 15 - 5/2**
In-Class = Presentations B

*All student groups will receive written feedback on their presentations on Friday May 3rd before 11:59 pm.

**Week 16 - 5/9**
In-Class Speaker (from 1:20-2:20 pm)

*Group Papers Due in Class!