

PUBLIC POLICY AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Winter 2020

Instructor: Greg Flynn
Email: flynngr@mcmaster.ca
Class: Mon, Thur - 1:30 – 2:20
Room: LRW 1055

Office: KTH 543
Office Hours: Tues 2:30-4:30

Contents

Course Description.....	3
Course Objectives.....	3
Required Materials and Texts	4
Class Format.....	4
Course Evaluation – Overview	4
Course Evaluation – Details	4
Tutorial Participation (10%) – weekly, beginning January 13, 2020.	4
Problem Based Learning Session Participation (10%) – bi-weekly, beginning January 23, 2020.....	5
Policy Actors Paper (20%), February 10, 2020.....	6
Take Home Exam (20%), March 30, 2020.....	6
White Paper Group Assignment (40%), April 06, 2020.....	6
Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings	7
Week 1 (Jan 06, 09) Public Policy Concepts and Wicked Problems	7
Week 2 (Jan 13, 16) Policy Actors.....	7
Week 3 (Jan 20, 23) Policy Actors.....	8
Week 4 (Jan 27, 30) Establishing Policy Problems.....	8
Week 5 (February 03, 06) Establishing Policy Problems	9
Week 6 (Feb 10, 13) Policy Decision Making	9
Week 7 (Feb 17 - 23) - Reading Week	9
Week 8 (Feb 24, 27) Policy Decision Making	10
Week 9 (Mar 02, 05) Implementing Policy Decisions.....	10
Week 10 (Mar 09, 12) Implementing Policy Decisions.....	10
Week 11 (Mar 16, 19) Policy Outcomes	11
Week 12 (March 23, 26) Policy Outcomes	11
Week 13 (Mar 30, Apr 02) Completing the Cycle	12

Week 14 (Apr 06) Completing the Cycle.....	12
Course Policies	12
Submission of Assignments.....	12
Grades.....	12
Late Assignments	13
Absences, Missed Work, Illness	13
Avenue to Learn	14
Turnitin.com.....	14
Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)	15
University Policies	15
Academic Integrity Statement.....	15
Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities.....	16
Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy	16
Course Modification	16

Course Description

The choices that governments make in relation to the public goods and services provided to the public have an impact on all of a nation's citizens on a daily basis, often times without people even thinking about the decisions governments have made. In this context, public policy decisions have the ability to disproportionately benefit some groups and disadvantage others. In addition, governments are invariably judged by the electorate on the success or failures of their policies and political parties are measured, in part, on the policy choices they offer during the course of election campaigns. In short, public policy decisions are at the heart of politics in democratic states and form the basis of decisions about the quality of governance of a country.

The course is intended to give students an introductory understanding of two separate, but inter-related sub-fields of political science – public policy and public administration. It will also provide students with a background in both fields to provide for a better understanding of more specific policy related issues in the other sub-fields, such as international relations, Canadian and comparative politics.

The course will use a problem based learning approach to understanding public policy and public administration, through the use of in-class discussions in a guided group format and attendance and participation will be important parts of the learning process. In addition, it will also employ both independent and group based approaches in some of the evaluation methods.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course students should:

- Have a greater understanding of the policy-making process in democratic states and to be able to assess it at an introductory level from two different halves of the policy equation – inputs (policy) and outputs (administration);
- Be able to describe the constituent elements of the policy cycle;
- Identify the different types of policy actors in Canada and other democratic states;
- Appreciate the complicated nature of identifying, detailing and resolving public policy problems.
- Analyze current political and public policy issues from different policy and administration related perspectives; and
- Appraise the validity and legitimacy of arguments advanced in public by politicians and the media in relation to claims of policy successes or failure

Required Materials and Texts

- Various readings (as listed below) available through the McMaster University libraries or Google Scholar as well as being made available through Avenue to Learn.

Class Format

The class is scheduled for two one-hour sessions per week plus a tutorial.

The Instructor led sessions will consist of either an interactive lecture format by the instructor with students having the opportunity to ask questions concerning the information being provided to them or a discussion based format that will approach the lecture content from a problem based perspective. During these discussion sessions, students will review and explore the assigned problem in a small group format and guided by the instructor and/or teaching assistant as a means of better understanding the relevant lecture content on the topic.

The third hour of instruction in the course will be undertaken by way of tutorials. The tutorial discussions will focus on clarifying questions that arise out of the weekly reading as well as the lectures AND will provide students with an opportunity to meet with group members to work on the relevant group work throughout the course. In addition, the tutorials will serve as the opportunity for students to receive instruction and feedback on their assignments.

Tutorials begin the week of January 13, 2020.

In addition to formal class time, students are invited to meet with the instructor during regular office hours or by appointment to discuss course content or any other concerns.

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. Tutorial Participation - weekly, beginning January 13, 2020
2. PBL Participation - biweekly, beginning January 23, 2020
3. Policy Actors Paper - February 03, 2020
4. Take Home Exam - March 30, 2020
5. White Paper - April 06, 2020

Course Evaluation – Details

Tutorial Participation (10%) – weekly, beginning January 13, 2020.

Participation in tutorial discussions will account for ten percent of the final grade.

Students should note that participation is not synonymous with attendance and that students are expected to not only attend tutorial, but to ask questions of and participate in the discussions about the weekly readings.

At the outset of each tutorial, students will be asked to sign an attendance sheet indicating their presence for that week and it is the sole responsibility of students to ensure that they have signed the sheet.

Please note that signing an attendance sheet on behalf of someone who is not present in a tutorial session constitutes an offence under the academic integrity policy of McMaster University.

Students may participate in the tutorial discussion in one of three ways. First, they may make comments or ask or respond to questions asked during the course of the weekly discussions. Second, students may submit a brief summary of the weekly reading and pose two questions that they have after having completed the readings or that are not fully explained therein. These summaries and questions must be provided to the TA at the beginning of the tutorial for each week. Third, students may post comments on a discussion thread on Avenue to Learn for their individual and specific tutorial group after the tutorial session and only within a reasonable period of time after each tutorial and before the next scheduled tutorial meeting.

Only those students who have attended tutorial and signed the attendance sheet will have the option of having this third form of discussion contribute to their participation grade.

Tutorial groups will focus on clarifying and applying the material set out in the readings to the lecture content, but could also include a discussion of contemporary political debates, albeit in light of the historical and theoretical perspectives associated with public policy or public administration of the issue.

Please note that weekly questions must be submitted in hard copy/paper format. Electronic copies will not be accepted or considered for grading.

Problem Based Learning Session Participation (10%) – bi-weekly, beginning January 23, 2020.

Participation in the problem based learning sessions will also account for ten percent of the final grade in the course.

The problem based learning component of the course is intended to provide students with an opportunity to tie the theoretical and/or conceptual issues discussed in lectures and readings to real world, contemporary problems facing governments in Canada and throughout the world.

Participation in the PBL sessions will take place in small groups and as guided by the instructor and/or teaching assistants. Students will be graded on their contributions to the discussions, including asking clarifying questions, linking theory and concepts to the case study, raising or considering other relevant examples and their willingness to respond to questions within the group when asked. As it is a small group and discussion based

approach, participation can only be graded on the basis of the actual attendance and taking part in the conversation in the small groups.

Policy Actors Paper (20%), February 10, 2020

As part of the major group project, students will submit a six to eight page for the group that will consist of twenty percent of the final grade.

As a first step, Students will choose a policy problem that is of current relevance to a government in Canada and submit a “policy map” outlining all of the relevant government and non-government departments, actors and/or organizations within the policy subsystem who have an interest in the policy problem as well as identify their general preferred policy options or directions associated with their interests.

The policy map may consist of either a written summary of the various policy actors and their interests and positions or of a visual depiction of the policy subsystem accompanied with an explanation of the various policy interests and positions.

Take Home Exam (20%), March 30, 2020

The take home exam will be based on all materials covered in the lectures, discussions and assigned readings throughout the semester and will account for twenty percent of the final grade in the course.

The exam will provide students with an opportunity to apply the course material they have learned over the course of the semester in a general fashion and cover as much material as possible.

As this is an exam, it is due one March 30, 2020 and there will be no extensions and very limited accommodations for any reason, including work in other courses, and MSAFs cannot be used to extend the deadline. As such, please plan your course and other work schedules accordingly.

White Paper Group Assignment (40%), April 06, 2020

The White Paper group assignment is a significant research project that should reflect an understanding of course content and makes up forty percent of the final grade for the course.

White papers are comprehensive policy documents that are used by governments to consider a substantial change in policy direction in a particular policy domain. These documents usually involve a fairly extensive consideration of the following:

- history of the policy space and government action therein,
- considerations of alternate definitions/framing of policy issues/problems in the space,
- listing and positions of relevant policy actors,

- an examination of existing and possible policy options and the evidence supporting them, and
- a recommendation for future action.

Examples of existing white papers can be found on [Paperflite](#).

Students will work in groups of three or four from within their tutorials to provide a detailed White Paper on a policy area of their choice.

The group project should address the various issues raised above. In this regard, it is expected that students will need to consult academic and non-academic sources to research their briefs, including primary research where possible.

The white paper should be 35 to 40 double spaced pages in length, exclusive of bibliography and references.

A list of potential topics will be provided to the class in early January.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1 (Jan 06, 09) Public Policy Concepts and Wicked Problems

January 06, 2020

Introduction to Public Policy and Public Administration and Review of Course Outline

January 09, 2020

Public Policy Definitions and Concepts and Public Policy as Wicked Problems

Readings:

- Howlett, Michael, M. Ramesh and Anthony Perl. 2009. *Studying Public Policy: Policy Cycles & Policy Subsystems, 3rd edition*. Oxford University Press, Introduction.

Week 2 (Jan 13, 16) Policy Actors

January 13, 2020

Government Policy Actors

January 16, 2020

Government and Non-Government Policy Actors

Readings:

- Hooghe, Liesbet and Gary Marks. 2003. "Unraveling the Central State, But How? Types of Multi-Level Governance" *American Political Science Review* 97(2), 233-243.

Note: Tutorials begin this week and will include organization of group projects. Attendance is strongly recommended.

Week 3 (Jan 20, 23) Policy Actors

January 20, 2020

Non-Governmental Policy Actors

January 23, 2020

PROBLEM BASED LEARNING SESSION

Readings:

- Burstein, Paul and April Linton. 2002. "The Impact of Political Parties, Interest Groups and Social Movement Organizations on Public Policy: Some Recent Evidence and Theoretical Concerns" *Social Forces* 81(2), 381-408.
- Case Study #1

Week 4 (Jan 27, 30) Establishing Policy Problems

January 27, 2020

Problem Definition, Framing and Discourse

January 30, 2020

Causal Stories

Readings:

- Rochefort, David A. and Roger W. Cobb. 1993. "Problem Definition, Agenda Access, and Policy Choice" *Policy Studies Journal* 21(1), 56-71.

Week 5 (February 03, 06) Establishing Policy Problems

February 03, 2020

Agenda Setting and Policy Windows

February 06, 2020

PROBLEM BASED LEARNING SESSION

Readings:

- Jones, Bryan D. and Frank R. Baumgartner. 2004. "Representation and Agenda Setting" *Policy Studies Journal* 32(1), 1-24.
- Case Study #2

Week 6 (Feb 10, 13) Policy Decision Making

February 10, 2020

Venue Shifting/Shopping

February 13, 2020

Venue Shifting and Evidence/Information Based Policy Making

Readings: Flynn, Greg. 2011. "Court Decisions, NIMBY Claims, and the Siting of Unwanted Facilities: Policy Frames and the Impact of Judicialization in Locating a Landfill for Toronto's Solid Waste" *Canadian Public Policy* 37(3), 381-393.

Week 7 (Feb 17 - 23) - Reading Week

Readings: None

Week 8 (Feb 24, 27) Policy Decision Making

February 24, 2020

Evidence, Information and Ideology

February 27, 2020

PROBLEM BASED LEARNING SESSION

Readings:

- Parsons, Wayne. 2002. "From muddling through to muddling up – evidence based policy making and the modernization of British government" *Public Policy and Administration* 17(3), 43-60.
- Case study #3

Week 9 (Mar 02, 05) Implementing Policy Decisions

March 02, 2020

Policy Instruments

March 05, 2020

Policy Instruments

Readings:

- Salamon, Lester M. ed. 2002. *The Tools of Government: A Guide to the New Governance*. Oxford University Press, Introduction.

Week 10 (Mar 09, 12) Implementing Policy Decisions

March 09, 2020

Policy Instruments

March 12, 2020

PROBLEM BASED LEARNING SESSION

Readings:

- Peters, Guy B. 2005. "The Problem of Policy Problems" *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis* 7(4), 349-370.
- Case Study #4

Week 11 (Mar 16, 19) Policy Outcomes

March 16, 2020

Policy Evaluation as a Process

March 19, 2020

Policy Evaluation and Performance Measures

Readings:

- Wallner, Jennifer. 2008. "Legitimacy and Public Policy: Seeing Beyond Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Performance" *Policy Studies Journal* 36(3), 421-433.

Week 12 (March 23, 26) Policy Outcomes

March 23, 2020

Performance Measures

March 26, 2020

PROBLEM BASED LEARNING SESSION

Readings:

- de Lancer Julnes, Patria and Marc Holzer. 2001. "Promoting the Utilization of Performance Measures in Public Organizations: An Empirical Study of Factors Affecting Adoption and Implementation" *Public Administration Review* 61(6), 693-708.
- Case Study #5.

Note: Take Home Exam will be distributed in class on March 26, 2020.

Week 13 (Mar 30, Apr 02) Completing the Cycle

March 30, 2020

Democracy and Accountability

April 02, 2020

Accountability Measures and Processes

Readings:

- Bell, Jeffrey Graham. 2006. "Agents of Parliament: A New Branch of Government?" *Canadian Parliamentary Review* 29(1), 13-21.

Note: Take Home Exam due in class on March 30, 2020.

Week 14 (Apr 06) Completing the Cycle

April 06, 2020

Accountability Measures and Conclusions

Readings: *None*

Note: White Paper group assignment due in class on April 06, 2020.

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

Written assignments should be provided to the instructor, either at the beginning of class or during office hours prior to class. As a last resort, assignments can be submitted to the box outside of the political science office after hours (date-stamped for the following day) or to the Department of Political Science Office during regular business hours. Assignments will not be accepted that are slipped under the instructor's or any other door.

Papers received by e-mail or fax will not be accepted without the prior express permission of the instructor on each assignment.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

Late Assignments

Students should make all reasonable attempts to submit papers on the due date. In the event that a legitimate extension is required, students should speak to the instructor ***in advance*** of the due date to make the appropriate arrangements for such an extension. Requests for an extension submitted by e-mail will not be considered – you must speak to the instructor in person.

Examinations and/or assignments related to this and other courses do not constitute or qualify as exceptional circumstances or legitimate excuses.

Late papers may be penalized at the rate of five percentage points per working day for each day of delay, up to a maximum of one week. After one week, the instructor may refuse to accept any late assignments in the absence of proper medical certification justifying an inability to fulfill academic requirements on a prolonged basis. Papers accepted after one week of lateness, in addition to the daily deduction, will be subject to a further deduction of one full letter grade (ie. A to B, B to C) per each week of lateness.

The instructor reserves the right to not provide any comments or feedback on papers submitted after the original deadline, whether an extension is granted or not and whether any other late penalties are applied.

IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES, A LATE ASSIGNMENT MUST BE SUBMITTED FOR GRADING PRIOR TO THE RETURN OF THE GRADED ASSIGNMENTS TO THE CLASS OR IT WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AND NO MAKEUP OR REPLACEMENT ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE PROVIDED.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

Students should make all reasonable efforts to attend and are responsible for the material covered in each and every scheduled class. However, it is understood that some absences are unavoidable and students should make every effort to catch up on missed

materials and the instructor will provide reasonable assistance to assist a student. In this regard, students should attempt to obtain lecture notes or other class materials from their colleagues in the class before seeking assistance from the instructor concerning missed lecture and/or class content.

Requests for the instructor to repeat a lecture or seminar discussion (either during office hours or at any other time) or provide access to the instructor's lecture notes are not reasonable requests for assistance.

In the event that students are unable to attend class or tutorials or complete required assignments, they should avail themselves of the MSAF policy or submit the appropriate medical or other documentation to their faculty office to support an accommodation request based on a prolonged absence. In the absence of either an MSAF or a faculty approved accommodation request, the instructor reserves the sole right to not accept any outstanding work in accordance with the late assignments policy.

If a student has submitted the appropriate documentation to their faculty and been granted an allowance for outstanding work or has received the approval of the instructor for the incomplete work, the instructor reserves the sole right to re-allocate the missed grades to other assignments.

Please note that an MSAF submission, where permitted, provides a three day extension for any assignment. In the event that students require a further period of time to submit their outstanding work, they must discuss any further extension with the instructor prior to the end of the three day MSAF extension. In the absence of a further approved extension, an assignment subject to an MSAF becomes a late submission after three days.

The filing of an MSAF does not relieve a student of the obligation to complete the outstanding assignment.

Avenue to Learn

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Turnitin.com

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via Avenue to Learn (A2L)

plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work through A2L and/or Turnitin.com must still submit an electronic and/or hardcopy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com or A2L. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more information please refer to the [Turnitin.com Policy](#).

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students requiring a RISO accommodation should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests

University Policies

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behavior in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behavior can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University's Policy for [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#).

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective January 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Course Modification

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.