

PUBLIC POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION
POLSCI 2U03
Winter 2022, Term 2

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Course Description

The choices that governments make in relation to the goods and services provided to the public have an impact on the 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 can disproportionately benefit some groups and disadvantage others. In addition, governments are invariably judged by the electorate on the success or failure of their policies and performance of political parties are measured, in part, on the policy choices they offer during the course of election campaigns. Public policy decisions are at the heart of politics in democratic states and form the basis of assessments about the quality of governance.

Course Objectives

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 sense of policy issues.

By the end of the course students should be able to:

- have a greater understanding of the policy-making process in democratic states
- assess the governing process with reference to inputs (policy) and outputs (administration)
- describe the constituent elements of the policy cycle and identify the different types of policy actors in Canada
- analyze current political and public policy issues from different perspectives

Required Materials and Texts

- There are no required texts for this course.
- The required readings for the course will be posted on Avenue to Learn. Students are strongly encouraged to complete the readings in advance of the date in which each topic will be addressed. As the course will employ a problem-based format, students will need to be fully prepared in order to have the optimum learning experience for those sessions.
- The readings also form part of the examinable content for the course. Students are also encouraged to locate and consult sources of information in addition to the assigned readings.

Class Format

The class is scheduled for one lecture session per week on Mondays plus a tutorial. Please note that the first four lectures (January 10-31, 2022) will be held on Zoom. The link is posted on Avenue. The remaining classes will be offered in-person in PCC 155, subject to Public Health advisories.

The lectures will provide information on various aspects of public policy and administration and students will have the opportunity to add comments and raise questions. They will review and explore relevant problems as a means of better understanding the relevant content.

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 readings as well as the lectures. In addition, the tutorials will serve as the opportunity for students to receive instruction and feedback on their assignments. Tutorials will begin on the week of January 17, 2022.

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

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. Policy Map (20%), due February 7, 2022
2. Briefing Note (20%), due March 4, 2022
3. Policy Instrument Advice (20%), due April 1, 2022
4. Final Examination (40%), date to be announced

Course Evaluation – Details

Assignment/test

The first three assignments may be completed individually or in a group of two students belonging to the same tutorial group. By submitting work with another student, both students accept and agree that the grade for the assignment will be shared by each student and that the assignment will be graded as a single document as a whole – contributions by each student will not be assessed individually. In addition, students agree and accept that all responsibility for the assignment, including both late submissions and academic dishonesty provisions, will be applied to both students in the event that there are any issues associated with the submission of the assignment.

1. Policy Map (20%), due February 7, 2022

Students will choose a policy problem that is of current relevance to a government (federal, provincial or municipal) 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 preferred policy options associated with their interests.

The policy map will present a written summary of the role of various policy actors and their interests and positions along with an explanation of their objectives and strategies. It will be 3-4 double spaced pages in length.

2. Briefing Note (20%), due March 4, 2022

Students will write a two-to-three-page maximum briefing note on an issue of current relevance to a national/federal, provincial or municipal government. The briefing note is expected to provide a synopsis of a complicated issue facing the government and present a range of options, including a recommendation for action. More information on the briefing note will be provided to students in class.

3. Policy Instrument Advice (20%), due April 1, 2022

Students will choose an issue of current relevance to a national/federal, provincial or municipal government and identify and explain at least four different policy instruments or tools that could be used to address the problem as well as suggest ways or means of measuring whether the various instruments could accomplish the government's policy goals. Students should include both the broad definition of the measures as well as specific data to support how to measure the success or failure of the policy option.

4. Final examination (40%), April 2022, date to be announced

The final exam will be based on all materials covered in the lectures and assigned readings throughout the course. The exam will provide an overall summary of the course for students and an opportunity to apply the material they have learned over the course of the term.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1 (Jan 10) Introduction

Reading No assigned reading

Week 2 (Jan 17) Public Policy: Concepts and Wicked Problems

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

Week 3 (Jan 24) Public Policy: Concepts and Wicked Problems

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

Week 4 (Jan 31) Policy Actors: Government

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

Week 5 (Feb 7) Policy Actors: Non-Government

Reading Paul Burstein 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.

Week 6 (Feb 14) Problem Definition

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

NOTE: Policy Map Due on Monday February 7, 2022.

Week 7 (Feb 21) Mid-term recess, NO CLASS

Week 8 (Feb 28) Agenda Setting

Reading Bryan Jones and Frank R. Baumgartner. 2004. "Representation and Agenda Setting" *Policy Studies Journal* 32 (1), 1-24.

NOTE: Briefing Note due on Friday March 04, 2022

Week 9 (Mar 07) Evidence Based Policy Decisions

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

Week 10 (Mar 14) Policy Instruments

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

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

Week 11 (Mar 21) Policy Implementation

Reading Bob Hudson, David Hunter and Stephen Peckham, 2019. "Policy failure and the policy implementation gap: Can Policy Support Programs Help?" *Policy Design and Practice* 2(1), 1-14.

Week 12 (Mar 28) Policy Evaluation

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

NOTE: Policy Instrument Advice due on Friday April 01, 2022.

Week 13 (Apr 04) Accountability Measures and Processes

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

Week 14 (April 11) Review

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

Written work must be uploaded to Avenue to Learn.

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 other courses do not constitute or qualify as exceptional circumstances or legitimate excuses.

Late papers will be penalized at the rate of five percentage points per working day for each day of delay, up to a maximum of one week, and entirely within the discretion of the instructor. 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. ***IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES, A LATE ASSIGNMENT***

MUST BE SUBMITTED FOR GRADING PRIOR TO THE RETURN OF ASSIGNMENTS TO THE CLASS OR IT WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF): In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”.

Courses With An On-Line Element

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, 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 a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Online Proctoring

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

Authenticity / Plagiarism Detection

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software.

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 details about McMaster’s use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The

Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

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 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.

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. **It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.**

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 behaviour 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. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#), located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights](#)

[& Responsibilities](#) (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online**.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 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.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.