

Organizations and Public Policy

Policy 82.4 (SOCY 39.1)

Spring Quarter 2007; 10A: TuTh 10 – 11:50

X-hour: W 3:00 – 3:50

Instructor: Melissa Wooten

Office: 109 Silsby Hall

Phone: 646-9041

Office hours: TBD

Email: Melissa.E.Wooten@dartmouth.edu

Course Description:

Laws and regulations moderate our behavior on a daily basis. Should I run the red light? Should I accurately report my income? The answers to these questions and others may depend in part on the penalties we'd face if found in violation of the laws governing driving and taxes. Whether we choose to obey or disobey, our behavior was influenced by the mere presence of regulation. We may choose to obey and protest simultaneously. You stop at the red light; but the following day you petition your city or county legislators regarding the usefulness of this light. You accurately report your income on your state or federal tax forms; but in the following election you vote for candidates that promise to lower taxes. As these examples illustrate, laws and regulations may shape your behavior, but as a citizen you also have the ability to shape the laws that govern your behavior as well.

Just as your individual behavior is shaped by regulations, and just as you have the ability to influence regulations, organizations too face similar circumstances. In this course we will closely examine the relationship between organizations and public policy. Most view this relationship as a fairly static one: legislatures craft and implement the public policies that organizations then follow. However, the relationship between organizations and public policy is far more dynamic and complex than this. Yes, public policy provides the rules and regulations to which organizations must adhere but not unlike individuals, organizations also have the ability to fully participate in the political process. As participants in the political process, organizations take an active role in forming public policy and in shaping the definition of compliance to public policy. By focusing on topics ranging from anti-trust regulation, civil rights employment legislation, incorporation laws, etc., emphasis in this course is placed on understanding the joint influence of organizations and governmental authorities on the public policy process.

In this course we will read and discuss theoretical and empirical research that focuses on the relationship between organizations and public policy. Readings will cover a broad range of social science topics including organization theory, collective action, and public policy.

Class Participation:

This class is a seminar and as such participation (15% of grade) is a vital component to your success. Completing the readings, attending class, and contributing to the discussions during class are equally important. Students are required to email me with three questions or topics they would like to discuss in class based upon the readings. If you fail to turn them in or they indicate that you haven't done the reading your class participation grade will be negatively affected. The questions are due by midnight before each class. Missing a significant number of classes will also hinder your ability to succeed in this course. As such, missing three class periods will automatically lower your overall participation score. Missing five or more class periods means that you automatically forfeit your participation score. This will result in a letter grade reduction from your overall score, no matter how well you performed in other parts of the course.

In addition to class participation, students will write 4 short papers (4-5 pages; 1500 words; 15% each of course grad) throughout the term, analyzing a specific issue or aspect of organizations and public policy (specific assignments will be handed out during the first week of class as well as the grading guidelines for these papers). Finally, students will hand in a final term paper (12 – 15 pages; 6,000 – 7,000 words; 25%) on a topic discussed with and approved by me.

Grades are determined, based on:

Class participation:	15%
Short Papers (4):	15%
Final Paper:	25%

Course Schedule and Readings:

Week 1: American Democracy and Organizations

March 27: Course Introduction.

March 29: de Tocqueville, Alexis. Democracy In America. Chapters 9 – 13 (pp. 173 – 232)

Scott, W. Richard. 1998. Organizations: Rational, Natural, and Open Systems. Chapter 1 (pp. 3 – 24)

Week 2: The Nation-State's Influence

April 3, 5: Dobbin, Frank. 1994. Forging Industrial Policy (262 p.)

We will meet during X hour this week

Week 3: Organizations Implementing Public Policy

April 10, 12: Selznick, Philip. 1949. TVA and the Grass Roots (269 p.)

We will meet during the X hour this week

Week 4: Policy, Organizational Demography, and Organizational Form

April 17: Fligstein, Neil. 1991. "The Structural Transformation of American Industry". (pp. 311 – 336, in *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analyses*. Walter Powell and Paul DiMaggio (Eds.))

Davis, Gerald, Kristina Diekmann, and Catherine Tinsley. 1994. "The Decline and Fall of the Conglomerate Firm in the 1980s: The Deinstitutionalization of An Organizational Form." *American Sociological Review* 59:547 – 570.

April 19: Wade, Swaminathan, and Saxon. 1998. "Normative and Resource Flow Consequences of Local Regulations in the American Brewing Industry". *Administrative Science Quarterly* 43: 905 – 935.

Week 5: Organizations and Political Activity

April 24: Mizruchi, Mark. 1989. "Similarity of Political Behavior among Large American Corporations." *American Journal of Sociology* 95: 401 – 24.

Fernandez, Roberto and Roger Gould. 1994. "A Dilemma of State Power: Brokerage and Influence in the National Health Policy Domain." *American Journal of Sociology* 99: 1455 – 1491.

New York Times. June 4, 2006. "Going Once, Going Twice, Gone!: How eBay Makes Regulations Disappear" (6 p.)

Week 6: Organizations and Social Movements/The Collective Action of Organizations

May 1: Merkel, Philip. 1991. "Going National: The Life Insurance Industry's Campaign for Federal Regulation after the Civil War." *Business History Review* 65: 528 – 553.

Armstrong, Elizabeth. 2002. "Crisis, Collective Creativity, and the Generation of New Organizational Forms: The Transformation of Lesbian/Gay Organizations in San Francisco." *Research in the Sociology of Organizations* 19:361 – 395.

May 3: Schneiberg, Marc. 2002. "Organizational Heterogeneity and the Production of New Forms: Politics, Social Movements, and Mutual Companies in American Fire Insurance, 1900 – 1930." *Research in the Sociology of Organizations* 19: 39 – 89.

Davis, Gerald and Doug McAdam. 2000. "Corporations, Classes, and Social Movements After Managerialism." *Research in Organizational Behavior* 22:193 – 235.

Week 7: Expansion of Civil Rights within Organizations

May 8: Dobbin, Frank, Lauren Edelman, John Meyer, W. Richard Scott, and Ann Swidler. 1988. "The Expansion of Due Process in Organizations." (pp. 71 – 98, in *Institutional Patterns and Organizations*. Lynne Zucker (Ed.))

Edelman, Lauren. 1992. "Legal Ambiguity and Symbolic Structures: Organizational Mediation of Civil Rights Law." *American Journal of Sociology* 97: 1531 – 1576.

May 10: Dobbin, Frank, John Sutton, John Meyer, and Richard Scott. 1993. "Equal Opportunity Law and the Construction of Internal Labor Markets." *American Journal of Sociology* 99: 396 – 427.

Kelly, Erin and Frank Dobbin. 1998. "How Affirmative Action Became Diversity Management." *American Behavioral Scientist* 41: 960 – 984.

Week 8: Organizations and Public Policy in the non-American Context

May 15: Spicer, Andrew. 2002. "Revolutionary Change and Organizational Form: The Politics of Investment Fund Organizations in Russia, 1992 – 1997." *Research in the Sociology of Organizations* 19: 91 – 124.

Djelic, Marie-Laure and Kerstin Sahlin-Andersson. 2006. Transnational Governance: Institutional Dynamics of Regulation. Read the Introduction, "A World of Governance: The Rise of Transnational Regulation." (pp. 1 – 28)

May 17: O'Brien, Robert, Anne Marie Goetz, Jan Scholte, and Marc Williams. 2000. Contesting Global Governance: Multilateral Economic Institutions and Global Social Movements. Read the Introduction, "Contesting Global Governance: Multilateralism and Global Social Movements." (pp. 1 – 23)

Week 9: Extensions and Concluding Thoughts

May 22, 24: During this week we will center our class discussions towards understanding how the topic of organizations and public policy relate to other sociological topics including globalization, corporate social responsibility, etc. We will also incorporate current events such as pension and retirement plans into our discussion to enrich our understanding of the influence that both organizations and policy makers have on the implementation and administration of these systems. The readings for this week's class will come from recent popular press articles and will be distributed at the end of Week 8.

Week 10:

May 29: No Classes. Please use this time to work on your final paper. I will make myself available to meet with each of you individually during our regularly scheduled class time.