

Nelson A. Rockefeller Center for Public Policy and the Social Sciences
Dartmouth College

PBPL 5: INTRODUCTION TO PUBLIC POLICY
Winter 2010 Term—Rockefeller 003

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10: MWF 10:00-11:05am
X-Hour: Thursday, 12:00-12:50pm
Office Hours: MWF 12:00-2:00pm
and by appointment

Course Philosophy: Public policymaking in the United States is characterized by scholars and politicians in a wide variety of ways. For some, public policy reflects “the authoritative allocation of values;” while others see the policymaking process from a more bottom line perspective—“who gets what, when, and how.” Still others have incorporated the overtly political nature of public policy by referring to the process as “partisan mutual adjustment,” and have acknowledged that public policymaking involves trade-offs and, at times, less than optimal policy outcomes—“satisficing.” Those who make public policy in the United States often wrestle with normative questions of what constitutes the “best” policy outcomes for the most people as they strive to reach the right balance between government intervention and citizens’ rights to “the pursuit of happiness.” James Madison clearly stated in the Federalist Papers that “if men were angels, no government would be necessary.” Unfortunately, citizens of the United States are not angels and, as a result, must be constrained in their self-interested pursuits. Public policy—influenced by economics, psychology, philosophy, political science, and religion—reflects the aspiration of creating a society in which its citizens behave in a way that reflects the broadly agreed upon societal norms and values, but also the day-to-day rules and regulations established by governments at all levels. As the art of political decision-making, public policy reflects the reality that: 1) penalties and incentives (“carrots and sticks”) are the primary forces in our society that constrain and facilitate daily activities; 2) information, who has how much of it and when, is key to structuring penalties and incentives; and that 3) thinking empirically, knowing what to measure and how to measure it, is as important as thinking normatively.

In this course we will pursue these aspects of public policy from a variety of perspectives. The term will be divided into four main components:

- I. The Nature of Public Policy: What is Public Policy, Who Makes It, and Why Study It?
- II. Making Public Policy: The Process, Structure, and Context of Policymaking
- III. The Policy Players: Institutional and Non-Institutional Actors
- IV. The Policy Game: Rules, Strategies, Culture, and Resources

In the concluding section of the course, we will be pursuing specific policy domains—environmental policy, education policy, health care policy, welfare policy, immigration policy, and defense policy.

PBPL 5 and the Public Policy Minor: The course is designed as the gateway offering for students beginning to pursue a minor in public policy through the Rockefeller Center. For those students who are '13s as well as those who are '12s or '11s, but have not yet begun their public policy minor, this course will serve as the required first course in the path toward completing the minor. In class, the requirements for the Public Policy Minor will be discussed in detail as well as a clear roadmap for completing the minor during your four years at Dartmouth College. As this is the introductory course in the minor, there are no course prerequisites for PBPL 5. Nonetheless, the course is designed with the assumption that students in the class have a solid understanding of the American political system. If you have completed an AP American Government class in high school (or its equivalent) or have taken GOVT 3: The American Political System here at Dartmouth, you should be prepared for this course. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your background in American politics, please speak with Professor Shaiko at the end of the first class meeting. A section of GOVT 3 is being taught at this time during this term. There are spaces available in that class if you would like to switch over to GOVT 3 for this term and then enroll in PBPL 5 next winter term.

Course Readings: There are six required books for this course; we will read each of the books in its entirety. There are three main texts that we will be reading throughout the term:

Stella Z. Theodoulou and Chris Kofinis, **The Art of the Game: Understanding American Public Policy Making**. (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, 2004).

John W. Kingdon, **Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies**. 2nd Edition. (New York: Longman, 2003).

Stella Z. Theodoulou and Matthew A. Cahn, eds., **Public Policy: The Essential Readings**. (New York: Prentice Hall, 1995).

The Theodoulou/Kofinis text will provide the basics for our exploration into the American public policy process. The Kingdon text, recently updated, is already a classic in the field of public policy. The Theodoulou/Cahn edited volume contains virtually all of the “must-read” public policy articles in the field, written by the best classic and contemporary scholars such as Sabatier, Lowi, Dahl, Heclo, Lindblom, Bardach, Wildavsky, Wilson, Weber, Friedman, Neustadt, and Domhoff.

The next three books will be read in sequence, during each of the components of the course. We will begin with Harold Winter’s **Trade-Offs: An Introduction to Economic Reasoning and Social Issues** while discussing the broad theories and models of public policymaking in Part I. We will then pursue policymaking processes and outcomes in each of the three branches of government. We will explore executive branch decision making through the White House and the federal bureaucracy in Part III through **The Art of Policy Making: Tools, Techniques, and Processes in the Modern Executive Branch**, by George Shambaugh and Paul Weinstein. We will also assess the role of the federal courts as public policymakers in Part IV in reading **Disabling Interpretations: The Americans with Disabilities Act in Federal Court** by Susan Gluck Mezey.

Harold Winter, **Trade-Offs: An Introduction to Economic Reasoning and Social Issues**. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).
George E. Shambaugh IV and Paul J. Weinstein, Jr., **The Art of Policy Making: Tools, Techniques, and Processes in the Modern Executive Branch**. (New York: Longman, 2003).
Susan Gluck Mezey, **Disabling Interpretations: The Americans with Disabilities Act in Federal Court**. (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005).

All six books are available for purchase at the Wheelock Bookstore in Hanover. The books are also available online via amazon.com and other book outlets. In some of the cases, used copies should be available as well.

Course Policies and Procedures: As this is an introductory course with a fairly large class size, much of the presentation of course material will occur in a lecture format. There will be opportunities for discussion of the readings and lectures throughout the term. Please feel free to ask questions or present comments during class. While there will not be attendance taken in class, it will be very difficult to do well in this course without attending class. I assume that you can read the English language; therefore, the readings stand as the jumping off points for class lectures. Obviously, the Dartmouth College Honor Code is in effect in the course. I will not tolerate cheating/plagiarism of any kind.

You will note on the syllabus that part of many Friday classes is set aside for a “Rocky Moment.” During these brief breaks from the course material, the professor, Rockefeller staff, and current Rocky students will offer concise insights into some aspect of the Rockefeller experience at Dartmouth. By the end of the term, each student should be well informed about all of the curricular and co-curricular programming provided to students and should be ready to engage in one or more of these experiences.

We will be using X-Hours at various points throughout the term. As speakers supported by the Rockefeller Center who are speaking on issues relevant to the class come to campus, we will try to arrange for them to meet with the class, either in our typical MWF time slot or during the X-Hour. If they appear during regular class time, we will use the X-Hour that week to keep pace.

Regarding office hours, I will hold them as scheduled on the syllabus. I tend to be on campus and in my office every day of the week if I am in town. So, blitz me to make sure I am in my office. If I am free at that moment, I will be glad to meet with you.

Course Requirements: The requirements for the course include three writing assignments, a midterm examination, and a final examination. The first writing assignment, due on **Friday, January 15**, will be in the form of a critical essay (of roughly five double-spaced pages) that clearly identifies policy “trade-offs” made in some aspect of public policymaking at the federal level of government (using Winter’s

Trade-Offs as the basis for the analysis without using the examples that he presents in his book). The second writing assignment, due on **Thursday, February 11**, will be a “One-Pager.” You will take on the role of a lobbyist attempting to inform and persuade Members of Congress on some aspect of the ongoing healthcare reform legislation. The stock-in-trade for lobbyists is the one-pager. If you cannot say what you need to say to Members of Congress and their staffs in two sides of one page, you are lost. You may have a 50-page policy paper with all of the gritty details in it, but Members of Congress and their staffs want and need to see the tightest and most concise versions of political persuasion. This will be your task. For your third and final writing assignment, you will have the choice of writing a “Policy Memorandum” for the President of the United States on a policy issue in one of the following policy domains—environmental policy, education policy, health care policy, welfare policy, immigration policy, and defense policy **OR** writing an *amicus curiae* brief for a case pending before the Supreme Court of the United States. You will also have the option of completing this assignment on your own or in groups. We will discuss these options in class at the appropriate time. This final paper will be due on **Monday, March 1**. Papers #1 (critical essay) and #2 (one-pager) will each be worth 10 percent of your final grade. Paper #3 (policy memorandum/amicus brief) will be worth 20 percent of your final grade. We will also have a midterm examination (**Friday, January 29**) and a final examination (**Sunday, March 14 at 8:00am**). Each examination will be worth 30 percent of your final grade.

Class Schedule and Reading Assignments:

I. The Nature of Public Policy: What is Public Policy, Who Makes It, and Why Study It?

WEEK 1: Monday, January 4 Wednesday, January 6 Friday, January 8	Introduction to Public Policy: Course Requirements and Expectations; Overview of Public Policy as an Interdisciplinary Field of Study Readings: Theodoulou and Kofinis, Chapters 1,2,5: “The Foundation of Public Policy,” “The What: Policy Typologies,” and “The Policy Process,” pp. 1-35, 80-97; Theodoulou and Cahn, eds., Chapters 2-10: Sabatier, Lowi, Edelman, Salisbury, Dahl, Heclo, Miliband, Truman, Mills; Kingdon, Chapter 1: “How Does an Idea’s Time Come?” pp. 1-20. Winter, Trade-Offs, entire, pp. 1-124.
Friday Rocky Moment: “What is the Public Policy Minor?”	

II. Making Public Policy: The Process, Structure, and Context of Policymaking

WEEK 2: Monday, January 11 Wednesday, January 13 Friday, January 15	Readings: Theodoulou and Kofinis, Chapters 3,6-9: "The Where: Institutional Structure," "Problem Identification," "Agenda Setting," "Policy Design and Formulation," "Policy Adoption," pp. 36-53, 99-165; Theodoulou and Cahn, eds., Chapters 12-15: Cobb and Elder, Kingdon, Lindblom, Schulman; Kingdon, Chapter 4: "Processes," pp. 71-89. PAPER #1 DUE ON FRIDAY, JANUARY 15.
Friday Rocky Moment: "What is Civic Skills Training? What Internship Funding Opportunities Are Available through the Rockefeller Center?"	
WEEK 3: Wednesday, January 20 *Thursday, January 21 Friday, January 22 (No class on Monday, January 18: Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday)	Readings: Theodoulou and Kofinis, Chapters 10-12: "Policy Implementation," "Policy Evaluation," "Policy Change or Termination," pp. 166-219; Kingdon, Chapters 5-6: "Problems," "The Policy Primeval Soup," pp. 90-144; Theodoulou and Cahn, eds., Chapters 16-21: Bardach, Majone and Wildavsky, Sabatier and Mazmanian, Nachmias, Nagel, Rubin.
Friday Rocky Moment: "What is the Policy Research Shop?"	
WEEK 4: Monday, January 25 Wednesday, January 27 Friday, January 29	Readings: Readings on Congress and Healthcare Reform will be posted on Blackboard. MIDTERM EXAMINATION ON FRIDAY, JANUARY 29.

III. The Players: Institutional and Non-Institutional Actors

WEEK 5: Monday, February 1 Wednesday, February 3 Friday, February 5	Readings: Kingdon, Chapter 2: "Participants on the Inside of Government," pp. 21-44; Theodoulou and Kofinis, Chapter 4: "The Who: The Policymaking Actors," pp. 55-76; Theodoulou and Cahn, eds., Chapters 23-31: Fiorina, Mayhew, Light, Wildavsky, Wilson, Weber, Meier, Baum, Glazer. Shambaugh and Weinstein, The Art of Policymaking, entire, pp. 1-174.
Friday Rocky Moment: "What is the First-Year Fellowship?"	

<p>WEEK 6: Monday, February 8 Wednesday, February 10 Thursday, February 11 (No Class on Friday due to Winter Carnival.)</p>	<p>Readings: Kingdon, Chapter 3: “Outside the Government, But Just Not Looking In,” Theodoulou and Cahn, eds., Chapters 32-36: Iyengar and Kinder, Graber, Eldersveld, Berry, Sabato. PAPER # 2 DUE ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11.</p>
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IV. The Policy Game: Rules, Strategies, Culture, and Resources

<p>WEEK 7: Monday, February 15 Wednesday, February 17 Friday, February 19</p> <p>Friday Rocky Moment: “What is MLDP?”</p>	<p>Readings: Kingdon, Chapters 7-8: “The Political Stream,” “The Policy Window and Joining the Stream,” pp. 145-195; Theodoulou and Cahn, eds., Chapters 38-42: Beard, Hamilton/Madison/Jay, Rogin, Bowles and Gintis, Friedman; William Rehnquist, The Supreme Court, Chapters 11-14, pp. 209-266; (Posted on Blackboard). Mezey, Disabling Interpretations, Chapters 1-4, pp. 1-108.</p>
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<p>WEEK 8: Monday, February 22 Wednesday, February 24 Friday, February 26</p> <p>Friday Rocky Moment: “What are the new Leadership Courses being offered by the Rockefeller Center?”</p>	<p>Readings: Theodoulou and Kofinis, Part III: Policy Arenas: Exploring the Policy Process, Chapters 13-18, pp. 226-320; Mezey, Disabling Interpretations, Chapters 5-7, pp. 109-173.</p>
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<p>WEEK 9: Monday, March 1 Wednesday, March 3 Friday, March 5</p> <p>Friday Rocky Moment: “What is the Rockefeller Leadership Fellows Program?”</p>	<p>Readings: Kingdon, Chapters 9-10: “Wrapping Things Up,” “Some Further Reflections,” pp. 196-230; Theodoulou and Cahn, eds., Chapters 43-46: Neustadt, Edelman, Dahl, Domhoff; Theodoulou and Kofinis, Chapter 19: “Understanding Choices and Decisions,” pp. 322-329. PAPER #3 DUE ON MONDAY, MARCH 1.</p>
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<p>WEEK 10: Monday, March 8 Sunday, March 14</p>	<p>Conclusions; Review for Final Examination. FINAL EXAMINATION, 8:00AM.</p>
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