

***Introduction to Public Policy***  
**Political Science 361**  
**Spring 2010**

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January 5—February 9  
Hahn Hall of Administration, Los Angeles  
Advisement: By Appointment

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**Course Description**

This course will introduce students to public policy approaches, contexts, processes and outcomes. More specifically, this course will examine the processes by which public problems are (or are not) placed on the agenda, the processes by which we develop policy proposals to deal with those problems, the processes we use to decide whether to adopt a particular policy proposal, the implementation of those policies and the evaluation of policies (audits). We will examine all these processes both in the abstract (through readings and discussions) and through practice (through case studies and exercises in class and research projects). The course's seminar format ensures a student-centered learning experience, with a strong emphasis on discussion, analysis, and presentation by members of the class.

**Course Learning Objectives**

- Acquire an overview and an in-depth understanding of the fields of public policy, management and communication.
- Comprehend the public policy process, from identification of issues through policy analysis, to policy formation, implementation and evaluation.
- Show various leadership styles and/or strategies.
- Identify policy formation and implementation models.

**Required Materials**

- Peters, B. Guy. 2009. *American Public Policy: Promise and Performance*, Eighth Edition. CQ Press. Earlier editions NOT acceptable.
- Kingdon, John. 2003. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*, Second Edition. Longman Classics. Earlier editions NOT acceptable.
- Hacker, Diana. 2008. *A Pocket Style Manual*, Fifth Edition. Bedford/St. Martin's. Earlier editions or similar writing style manual that covers APA acceptable.

Books are available in the CSUN bookstore and online. Please bring the books with you to class meetings.

## Grading and Course Requirements

All assignments must be completed in order to receive academic credit for this course. This course will utilize the +/- grading system (B+, B, B-, etc.).

- Class Participation.....25%
- Position Paper.....40%
- Final Exam.....35%
- Plagiarism Tutorial and Test.....no credit for course unless completed

### Class Participation

This course will be conducted as a seminar rather than as a lecture (although I will begin each class with a brief lecture that will help to guide our group discussion). As such, it depends upon the regular and meaningful participation of each member of the class. Since we will be completing an entire semester's worth of coursework in only 6 weeks, it is absolutely essential that you attend every class meeting. It is also essential that you complete the required readings and assignments prior to the class for which they are scheduled.

Come to class prepared to discuss the readings critically. Your prepared participation will be expected in every class meeting. Your class participation will be evaluated not just on the quantity of your participation, but also on the quality and originality of your participation. The class will be more productive and more fun the more you participate in a meaningful way.

A component of the class participation grade is in-class debates. Members of the class will choose a debate topic at the beginning of the class, but they will be assigned a side to debate on (FOR or AGAINST the motion).

Each debate will last 30 minutes. You are expected to coordinate with your other team members to decide how to organize your side of the argument. Each debate will be comprised of an opening statement by each participant alternating between the "For" side and the "Against" side. These statements are 4 minutes each. You may use notes but there will be no visual aids. This will then be followed by 3 minutes of questions and comments from the audience, and 3 minutes of feedback. An anonymous poll of the audience will be taken before the debate and another one after. The debate "winner" will be the team who gains the most support from the audience. (This does not affect your grade.)

You will be graded on the following components of your presentation: research and data; articulation of argument; preparation; ability to answer questions and provide rebuttal.

### Position Paper

A 7 to 8 page position paper on the topic you sign up to debate is required. Similar to the class debates, a position paper describes a position on an issue and the rationale for that position. It is based on facts that provide a solid foundation for your argument. You may choose a position on your debate topic, but if the position you choose is one you've already formed an opinion on, be sure to examine your opinion of the issue critically in writing the position paper. All sources must be appropriately cited using APA citations and references. Position papers must be submitted online at turnitin.com by 5pm on the due date.

In the position paper you will:

- Trace the issue through the five stages of the policy making process.
- Use evidence from the assigned readings and from outside sources to support your position on the issue.
- Examine the strengths and weaknesses of your position.
- Evaluate possible solutions and suggest courses of action. In this section, you will recommend retaining, changing, or discontinuing a particular policy and provide evidence to support your recommendation.

Position papers will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Strength of argument
- Use of evidence from the assigned readings for the semester and from outside evidence that support the argument
- Your analytic ability and the overall quality of your writing, including grammar, style, organization, and clarity.

### Position Paper Proposal

In week 3 of the course, students will submit in hard copy a position paper proposal that states which topic they have chosen, which position they will argue, and what they expect the basis for their argument to be. Proposals should be no more than a half page (typed in a standard size 12 font, double-spaced, with 1 inch margins).

The proposal will not be graded but is required as part of your position paper grade. Failure to turn in the proposal will result in a reduction of your position paper grade.

### Final Exam

The final exam will include multiple choice, identification, short answer, and essay questions drawn from the reading materials and lectures. A study guide will be handed out a week before the final exam.

### IUB Plagiarism Tutorial and Test

In this online assignment, you will complete an online tutorial that will help you recognize, understand, and avoid plagiarism. You will then take a test based on the tutorial. You can take the test as many times as it takes to score 100%. Once you score 100% on the test, you will be able to view a web page with a certificate confirming that you completed the test. Print this certificate, sign it, and turn it in. You should keep a copy for yourself, as it is the only record you will have that you completed the tutorial and test and other instructors may request it from you in future courses. If you have already completed the tutorial and test for another course, you may turn in a copy of your signed certificate. The tutorial can be found at the following website:

<http://www.indiana.edu/~istd/index.html>

## Course Websites

- <http://csun.blackboard.com>
  - Blackboard is the web-based e-learning platform that is used to present and access your online course components such as the class syllabus and required readings. Instructions for accessing your account were emailed to you by the PSM office.
- <http://www.turnitin.com/>
  - Turnitin.com is a university endorsed online plagiarism prevention resource. The program identifies any material in a paper that may have previously appeared in published or web form or in another student paper in the secure database. Students are required to submit all written assignments (with the exception of the position paper proposal) using turnitin.com. To create an account, follow the steps below:
    - ✓ Go to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com)
    - ✓ Either log in if you have used the website before or click New User at the top right if this is your first time using the website.
    - ✓ Enter the **class ID number: 3017532**
    - ✓ Enter the **class enrollment password: 361s10**
- <http://www.csun.edu/~kmichaud/>
  - My website has the syllabus, links to the websites above, and some helpful resources.

## Student Conduct and Ethics

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a way that is appropriate for an institution of higher learning. This includes maintaining academic integrity and professionalism and refraining from any sort of behavior that is disruptive to me or your fellow students.

Plagiarism is a growing problem in the university. The university, and the MPA program, takes plagiarism very seriously. The university catalog defines plagiarism as intentionally or knowingly representing the words, ideas, or work of another as one's own in any academic exercise.

University policy states that cheating or plagiarism in connection with an academic program is an offense for which a student may be expelled, suspended, or given a less severe disciplinary sanction. Any student in my class found to have plagiarized any portion of submitted work will receive an F for the class and will be referred to the Office of Student Affairs for further disciplinary action.

## **Schedule of Readings and Assignments\***

*\*Subject to change.*

Tues, January 5 5 pm to 9:30 pm	<u>Introduction: What is Public Policy?</u> <b>Readings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Peters, Chapters 1 through 3</li></ul> <b>Policy Study: Energy and the Environment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Peters, Chapter 14</li></ul>
Sat, January 9 9 am to 5 pm	<u>Agenda Setting I: Players and Models</u> <b>Readings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Peters, Chapter 4</li></ul> <b>Policy Study: Health Care</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Peters, Chapter 11</li></ul>
Sat, January 23 9 am to 5 pm	<u>Agenda Setting II: Choosing Issues</u> <b>Readings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Kingdon, Chapters 1 through 7</li></ul> <b>Policy Study: Education</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Peters, Chapter 13</li></ul> <b>Assignments Due</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Position Paper Proposal</li><li>• IUB Plagiarism Certificate</li></ul>
Sat, January 30 9 am to 5 pm	<u>Developing and Choosing Priorities: Policy Formulation, Legitimation, and Decision Making</u> <b>Readings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Peters, Chapters 5 and 17</li><li>• Kingdon, Chapters 8 and 9</li></ul> <b>Policy Study: Social Security and Welfare</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Peters, Chapter 12</li></ul>
Sat, February 6 9 am to 5 pm	<u>Budgeting, Implementation, and Evaluation</u> <b>Readings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Peters, Chapters 6 through 8</li></ul> <b>Policy Study: Defense and Law Enforcement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Peters, Chapter 15</li></ul>
Tues, February 9 5 pm to 9:30 pm	<u>Final Exam and Position Paper</u>