

**PSCI 6407F**  
**PUBLIC POLICY: THEORY AND ANALYSIS**  
(Public Affairs and Policy Analysis Core Course)

Tuesday 14:35 – 17:25

Please confirm location on Carleton Central

**Instructor:** S. E. Bennett

**Office:** A627 Loeb Building

**Office Hours:** 8:30 to 12:30 Mondays  
11:00 to 12:00 Tuesdays

**Phone:** 613-520-2600 ext. 2791

**Email:** [sebalpha@connect.carleton.ca](mailto:sebalpha@connect.carleton.ca)

Note that the above office hours may not be held during the first week of classes and are sometimes cancelled due to conflict with various university meetings.

Read this syllabus carefully. This syllabus stipulates class policies. Exemptions from these policies will not be granted.

Note: In so far as possible, you should try to communicate with the instructor in class or through electronic mail. In person meetings during office hours should be reserved for problems that cannot be dealt with any other way.

Note: Class related email communications should be via your Carleton Connect account.

**NATURE OF COURSE**

This course is for graduate students interested in understanding public policy. For doctoral students it serves several purposes, including preparation for comprehensive exams. For masters students, it is an entry into graduate studies of public policy and a place where research interests can be explored.

The course will have the following major foci:

- Obtaining an overview of some of the theoretical approaches commonly used to explain public policy in academic circles

- Learning about some of the major putative crises/problems facing human communities in the context of several enduring trajectories of human history
- Attempting to see if existing theory can provide any useful understanding of the largest issues that purportedly face modern polities and societies

In effect, we will be asking what the major academic perspectives on public policy are and whether or not academic perspectives on public policy can tell us anything useful about the unfolding of what some think are critical trends in the history and future of civilization. Doctoral students should be particularly concerned with the content, weaknesses and strengths of various theories.

Keep an open mind in this course. Think about what this might mean. Do not take the course if you have even the slightest inclination that you are unable to conceptually move beyond some cause, ideology, belief or identity that you have already taken to heart. People who are already dysfunctional “true believers” of whatever sort are likely to be dissatisfied with the course and an annoyance to other students. There are secular true believers as well as spiritual ones.

### MAIN TEXTS

Most of the following have been ordered as main texts, but do not buy them until after the first class. Some of them are more important than others, and you will need advice on their relative importance. These main texts will mostly be used in the first part of the course.

Castles, Francis G.

The Future of the Welfare State: Crisis Myths and Crisis Myths and Crisis Realities

Howlett, M., Ramesh M. and Perl, A.

Studying Public Policy: Policy Cycles and Policy Subsystems (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.)

John, Peter

Analysing Public Policy (This book will probably only be available on reserve and may not be available for sale.)

Sabatier, Paul A. (ed.)

Theories of the Policy Process (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.)

Readings will be drawn from other sources as well. Some of them will prove to be almost as important as the official main texts. Generally, additional readings should be on reserve.

## **GRADING AND PRELIMINARY COMMENTS ON COURSE WORK**

Major Seminar Paper	75% of course grade
Participation	25% of Course Grade

More details on the paper will be provided in class. It is due in digital form (using a readable and writable medium) in the last class (December 1). In order for the student to have a chance at a reasonable grade, the paper must be at least 6250 words long at a bare minimum. Typically, many papers are considerably longer than this. Also, during that last class, you will make an oral presentation of your final work, if time permits.

Students may be allowed the option of writing an extensive take-home exam in place of a paper. However, the amount of work will be just as great a writing a research paper. The main difference is simply that the instructor will set the questions to be addressed.

Class participation is judged primarily in terms of presentations of one's own work and presentations of readings for which one is responsible. There may be other minor elements to participation. Generally, it is expected that a student would make at least 3 presentations on readings. In addition, students will also do a mid-course presentation on their proposed major paper. If time permits, there will also be a presentation of final papers.

If you are principally responsible for a particular part of the readings in a given week, you should prepare a typed summary of that area and provide copies of that summary to the class. You should also provide the instructor with a WORD or POWERPOINT copy of your presentation.

If it turns out that enrolment this year is very small, some adjustments may have to be made in presentation responsibilities of students.

## **MAIN TOPICS AND READINGS**

The following topics and readings will provide the main framework for the course. The general flow of the course will be to first consider general questions of theory and to follow this with consideration of trajectories that are linked to the major potential problems confronting human communities. It is likely that the course will not explicitly cover all of the material outlined, depending on time constraints, class size, student mix and student interests. It is also likely that we will expand readings on certain topics beyond what is indicated below.

All the time, the student should be considering what theories contain and whether the theories tell us anything useful about the major, large scale trajectories unfolding over long periods of time and how one could respond to them in a public context.

Note that the instructor considers it to be bad pedagogy and probably bad administration to assign in advance specific dates to the coverage of specific topics. In general, we want to spend about 6 or 7 weeks on the first seven topics, and we hope to spend the rest of the class on the remaining topics and activities. However, this is an expectation that can be altered in light of student background, interests and progress. Furthermore, it may prove to be of particular benefit to the doctoral students to spend more than the anticipated amount of time on the initial theory sections. We will cover as many of the topics as is appropriate and possible in the order listed below.

### **First Part of Course: Conventional Theory**

#### 1. Overview of Basic Perspectives on the Study of Public Policy

Howlett, et. al., Chapter 1 and 2

John, Chapter 1

Sabatier, Chapter 1

#### 2. Policy Process, Structures and Actors: Organizational and Institutional Components

Howlett, et. al., Chapters 3 to 8

John, Chapters 2 and 3

#### 3. Socio-Economic Approaches

Castles, Comparative Public Policy: Patterns of Post-War Transformation (1998), Chapters 2 and 3 may be a useful secondary reading here

John, Chapter 5

Sabatier, Chapter 9

#### 4. Different Perspectives on Policy Rationality

John, Chapter 6

Sabatier, Chapters 2 to 4

## 5. Ideas, Meaning and Related Elaborations as a Basis for Theory

John, Chapter 7

Topic 5 may interact to some degree with some of the topics covered in 4, but it has its own venerable history going back into the roots of modern social science and forward into some of the more subjective theoretical novelties of more recent times.

## 6. Group and Network Oriented Approaches

John, 4

Sabatier, Chapter 5

## 7. Synthetic Theories or Overviews Intended to Model Major Change and Stability

John, Chapter 8

Howlett, et al, Chapter 9

Sabatier, Chapters 6 and 7

## **Second Part of Course: Mid-Course Paper Proposals**

8. Probable Time for Preliminary Presentations on Proposed Paper Topics or Summaries of Theoretical Approaches (depending on rate of progress thus far)

## **Third Part of Course: Large Scale Policy Relevant Trajectories - Policy and the Stability and Survival of Complex Human Communities**

### 9. Trajectory One: Aspects of Ecological and Environmental Problems

McIntosh, Tainter, Keech McIntosh (eds.), The Way the Wind Blows: Climate, History and Human Action -Chapters 1, 12 and 13

### 10. Trajectory Two: Demographic Crises Old and New

Castles (2004) (Particularly Chapters 1, 6,7 and 8)

## 11. Trajectory Three: Technological Possibilities and Problems

Braman, Change of State: Information, Policy and Power (selected chapters)

Fukuyama, Our Posthuman Future: Consequences of the Biotechnology Revolution (selected chapters)

## 12. Crisis Three: Institutional Trajectories

Bratland, John, “On Societal Ascendance and Collapse: An Austrian Challenge to Jared Diamond’s Explications”

Diamond, Jared, Guns, Germs and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies, Chapter 14

## 13. Crisis Four: Multidimensional Trajectories: Collapse and Stability

Diamond, Jared, Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed, Chapters 1, 14, 15 and 16

Some additional material may be presented for reading in summary form relating to theories of historical cycles as well as theories of diminishing returns of complexity.

## 14. Final Presentations (If Time Permits)

### **OTHER RULES**

Without going into great detail, various other course, departmental and university rules apply to the conduct of any course. You are expected to know them. From, my point of view, the important rules are:

1. Do your work on time as described in this outline and in class. No credit is given for late work.
2. Do not engage in plagiarism.
3. Do not disrupt the class.
4. Keep an open mind with respect to value systems and approaches to inquiry.

At a more specific level, remember that:

1. Your presentations should be available as WORD or POWERPOINT documents and submitted to the instructor shortly before or shortly after you

do the actual presentation.

2. Your final paper should be turned in on some sort of digital storage device that is readable and writable and that you do not want back. This would normally be something like a RW CD or a memory stick of some sort. Papers should be in WORD format.

An attachment pertaining to general departmental or university rules of special importance to the Department and/or University is provided at the end of this document. The instructor only takes responsibility for the essence of the above material.

### **Academic Accommodations**

**For students with Disabilities:** Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (500 University Centre) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Registered PMC students are required to contact the centre (613-520-6608) every term to ensure that the instructor receives your request for accommodation. After registering with the PMC, make an appointment to meet with the instructor in order to discuss your needs **at least two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations**. If you require accommodation for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodation to PMC by **November 16, 2009 for December examinations** and **March 12, 2010 for April examinations**.

**For Religious Observance:** Students requesting accommodation for religious observances should apply in writing to their instructor for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student. Instructors and students may contact an Equity Services Advisor for assistance ([www.carleton.ca/equity](http://www.carleton.ca/equity)).

**For Pregnancy:** Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a *letter of accommodation*. Then, make an appointment to discuss your needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

**Plagiarism:** The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;

- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course's instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They include a mark of zero for the plagiarized work or a final grade of "F" for the course.

**Oral Examination:** At the discretion of the instructor, students may be required to pass a brief oral examination on research papers and essays.

**Submission and Return of Term Work:** Papers must be handed directly to the instructor and will not be date-stamped in the departmental office. Late assignments may be submitted to the drop box in the corridor outside B640 Loeb. Assignments will be retrieved every business day at **4 p.m.**, stamped with that day's date, and then distributed to the instructor. For essays not returned in class please attach a **stamped, self-addressed envelope** if you wish to have your assignment returned by mail. Please note that assignments sent via fax or email will not be accepted. Final exams are intended solely for the purpose of evaluation and will not be returned.

**Approval of final grades:** Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by an instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

**Course Requirements:** Failure to write the final exam will result in a grade of ABS. FND (Failure No Deferred) is assigned when a student's performance is so poor during the term that they cannot pass the course even with 100% on the final examination. In such cases, instructors may use this notation on the Final Grade Report to indicate that a student has already failed the course due to inadequate term work and should not be permitted access to a deferral of the examination. Deferred final exams are available **ONLY** if the student is in good standing in the course.

**Connect Email Accounts:** All email communication to students from the Department of Political Science will be via Connect. Important course and University information is also distributed via the Connect email system. It is the student's responsibility to monitor their Connect account.

**Carleton Political Science Society:** The Carleton Political Science Society (CPSS) has made its mission to provide a social environment for politically inclined students and faculty. Holding social events, debates, and panel discussions, CPSS aims to involve all political science students in the after-hours academic life at Carleton University. Our mandate is to arrange social and academic activities in order to instill a sense of belonging within the Department and the larger University community. Members can benefit through numerous opportunities which will complement both academic and social life at Carleton University. To find out more, please email [carletonpss@gmail.com](mailto:carletonpss@gmail.com), visit our website at [poliscisociety.com](http://poliscisociety.com), or come to our office in Loeb D688.

**Official Course Outline:** The course outline posted to the Political Science website is the official course outline.