PSCI 6407A
Public Policy – Theory and Analysis
Seminars: Wednesdays 0835 to 1125
Please confirm location on Carleton Central

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Office Hours: Wednesdays, 12:00 to 2:00 p.m. or by appointment

Course Description and Learning Outcomes:

PSCI 6407 and PSCI 6408 together constitute the core course for doctoral students in the Public Affairs and Policy Analysis field in the Department of Political Science. The aims of these courses are: first to provide students with a solid grounding in all aspects of theories and concepts relating to public policy and public affairs management; and second to prepare students for their comprehensive examinations at the end of their first year of doctoral studies. PSCI 6407 focuses on theories of public policy whereas PSCI 6408 focuses on public affairs management.

In this course we will undertake an exploration of the field of public policy by surveying a range of theoretical approaches for understanding and analyzing public policy. It is designed to familiarize students with the foundations of public policy theories – their basic concepts, constructs, and contributions to the field. Each seminar in the fall term is organized around seminal works and concepts in the field of public policy, beginning with the study of actors, institutions and ideas, and ending with an examination of some critical approaches. Readings on each subject are selected with the aim of introducing students to the key theoretical concepts and debates that make up the field of public policy.

Over the course of the term, students should develop critical analytic skills in comparing the different approaches, assessing their strengths, weaknesses, and explanatory power, and applying them to specific policy issues or situations. By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Identify the core components and assumptions of different theoretical approaches;
- Synthesize and critically analyze the contributions and limitations of these approaches;
- Apply these concepts to the analysis of practical policy problems.

The course will be structured around weekly discussions of required readings. Each week, one or two students will facilitate discussion, beginning with a brief synthesis of the assigned readings. Guidelines for facilitating discussions will be provided in class. All students are expected to come fully prepared to actively participate in discussions, regardless of whether they are presenting.

Academic Accommodations

For Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course are encouraged to contact the Paul Menton Centre (PMC) for Students with Disabilities (500 University Centre) to complete the necessary forms. 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 in-class test or CUTV midterm exam. This will allow for sufficient time to process your request. Please note the following deadline for submitting completed forms to the PMC for formally scheduled exam accommodations: **November 7th, 2008** for December examinations, and **March 6th, 2009** 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).

**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 Undergraduate Calendar defines plagiarism as: "to use and pass off as one's own idea or product, work of another without expressly giving credit to another." The Graduate Calendar states that plagiarism has occurred when a student either: (a) directly copies another's work without acknowledgment; or (b) closely paraphrases the equivalent of a short paragraph or more without acknowledgment; or (c) borrows, without acknowledgment, any ideas in a clear and recognizable form in such a way as to present them as the student's own thought, where such ideas, if they were the student's own would contribute to the merit of his or her own work. Instructors who suspect plagiarism are required to submit the paper and supporting documentation to the Departmental Chair who will refer the case to the Dean. It is not permitted to hand in the same assignment to two or more courses. The Department's Style Guide is available at: [http://www.carleton.ca/polisci/undergrad/Essay%20Style%20Guide.html](http://www.carleton.ca/polisci/undergrad/Essay%20Style%20Guide.html)

**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:** Students must fulfill all course requirements in order to achieve a passing grade. Failure to hand in any assignment will result in a grade of F. 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:** The Department of Political Science strongly encourages students to sign up for a campus email account. Important course and University information will be distributed via the Connect email system. See [http://connect.carleton.ca](http://connect.carleton.ca) for instructions on how to set up your account.

### Evaluation and Grading:

1) **Seminar participation: 10%**  
   Students will be evaluated on their participation in discussions of assigned readings each week. Evaluation parameters for participation will be distributed in the first seminar meeting. To facilitate discussion, each student is expected to submit two questions based upon the readings, prior to upcoming the class. Questions should make specific reference to the readings and should not be generic. Questions are to be posted in advance of the seminar, to the WebCT discussion list, and no later than Tuesday at 2:00 p.m.

2) **Presentations: 10%**  
   In addition, students will be assigned topics for which they will be responsible for leading class discussions. These seminar presentations are to be based on two readings from a given week. Presentations will be assigned at the beginning of the term, with each student presenting in a minimum of three seminars. Presentations should be no longer than 10 minutes, they should focus on key concepts, claims, issues etc, raised by the readings, and raise/pose questions for seminar discussions.

3) **Short Papers: 4 x 10% = 40%**  
   Each paper should take the form of critical discussion of a theme or hypothesis related to the readings from one week (excluding case studies). Papers should be handed in within one week of the class discussion of the topic. These essays are meant to be critical reviews of the work and must incorporate supplementary material. A minimum of two of these papers must be submitted no later than Wednesday October 29th.

4) **Research Essay: 40%**  
   Students are expected to submit an original analysis of a specific public policy issue, using literature drawn from the course syllabus. Specific paper topics must be discussed with the Instructor, and outlined in a written submission. Failure to submit a written outline of the proposed essay topic will result in an automatic penalty of -5/40 on the final paper. The essay will be no more than 25 pages, double-spaced. Additional details about and guidelines for the assignment will be distributed in class. The essay is due no later than **Monday December 8th, 2008 at 4 pm**. Late papers will be penalized at 5/40 per day, to a maximum of 20/40. Papers will not be accepted after Friday December 12th.
Course Schedule and Readings:

Most required and supplementary readings are available electronically through MacOdrum Library. There are two required texts available through Haven Books (43 Seneca Street at Sunnyside):


Required readings that are not available electronically will be placed on reserve in the Political Science Resource Room, C666 Loeb. Please note that the Resource Room is open from 8:30 a.m. – 4:15 p.m., Monday to Friday.

1) **Introduction: Major Approaches to Policy Analysis (September 10)**


**Supplementary Reading:**


2) **Rational Choice Approaches (September 17)**

Supplementary Reading:


3) Multiple Streams: Chance and Rationality in the Policy Process (September 24)


Supplementary Readings


4) Rational Institutionalism: Rules and Rationality in the Policy Process (October 1)


Supplementary Reading:


5) **History and Path Dependence: Historical Institutionalist Approaches** (October 8)


**Supplementary Reading**


6) **Ideas, Political Institutions and Policy Change** (October 15)

Supplementary Reading


7) Ideas As Causal Forces: Discourse, Policy Frames and Agenda Setting (October 22)


8) Actors and Ideas: Epistemic Communities and Policy Networks (October 29)


**Supplementary Reading:**


9) **Feminist Policy Analysis (November 5)**


**Supplementary Reading**


10) **Power Resources Models of Distributional Policy (November 12)**

Supplementary Reading


11) Political Economy and Public Policy (November 19)


Supplementary Readings


12) Globalization, Internationalization and Public Policy (November 26)

Supplementary Reading