POLS 6310 01
THE POLICY PROCESS
SPRING, 2017

Time: Monday, 4:15 beginning January 23, 2017
Place: McGannon Hall
Professor: James F. Gilsinan, McG 133
O: 977-3285
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Office Hours: By appointment – we can meet when it is convenient for you. I'm on phased retirement and not in the office on a regular schedule but, if you need to see me, no problem, we will work out a mutually agreeable time within a day or two of your request.

BOOKS TO PURCHASE
The following books are on order at the SLU Bookstore:

Flood, Joe. The Fires: How a Computer Formula, Big Ideas, and the Best of Intentions Burned Down New York City – and Determined the Future of Cities

Smith, Kevin B. and Christopher W. Larimer, The Public Policy Theory Primer, 3rd Edition

Stone, Deborah, Policy Paradox, The Art of Political Decision Making, 3rd Edition

Besides these books, the following articles, available on line, will be required:

Steinberger, Peter J. "Typologies of Public Policy: Meaning Construction and the Policy Process," Social Science Quarte4rly 63 (Sept. 1980), 185-197.

Lindblom, Charles E. "The Science of Muddling Through," Public Administration Review 19 (Spring, 1950), 79-88

Bachrach, Peter and Morton Baratz, "The Two Faces of Power," American Political Science Review," 56 (1962), 947-952.

Innes, Judith and David Booher, "Network Power in Collaborative Planning, Journal of Planning Education and Research," 21 (3) (2003), 221-236.

Jones, M. D., and McBeth, M.K. "A Narrative Policy Framework: Clear Enough to Be Wrong?," Policy Studies Journal, 38 (2) (2010), 329 -353.

COURSE RATIONALE

Otto Von Bismarck, Chancellor of Germany, once remarked: "Laws are like sausages. It is better not to see them being made." John Kennedy was said to define governance as the choice between bad and worse. Pols 6310 will look inside the sausage-making machine to see how public policies are actually made in the United States – no matter how unappetizing it gets and no matter how much worse it could be. Pols 6310 is designed to introduce students to the literature, concepts, and theories of the policy process. Policy process focuses on how political actors get the government to focus on certain problems, form coalitions to enact policies, and generate support for their implementation. The emphasis in the readings will be on different concepts for studying the policy process – concepts that are applicable in diverse settings.

The central questions that organize the seminar revolve around issues of rationality. Is the policy process rational? Can it be? Should it be? What, if anything can replace the rationality paradigm for understanding the policy process and how we think about it?

POLICY DOMAIN

Seminar participants are required to select a policy domain to use as their case materials throughout the semester. A policy domain is a policy arena where there are coherent policy networks and ongoing debates. Examples are health policy, urban policy, or local economic development policy. The idea is for seminar participants to apply the models and concepts that we discuss in the seminar to their policy domains. Later on, for your final project, you will be required to focus in on a particular policy or decision. Within health policy, for example, you could focus on the policies of the federal government to limit smoking. The policy should be at least three years old and thus be fully documented and have some track record in implementation. Students may choose a policy at the national or state or local level, but it may be preferable to pick a major national law for a number of reasons, including that national laws tend to have more secondary literature documenting the policy process.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

This class is a combination of lectures by the professor and student led seminar presentations and discussions. You will be expected to keep up on the readings and present bi-weekly summaries of the assignments. In general the format will be alternating weeks of a lecture followed the next week by student presentations of the reading materials, discussion and audio visual programs. Although the professor has primary responsibility for organizing discussion, all seminar participants should come prepared with questions and comments of their own. Doing the reading means not just understanding the author's conclusions, but analyzing how the author

came to those conclusions. Many of the readings are difficult. You will need to take extensive notes and read many of the assignments more than once.

Your grade will be based on the following approximate percentages:

1. Seminar project (issue framing paper and final project) 50%

2. Mid-term exam ……………………………………15%

3. Class presentations and participation …………………..20%

4. Final exam……… ………………………………...... 15%

Issue-framing paper: You will be required to write an essay comparing and contrasting different ways of framing issues in your policy domain. The key to a good paper will be documenting how different groups frame the issue differently and how the framings can be viewed as part of a political strategy. This paper will have three parts:

- A policy domain map illustrating who the different players are and their connections

- A description of the different frames key players employ

- The discussion of the different policy and political consequences that flow from the differing frames

This paper together with a presentation is due **March 6**

Mid-term exam: The mid-term exam will also be on **Monday, March 6**, covering the readings and discussions up to that point in the course. A study guide will be given out prior to the exam to help you prepare for it. The first half of class will consist of five minute overviews of your policy domain map, with a description of the key players and the different policy consequences flowing from their different frames. The presentations should be in the form of three or four power point slides which will also be handed in as part of the overall paper. The second half of class will devoted to the written mid-term examination.

Class presentations and participation: Each student will be expected to do the reading and participate in the discussions. Further, each student will be assigned specific topics from the readings for analysis and discussion on the class week of student led seminars. He/she should plan to have a one or two page hand out to distribute among seminar participants highlighting what he or she thought were the key points of the topic and its relationship to other class materials. These handouts will help the entire seminar digest the policy process concepts and prepare for the exams. The individual assignments and readings are noted below.

Finally, each student will present his or her final project to the seminar at the end of the semester. The final project is a continuation of the framing paper. Based on that paper (which will form the introductory sections of the final project), you can choose one of the following:

Final seminar project:

- If you are a doctoral student, you may want to prepare a dissertation proposal that consists of a preliminary literature review (class readings plus literature specific to your policy domain); a problem statement articulating the importance of the problem from both a conceptual and policy perspective and that provides a comparison among policy process models which help shed light on the problem; a methods discussion describing the ways you will go about gathering information and testing assumptions and hypothesizes.

- You may also do a more traditional seminar paper. The goal of the paper is to tease out the politics behind your policy -- identifying the relevant actors, how they framed the issues, how they formed coalitions, and what institutional methods they advocated, e.g., privatization, decentralization, etc. Although not designed as a research paper, the paper should have enough empirical evidence from the policy arena to show the value of at least two of the policy process frameworks discussed in class. The facts you will use in the paper will come primarily from secondary sources. You are *not* expected to generate original data on your own, e.g., conducting interviews or surveys. The paper should demonstrate your ability to apply policy process models to your policy domain.

- You may want to demonstrate your knowledge of and facility with the class materials by creating a policy campaign using power point and other media to convince legislators that your particular policy issue belongs on the public agenda. In creating this presentation you will need to be able to defend certain challenges such as why one problem definition over another; how the politics surrounding the issue can be managed; what model of policy process are you assuming and why?

The decision on what your project will be is due on **February 13**. You will hand in a one page précis of what you intend to do. All final projects will also require a class presentation. These will be May 1 and May 8th. The completed projects are due no later than **Tuesday, May 9, at 5:00 P.M**. The final examination is an oral exam. You may sign up for a half hour time slot beginning Thurs. May 11 through Monday, May 15th.

COURSE OUTLINE

January 23 - 30 **The Rationality Project**

REQUIRED READING: Stone - Introduction and Part I; Smith and Larimer, Chapter 1 and 2; Flood, Chapter1 , and the Fog of War (Student led discussion, **Feb.6**)

February 6 -13 **If not a unitary rational actor, then what?**

REQUIRED READING: Flood, Chapters 2 to the end and Smith and Larimer, Chapter 3 (Student led discussion, **Feb. 20**)

February 20 – 27 **Issue framing**

REQUIRED READING: Smith and Larimer, Chapter 4; Stone, Chapters 2 through 6 (Student led discussion, **Feb. 27**)

March 6 **Mid Term and Issue Framing Paper and Presentation Due**

March 13 **Semester Break**

March 20 - 27 **Agenda Setting**

REQUIRED READINGS: Stone, Chapter 7 - 11; Smith and Larimer, Chapters 5 (Student led discussion, **April 3**)

April 3 – April 24 **Political Context for Change**

REQUIRED READINGS: Steinberger, Peter J., Lindblom; Charles E. , Bachrach; Peter and Morton Baratz; Innes, Judith and David Booher; Jones, M. D., and McBeth, M.K.; Stone, 12- end; Smith and Larimer, Chapters 6 – 10 (Student led discussion, **April 24**)

May 1 - 8 **Paper Presentations**

May 9 **Final Papers due by 5:00 P.M.**

May 11 - 15 **Final Exam**

Required Policy Statements from the College of Arts and Sciences:

<u>Academic Integrity</u>

The University is a community of learning, whose effectiveness requires an environment of mutual trust and integrity. Academic integrity is violated by any dishonesty such as soliciting, receiving, or providing any unauthorized assistance in the completion of work submitted toward academic credit. While not all forms of academic dishonesty can be listed here, examples include

copying from another student, copying from a book or class notes during a closed book exam, submitting materials authored by or revised by another person as the student's own work, copying a passage or text directly from a published source without appropriately citing or recognizing that source, taking a test or doing an assignment or other academic work for another student, securing or supplying in advance a copy of an examination or quiz without the knowledge or consent of the instructor, sharing or receiving the questions from an on-line quiz with another student, taking an on-line quiz with the help of another student, and colluding with another student or students to engage in academic dishonesty.

All clear violations of academic integrity will be met with appropriate sanctions. In this course, academic dishonesty on an assignment will result in an automatic grade of 0 for that assignment and a report of academic dishonesty sent to the Academic Honesty Committee of the College of Arts and Sciences. In the case of Class B violations, the Academic Honesty Committee may impose a larger sanction including, but not limited to, assigning a failing grade in the course, disciplinary probation, suspension, and dismissal from the University.

Students should refer to the following SLU website for more information about Class A and B violations and the procedures following a report of academic dishonesty: http://www.slu.edu/x12657.xml

Student learning, disability statement

In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:

Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.

University-level support (e.g., tutoring/writing services, Disability Services) by visiting the Student Success Center (BSC 331) or by going to www.slu.edu/success.

Students who believe that, due to a disability, they could benefit from academic accommodations are encouraged to contact Disability Services at 314-977-8885 or visit the Student Success Center. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Course instructors support student accommodation requests when an approved letter from Disability Services has been received and when students discuss these accommodations with the instructor after receipt of the approved letter.