

## **GOVT 3325 – American Public Policy**

**Spring 2002**

Prof: Scott Robinson

W 7-9:45

GR 3.232 (x4043)

HT 1.302

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Office Hours: M 1-2pm, W 9-10am

### **Course Objectives:**

The American government does a wide variety of activities. Federal officials make decisions about the safety of medicines, the allocation of federal officials to investigate terrorism, and the oversight of national parks. Local government officials decide where police officers are sent, what budgets fire departments receive, and how much high school teachers are paid. All of these diverse activities are policy decisions.

In this course, we consider various explanations for how the American political system decides what issues deserve attention, makes policy decisions, and implements those decisions.

### **Textbooks:**

There are two textbooks for the course.

Anderson, James E. 2000. *Public Policymaking. Fourth Edition.* New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Company. (Hereafter “A”)

Theodoulou, Stella Z. and Matthew A. Cahn. 1995. *Public Policy: The Essential Readings.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc. (Hereafter “SC”).

### **Examination Schedule:**

Exam #1: 2.13

Exam #2: 4.3

Exam #3: 5.8

The term paper is due on May 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **Attendance**

Attendance is not required for this class. However, the material in the lectures will be included on the examinations. Missing a class may result in missing information for which you will be held responsible. Note that because this course only meets once a week, missing a class involves missing a considerable amount of material.

### **Grading:**

Examination 1: 25%

Examination 2: 25%  
Examination 3: 25%  
Term Paper: 25%

### **Term Paper Assignments:**

This course satisfies an upper-division writing requirement. Everyone is required to write a term paper due at the end of the course (April 31<sup>st</sup>). The term paper will require considerable research beyond the textbooks on a piece of legislation of your choosing. More information on the term paper will be given to you early in the semester.

### **Academic Dishonesty:**

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course. The university policies regarding academic dishonesty are in force for all examinations and term papers. I will pursue the fullest possible punishment for any violations of the university policies regarding academic dishonesty (plagiarism, cheating, etc.).

### **Late Examinations:**

If you must miss an examination, you must speak to me a week in advance of the exam. Missing the examination without this meeting requires a university approved excuse. Examinations must be made up within one week of the original examination date.

### **Schedule of Topics and Readings:**

All of the following readings are considered required reading. The exams will draw from all of the reading as well as the materials discussed in class. Do not assume that because a point from a reading was not explored in class one may ignore that material when preparing for the exams. Any point from the class discussion OR the reading is fair material for the exam.

I reserve the right to revise the syllabus at any time (for example, by adding or removing reading material, changing the daily topics, or moving back the tests [but never forward]). I will announce any changes ahead of time in class.

1/16

#### **Class Introduction**

1/23

#### **The Study of Public Policy**

##### **A. Ch. 1**

SC. Theodoulou, "The Contemporary Language of Public Policy"

SC. Sabatier, "Political Science and Public Policy"

SC. Salisbury, "The Analysis of Public Policy"

SC. Lowi, "Distribution, Regulation, Redistribution"

1/30

**Policy Makers and Their Environments – Constitutional Participants**

A. Ch. 2.

SC. Fiorina, “Congress”

SC. Wildavsky, “The Two Presidencies”

SC. Wilson, “The Rise of Bureaucratic State”

SC. Glazer, “The Imperial Judiciary”

2/6

**Policy Makers and Their Environments - Informal Participants**

SC. Truman, “Group Politics and Representative Democracy”

SC. Mills, “The Power Elite”

SC. Hecl, “Issue Networks and the Executive Establishment”

SC. Berry, “The Advocacy Explosion”

SC. Sabato, “The Consultant Corps”

2/13

**Exam #1**

2/20

**Agenda Setting and Policy Formation**

A. Ch. 3

SC. Cobb and Elder, “Issues and Agendas”

SC. Kingdon, “Agenda Setting”

2/27

**Agenda Setting and Policy Formulation II**

SC. Edelman, “Constructing the Political Spectacle”

SC. Iyengar and Kinder, “News That Matters”

SC. Graber, “Processing the News”

3/6

**Policy Adoption**

A. Ch. 4

SC. Lindblom, “The Science of Muddling Through”

SC. Schulman, “Nonincremental Policy Making”

3/13

**Spring Break**

3/20

### **Ideological Conflict in US Policy**

**SC.** Bowles and Gintis, “Democracy and Freedom”

**SC.** Friedman, “Capitalism and Freedom”

**SC.** Beard, “An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution”

**SC.** Dahl, “A Preface to Economic Democracy”

**SC.** Domhoff, “Who Rules America Now?”

3/27

### **Budgeting**

**A.** Ch. 5

**SC.** Rubin, “The Politics of Budgeting”

4/3

### **Exam #2**

4/10

### **Implementation**

**A.** Ch. 6

**SC.** Bardach, “The Implementation Game”

4/17

### **Implementation II**

**SC.** Majone and Wildavsky, “Implementation as Evolution”

**SC.** Sabatier and Mazmanian, “A Conceptual Framework of the Implementation Process”

4/24

### **Evaluation**

**A.** Ch.7

**SC.** Nachmias, “The Role of Evaluation in Policy”

**SC.** Nagel, “Trends in Policy Analysis”

5/1

### **Conclusion**

**A.** Ch.8

**Term Paper Due**

5/8

**Final Exam**