OVERVIEW

One of the recurring themes in American history is the desire to remove politics (that great beast!) from policy making. Fortunately or unfortunately, we live in the real world where politics matters. Decision makers commonly hold different values and interests, and attempt to advance them through a variety of means (e.g., deployment of resources, advantageous issue framing, and negotiation). Outcomes frequently reflect participants' skills, clout, etc. Timing matters a lot. Additionally, the role of political entrepreneurs is especially critical.

This course asks students to embrace the notion that politics matters and then go beyond that. I aim to develop your ability to diagnose the political factors that affect outcomes. The ultimate goal is to improve your effectiveness in the policy arena.

PPA 210 also has a strong focus on ethics. I believe it is possible to teach people both to be skilled about acting within a highly political system and to do so in an ethically defensible way, cognizant of broad public purposes.

This course focuses mainly (although not exclusively) on the development stage of the policy process, and particularly efforts to secure enactment of legislation. I find legislative battles especially useful for illustrating key analytical points. However, students should remain aware that politics enters other forums and stages, including policy implementation.

LEARNING GOALS

The PPA faculty members have established a set of broad learning goals for the program as a whole, and have identified particular ones that are relevant to PPA 210. Following are those broad goals and how they are to be met in the course.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Broad MPPA Program learning objectives covered</th>
<th>What we expect students to learn in PPA 210</th>
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<tr>
<td>Use different analytical skills and tools strategically</td>
<td>Understand the multiple streams model of how and why policies are chosen</td>
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<td>Understand how to recognize when to advance policies based on whether or not windows of opportunity are open or closed</td>
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<td>Understand how the way a policy choice is framed affects its potential for support</td>
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<td>Learn a variety of analytical tools that are helpful in the political arena (e.g., tools to resolve collective action problems, negotiation skills)</td>
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<td>Understand the critical role of effective leadership in the public sector</td>
<td>Understand the key leadership role played by political entrepreneurs</td>
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<td>Frame and present problems to different audiences to optimize understanding</td>
<td>Understand how to frame and present problems to different audiences to optimize understanding</td>
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<td>Understand the particular importance of framing in terms of gains versus losses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consider the ethical dimensions of choices in public policy and administration</td>
<td>Consider how public policy choices may be viewed from different ethical frameworks (e.g., utilitarianism, Rawlsian justice)</td>
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<td>Consider the ethical nature and limits of role responsibilities</td>
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<td>Understand the difference between analysis and advocacy</td>
<td>Understand the difference between analysis and advocacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understand the significance of diversity in effective public governance in California</td>
<td>Understood how the diversity of political actors affects the type of policy choices that are made</td>
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**CONDUCT OF THE SEMINAR**

The term "seminar" is accurate. Conventional lectures will be limited and classes will be discussion oriented. While I will guide the conversation, summarize points, and draw lessons, the bulk of class time will be devoted to exchange about course topics, in-class exercises, etc.
Student participation is therefore not a luxury; it is essential to a successful course. I expect that students will come to class consistently, be prepared to discuss the week's readings, and be prepared to accept special in-class assignments such as leading a critique of a particular argument from the literature.

In an effort to help encourage and guide discussion, I have included discussion questions for most class sessions.

**READINGS**

The following books are required and available at the Hornet Bookstore.


Note: this book is also used in our collaborative governance electives, PPA 270 and PPA 272, so you should definitely retain *Getting to Yes* if you plan to take a course(s) in that sequence.


There are also a few articles and case studies that will be available on SacCT or otherwise provided to you.

**ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING**

There will be two short papers, an in-class, open book mid-term examination, and a take home final examination. Assignment due dates are specified in the syllabus.

Additionally, each student will choose one required reading to critique during the course of the semester. The critique must be no more than two double spaced pages and should focus on what you find most valuable from the work as well as what you find most problematic about it. The critique will be due on the day we discuss the reading
and you should inform me before the class if you plan to submit one, as I will call plan to call upon you to discuss your points in class.

Course grades will be determined in accordance with the following weights:

- Article critique: 5%
- Paper #1 (agenda setting memo): 15%
- Take home mid-term examination: 20%
- Paper #2 (ethics paper): 20%
- Final examination: 30%
- Class participation: 10%

SPECIAL NEEDS RELATED TO DISABILITIES

Should you need assistance with portions of class due to disabilities, please let me know as soon as possible. The University offers services to student with disabilities and I would be glad to refer you to the appropriate campus unit.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

I take issues of academic honesty (including avoiding plagiarism) seriously and you should as well. If you are unfamiliar with the specifics of University policy in this area I recommend you review the appropriate section of the on-line University Policy Manual: http://www.csus.edu/umanual/AcademicHonestyPolicyandProcedures.htm.

DISTRACTIONS

Please do not use cell phones or surf the Web during class. If laptops are being abused in class I may prohibit their use.

MAKE-UP ASSIGNMENTS AND MISSED CLASSES

Late assignments will not be accepted. At my discretion, a student who misses a deadline may be given a make-up assignment. Whether or not a penalty will be assessed depends on the reason (e.g., a family emergency constitutes a good reason; a competing requirement for another course does not).

You should inform me prior to the session if you must miss class on a specific day. Except under very unusual circumstances, a student who misses three classes will be penalized one entire grade (e.g., a B+ for the course will become a C+), and a student who misses more than three classes will receive a failing grade.
CLASS SCHEDULE

I. THE POLITICS OF POLICY MAKING: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A. Introduction

January 28

Read: “The Voting Rights Act of 1965, Parts A and B,” case study, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University; available on SacCT

Recommended Film: “Selma” (2014)

Discussion Questions
1. Why did the Voting Rights Act make progress when it did… and not earlier?
2. Who were the critical players in the case? What specifically did each contribute?

B. The “Three Streams” (Kingdon) Framework

February 4

Read: Zahariadis, chapters 1-2, 7
   Note: based on input from students in prior years, I suggest you start with chapter 1, then move to chapter 7 which summarizes all the main arguments in the book, and then return to chapter 2.

Discussion Questions
1. What accounts for the different results in Britain and France with respect to privatization?
2. How does “streams” theory differ from the “rational” theory of policy making?

February 11

Paper #1 (agenda setting memo) due

Read: Zahariadis, chapters 4 and 7 (review)

Discussion
   Come to class prepared to discuss your assignment

II. DEEPER INTO THE PROBLEM STREAM

A. Focusing Events
February 18


**Discussion Questions**
1. What exactly is a focusing event? What is not a focusing event?
2. To what extent were the September 11 terrorist attacks similar to other focusing events? To what extent were they different?
3. Consider the arguments that Ellen Martin and I make about the likelihood of the compensation question arising in the aftermath of another terrorist attack. Do you agree?

**B. Issue Framing and Problem Identification**

February 25


**Discussion Questions**
1. What does prospect theory suggest about human decision making
2. How did policy framing affect Greek policy decisions?
3. What does the Eckles and Schaffner article suggest about the future of the Affordable Care Act?

III. DEEPER INTO THE POLITICAL STREAM

**A. The Collective Action Problem and the Mobilization of Interests**

March 4


**In-Class Exercise:** “The Collective Action Game”

**Discussion Questions**
1. What is the collective action problem? Why is it so perverse?
2. How can the collective action problem be overcome?
3. If there is so much incentive for groups to opt out of political involvement, why are groups so active and important?
B. The Role of Public Opinion

March 11

Read: Stimson, entire book

Discussion Questions
1. So, if people are generally uninterested in politics, and have relatively little incentive to pay attention to public affairs, can public opinion be meaningful?
2. What drives people’s views of political leaders?
3. Given Stimson’s arguments, what should we expect in the 2016 presidential election?

March 18

In-Class Mid-Term Exam

Read: Jacob Hacker, “The Road to Somewhere: Why Health Reform Happened Or Why Political Scientists Who Write about Public Policy Shouldn’t Assume They Know How to Shape It,” Perspectives on Politics (September, 2010)

Discussion Questions
With respect to the causes of major public policy change, what points discussed thus far in the course does Hacker reinforce? What does he challenge and/or add?

IV. DEEPER INTO THE POLICY STREAM

April 1 (no class March 25: spring break)

Read: Mossberger, entire book (read chapters 1-4 and 8-9 especially carefully)

Discussion Questions
1. Why exactly did enterprise zones spread across the country?
2. How does the Mossberger book suggest the Kingdon model needs to be tweaked?

V. RESOLVING DEADLOCKS: NEGOTIATIONS

April 8

Read: Fisher, Ury, and Patton, parts I and II

Discussion Questions
1. Why is productive negotiation often so hard for people?
2. How can people negotiate more effectively?
In-Class Exercise: “Bradford Development”

April 15

Read: Fisher, Ury, and Patton, parts III, IV, and V

Discussion Questions
1. To what extent can someone negotiate effectively if the other party is in a stronger position?
2. Is lying fair in negotiations? Is it effective?

In-Class Exercise: “Redstone”

VI. THE ETHICS OF PUBLIC POLICY DECISIONS

April 22

Read: Sandel, chapters 1-6

Discussion Questions
To come

April 29

Ethics Paper Due

Read: 1) “Matters of Life and Death: Defunding Organ Transplants in the State of Arizona,” Kennedy School of Government case study Case Program; 2) Sandel, chapters 7-10

VII. THE ETHICS OF ADMINISTRATIVE DISCRETION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

May 6


Discussion Questions
1. What should we think about Charles Henri-Sanson, the “executioner of Paris? And if we condemn him, what does that imply for others who use their professional status to justify behavior that harms others?
2. Regarding “The Case of the Segregated Schools.” Should Wallace sign the brief?
VIII. WRAP-UP

May 13

Read: “From Research to Policy,” Kennedy School of Government case study

Discussion
Think about the various course themes and topics that are reflected in this case.