PAI 810: Foundations of Policy Analysis and Management

Spring 2017
Section 1: T/Th 2:00-3:20 p.m., Eggers 400C

Instructor: Leonard M. Lopoo, PhD
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Office hours: by appointment

Class materials are located on Blackboard: http://blackboard.syr.edu.

Course Objective
This course exposes students to the foundational literature in public policy analysis and public management. The primary goal of the course is to prepare doctoral students in the Department of Public Administration and International Affairs for the qualifying exam in “Foundations in Policy Analysis and Management.” The course has three distinct sections. First, the course covers consumer theory (microeconomics) which serves as a starting point for inquiries into market failures, government failures, and cost benefit analysis. In the second section of the course, students will read criticisms of this “rational” approach to decision making, which includes findings from behavioral economics. In the third portion of the course, students turn their focus to the policy process, which includes readings on agenda setting, policy diffusion, and policy implementation. Theoretical work from microeconomics, political science, and public administration serve as the source material.

Prerequisites: Admission to the PAIA doctoral program or instructor’s permission

Academic Integrity Policy
Syracuse University’s Academic Integrity Policy reflects the high value that we, as a university community, place on honesty in academic work. The policy defines our expectations for academic honesty and holds students accountable for the integrity of all work they submit. Students should understand that it is their responsibility to learn about course-specific expectations, as well as about university-wide academic integrity expectations. The policy governs appropriate citation and use of sources, the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments, and the veracity of signatures on attendance sheets and other verification of participation in class activities. The policy also prohibits students from submitting the same work in more than one class without receiving written authorization in advance from both instructors. Under the policy, students found in violation are subject to grade sanctions determined by the course instructor and non-grade sanctions determined by the School or College where the course is offered as described in the Violation and Sanction Classification Rubric. SU students are required to read an online summary of the University’s academic integrity expectations and provide an electronic signature agreeing to abide by them twice a year during pre-term check-in on MySlice. For more information about the policy, see http://academicintegrity.syr.edu.
The Violation and Sanction Classification Rubric establishes recommended guidelines for the determination of grade penalties by faculty and instructors, while also giving them discretion to select the grade penalty they believe most suitable, including course failure, regardless of violation level. Any established violation in this course may result in course failure regardless of violation level.

Disability Statement
If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), http://disabilityservices.syr.edu, located in Room 309 of 804 University Avenue, or call (315) 443-4498 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. ODS is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will issue students with documented disabilities “Accommodation Authorization Letters,” as appropriate. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact ODS as soon as possible.

Religious Observance
SU’s religious observances policy, found at http://supolicies.syr.edu/emp_ben/religious_observance.htm, recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holy days according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes. For fall and spring semesters, an online notification process is available through MySlice/Student Services/Enrollment/My Religious Observances from the first day of class until the end of the second week of class.

Any student who plans to miss an assignment due to a religious observance and has made the appropriate notifications should see me within the first two weeks of class to make arrangements for making up this missed work.

Required Books
Grading
Problem sets (3 @ 7.5% each) 22.5%
Cost-Benefit Analysis 22.5%
Critical analysis (5 @ 4% each) 20%
Book club (2 @ 12.5% each) 25%
Participation 10%

Problem sets: I will assign three problem sets covering the material on the first three topics of the course. Completed assignments should be submitted at the Center for Policy Research Front Desk (426 Eggers Hall) and signed in before the deadline. Students are allowed to work in small groups to discuss the problems and develop solutions together. However, each student must write-up the solutions that he/she submits independently.

Cost Benefit Analysis: Students are to conduct a CBA on a project of their choice, preferably on a program/project in their field of interest. Students should obtain data for their CBA. The final product should be no more than 10 pages, single spaced (12-point font, 1 inch margins) with the appropriate tables included in this page limit. Please include all assumptions and relevant data, notable limitations, and your final assessment of the financial strength of the program/project.

Critical analysis: For five sections of the course, please submit no more than a three-page, single-spaced (12-point font, 1 inch margins) critical analysis of the readings for that section. The analysis should include a summary of the material that is no more than one page. For the remainder of the critical analysis, please critique the content. If you are uncertain what to write in your critique, here is non-exhaustive list of questions you might address (although not all of them in one critique!).

• How does this material correspond with the earlier content in the course?
• What types of assumptions are made, and are they reasonable?
• Is there content here that informs your research area? How?
• Are there claims made that are logically inconsistent?
• Are the readings inconsistent?
• Can you synthesize this material with either earlier content or other research to advance a theory or explanation for a current public affairs issue?

For the critical analysis sections, please do not work with others. I want to discourage “group think.” However, once you have turned in your critical analysis, you should definitely distribute your ideas to others in the class.

Book club: Twice during the semester, you will be asked to run a book club (but not alone). We will randomly (or attempt to randomly) assign each of you two different books. The dates for the book clubs will not change. You and your team should plan to summarize the main contributions of the course (~ first 20 minutes) and then lead a discussion of the book for the remainder of the class (~60 minutes). As part of the discussion, please develop a number of discussion questions and be prepared to foster discussion. You may distribute the discussion questions early, but that is not a requirement.

Participation: Given that this is a seminar, students are expected to attend each class.

Late Assignments
I do not anticipate anyone turning in anything late. Please don’t. As an incentive to turn in the work on time, you will be penalized a grade for every hour it is late. An assignment due at noon that would have
received an A-, will receive a B+ if turned in anytime between 12:01 pm and 1:00 pm, a B if turned in between 1:01 pm and 2:00 pm, etc.

Tentative Schedule

**I. Background & Rational Choice Theory**

**Dates:** January 17, 19, and 24


**Assignment 1** - due January 27, 2016 at noon in CPR.

**II. Microeconomics Review & Social Welfare**

**Dates:** January 26, 31, February 2, and 7


**Assignment 2** – due February 10, 2016 at noon in CPR.

Problems 3-1 and 3-2 in Friedman

**February 7 Book Club:** Schelling *Micromotives and Macrobehavior*

**III. Market Failures: Public Goods, Externalities, and Asymmetric Information**

**Dates:** February 9, 14, 16, 21


Assignment 3 – due February 24 at noon in CPR.
Gruber Chapter 5: Problems 11, 12, 13, 16, 17
Gruber Chapter 7: Problems 11, 12, 15

**February 23 Book Club:** Hirschman *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty*

**IV. Cost-Benefit Analysis**

**Dates:** February 28, March 2, and 7


Case study in class (tentative date: March 7)

Assignment: CBA due May 5 at noon in CPR.

**V. Criticisms of Rational Policy Analysis**

**Dates:** March 9 and 21


Critical review: March 9, start of class.

**March 23 Book Club:** Stone *Policy Paradox*

**VI. Behavioral Economics**

**Dates:** March 28 and 30


Critical review: March 28, start of class.

**VII. Agenda Setting and Problem Definition**

**Dates:** April 4 and 6


Critical review: April 4, start of class.

**VIII. Policy Diffusion and Learning**

**Dates:** April 11 and 18

*Note: No class on April 13. Students are required to attend Volcker Lecture 4:00-5:30.*

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Critical review: April 11, start of class.

April 20 Book Club: Axelrod The Evolution of Cooperation

IX. Policy Implementation

Dates: April 25 and 27


Critical review: April 25, start of class.


Resources