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Course Description

An examination of the most pressing domestic issues confronting American society in the 21st century as seen from the perspective of the analytical and rhetorical techniques most commonly used by advocates to represent public policy issues and evaluate public policy choices. Topics include health care, education, criminal justice, social welfare policies, and immigration. Particular attention is devoted to the role that symbolic representation plays in regard to the process of defining public policy problems and identifying solutions. Students also are introduced to the fundamentals of evaluation research and the role that assessment plays in regard to the policy making process.

PSC 210 is a three credit course which serves as an introduction to the domestic policy agenda and the techniques associated with policy entrepreneurship and applied policy analysis. Hence, there are no prerequisites for the course and the instructor assumes that students possess little, if any, formal background in regard to these subjects. Within the context of the general education curriculum, PSC 210 has been designated as a Writing-Intensive course.

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of the course, students will have demonstrated the following skills and aptitudes:

1. The ability to identify and critique the analytical and rhetorical techniques utilized by policy entrepreneurs and applied policy analysts.
2. The ability to discuss the major issues underlying contemporary debates over fiscal policy, social welfare policies, health care, education, crime control and immigration policy.
3. The ability to apply the fundamental principles of evaluation research to the task of making public policy choices and assessing public policy outcomes.
4. The ability to write policy memos and analytical essays for a particular audience (e.g. policy makers, the public) and to support arguments by applying evidence and examples in a coherent and logical fashion, consistent with the conventions that characterize the field of applied policy analysis.

Assessment

Student performance in regard to the learning objectives will be evaluated on the basis of a student's level of engagement in the class and a student's performance on three take-home exercises. There will not be a final exam in this course. Students must earn a grade of "C" or better in order for the course to count toward the fulfillment of general education requirements or the Political Science major.

Class engagement will be evaluated on the basis of a rubric focusing upon a student's preparation for class as indicated by the quality of a student's contributions to class discussions. In preparation for each class, students are expected to complete the required readings, guided by the discussion questions assigned by the instructor. Students are expected to bring the text to each class and to be prepared to discuss the issues raised by the discussion questions.

Students are permitted to supplement their in-class contributions by submitting written responses to discussion questions on a weekly basis. However, written submissions are not intended to be a substitute for active and engaged participation in the classroom. Such submissions must be typed, single spaced, paginated and stapled together. Citations should be provided as appropriate. Submissions will be reviewed, but not graded per se, by the instructor.

Grade	Course Engagement Criteria
A	<input type="checkbox"/> Tends to participate in class discussions on a regular basis <input type="checkbox"/> Contributions tend to explicitly cite materials presented in the readings.
B	<input type="checkbox"/> Tends not to participate in class discussions on a regular basis, but does tend to submit written responses to discussion questions on a weekly basis. <input type="checkbox"/> Submissions tend to explicitly discuss materials presented in the readings.
C	<input type="checkbox"/> Class contributions tend not to explicitly cite materials presented in the readings. <input type="checkbox"/> Tends not to submit written responses to discussion questions on a regular basis.
O	<input type="checkbox"/> Does not participate in class discussions. <input type="checkbox"/> Does not submit written responses to discussion questions.

An Example of a Weekly Discussion Question:

Stone posits (p. 98) that politics is the process whereby "a society decides whether needs are real or legitimate." She also notes that in the United States the needs of homeless bag ladies largely go unmet (see p. 101). Should we infer from this that the needs of this group are neither real nor legitimate? How could we use Lasswell's conception of politics and Stone's conception of political reasoning to construct an alternative explanation for why the needs of homeless bag ladies go unmet?

All written work in the course will be evaluated on the basis of rubrics which focus upon (1) a student's command of content and (2) a student's ability to apply grammatical rules and conventions properly. The quality of each assignment's content and presentation will be evaluated separately.

Grade	Content Criteria
A	<input type="checkbox"/> Consistently addresses questions by explicitly drawing upon the key ideas, perspectives, interpretations and/or empirical evidence presented in the readings. <input type="checkbox"/> Consistently cites specific passages and/or evidence presented in the text to address questions; rarely relies simply upon personal experiences and/or anecdotal evidence.
B	<input type="checkbox"/> Tends to address questions by explicitly drawing upon the key ideas, perspectives, interpretations and/or empirical evidence presented in the readings. <input type="checkbox"/> Tends to cite specific passages and/or evidence presented in the text to address questions; relies somewhat upon personal experiences and/or anecdotal evidence..
C	<input type="checkbox"/> Tends not to address questions by explicitly drawing upon the key ideas, perspectives, interpretations and/or empirical evidence presented in the readings. <input type="checkbox"/> Tends not to cite specific passages and/or evidence presented in the text to address questions; tends to rely heavily upon personal experiences and/or anecdotal evidence.
D	<input type="checkbox"/> Rarely addresses questions by explicitly drawing upon the key ideas, perspectives, interpretations and/or empirical evidence presented in the readings. <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely cites specific passages and/or evidence presented in the text to address questions; relies almost exclusively upon personal experiences and/or anecdotal evidence.
F	<input type="checkbox"/> Fails to address the questions at all; submission is more than six days late.

Grade	Presentation Criteria
Satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/> Writing is generally free of grammatical errors and typographical errors <input type="checkbox"/> Errors that do appear do not tend to either distract or confuse the reader. <input type="checkbox"/> Submission consistently adheres to the APA format.
Needs Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Writing contains a noticeable number of grammatical and spelling errors <input type="checkbox"/> Errors tend to both distract and confuse the reader. <input type="checkbox"/> Submission does not consistently adhere to APA format.

Final submissions of all written work must be typed, double spaced, paginated and stapled together. Please use the APA format for all assignments. The following site constitutes a convenient place to find reliable information about this style: www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/. Students also are strongly encouraged to make use of the assistance and resources available through the Writing Center maintained by the Office of Academic Services (109 Curtis Hall).

Students are expected to submit a hard copy of written work directly to the instructor at the designated due date and time. However, if this is not possible, exercises may be submitted electronically via e-mail (formatted as a Word 2007 attachment) or by fax (610-606-4614). In all cases, students bear full responsibility for ensuring that such submissions reach the instructor by the scheduled due date. Late submissions will not be accepted except in the case of an extenuating personal circumstance that can be verified by college personnel.

Students will be given an opportunity to revise and resubmit the first two take-home exercises per the substantive comments and editorial corrections provided by the instructor. Tutorial assistance available through the Writing Center can be used for this purpose. Revisions should be submitted within seven days from the date the exercises were returned to students. Revisions should be submitted electronically via e-mail as a Word attachment with all corrections noted in boldface. Generally, resubmissions will result in a half-letter grade increase in regard to content.

Plagiarism is a legally punishable offense, a serious breach of academic and professional ethics, as well as an egregious violation of the college's Honor Code. Documented cases of plagiarism will result in a grade of "zero" for the assignment in question.

Class Conduct

To maintain an environment conducive to learning, everyone is expected to arrive on time for class, act with respect toward other students and refrain from behavior that could serve to disrupt the class or infringe upon the rights of other members of the class. Students also are expected to abide by the letter and spirit of the college's Honor Code

The instructor will adhere to the Code of Ethics established by the American Political Science Association, as these principles relate to a faculty member's responsibilities in the classroom and to students. Given the nature of this course, the instructor is mindful of his obligation:

- To not impose partisan views, conventional or otherwise, upon students.
- To faithfully represent the normative values, policy positions, and academic work of others.
- To respect and defend the intellectual freedom and procedural rights of students.
- To evaluate the performance of students equitably on the basis of criteria which are applied uniformly and in a nondiscriminatory manner.

Students with documented disabilities who may need academic accommodations should discuss these needs with the instructor during the first week of classes. Students with disabilities who wish to request accommodations should contact the Advising Center. Students wishing to arrange an incomplete for the course should discuss this option with the instructor prior to the end of the semester.

Required Texts:

C.E. Cochran et al. (2009) *American Public Policy: An Introduction*, 9th edition (Thomson/Wadsworth, 0-495-50189-1).

D. Stone (2002) *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*, revised edition (Norton, 0-393-97625-4).

Weekly Outline

Aug. 27:	Entrepreneurs & Electoral Politics	(no assignment)
Sep. 3:	Markets & Communities	(Stone Intro & ch. 1)
Sep. 10:	Fiscal Policy & Political Economy	(Cochran 46-53 & ch. 4)
Sep. 17:	Equity & Efficiency	(Stone 2 & 3)
Sep. 24:	Social Welfare Policies	(Cochran 7)

Exercise 1 – Due October 1st

Oct. 1:	Security & Liberty	(Stone 4 & 5)
Oct. 8:	Public Education Reform	(Cochran 9)
Oct. 15:	Symbols & Numbers	(Stone 6 & 7)
Oct. 22:	Health Care Issues	(Cochran 8)

Exercise 2 – Due October 29th

Oct. 29:	Causes & Decisions	(Stone 8 & 10)
Nov. 5:	Crime Control	(Cochran 6)
Nov. 12:	Inducements & Rules	(Stone 11 & 12)
Nov. 19:	Immigration Policy	(Cochran 11)
Nov. 26:	No Class	
Dec. 3:	Facts & Values	(Stone 13 & 14)

Exercise 3 – Due December 3rd