

**PUAD 640**  
**Public Policy Process**  
**Wednesday 4:30 –7:10**  
**Arlington 245**

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Office Hours: Tuesday 2:00-4:15, or  
By appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course is designed to provide an understanding of the dynamics of the public policy process in the United States. The course examines policy environments and major governmental and non-governmental actors that play roles in policymaking. Policymaking is analyzed across the stages of the policy process, from agenda setting and policy formulation to policy implementation and evaluation. The course also analyzes in-depth the policy context, policy process, and policy changes in several areas of public policy including Social Security reform, affirmative action, and nuclear power. In all instances, particular emphasis will be placed on the dynamic interactions among ideas, interests, institutions, and actors.

**CLASS SESSIONS:** Classes will follow a seminar format. The quality of class discussions will be critical to the success of this seminar. Students will be given discussion questions/topics each week to consider in completing the readings for the following week. Please come to class prepared to respond to these questions, as well as to raise questions of your own.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:** Students will be required to write two short papers (3-5 pages in length) analyzing selected readings. Paper questions will be distributed a week in advance and are due on the dates indicated on the course schedule. Three paper topics will be distributed during the semester; students will have a choice of which two to write. A reflective essay, drawing on both readings and Capitol Hill day, is required. Students will also be required to write a 12-15 page research paper.

**COURSE EVALUATION:** The final grade for the course will be based on class participation (20%), two short papers on readings (15% each), reflective essay on Capitol Hill Day (15%), the research paper memo (5%), and the research paper (30%).

**BOOKS:** The following books should be purchased at the Campus Bookstore:

Joan Aaron, *Licensed to Kill: The Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Shoreham Power Plant* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997)

Martha Derthick, *Up in Smoke* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2002)

John Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policy* (Boston: Scott Foresman and Company, 1995 or most recent)

Paul Light, *Still Artful Work: The Continuing Policies of Social Security Reform* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1995)

Barbara Sinclair, *Unorthodox Lawmaking: New Legislative Processes in the U.S. Congress* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2000)

Melvin Urofsky, *Affirmative Action on Trial: Sex Discrimination in Johnson v. Santa Clara* (Lawrence, KA: University Press of Kansas, 1997)

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### **Aug. 27 Introduction and Overview**

Discussion of course themes, syllabus, and course requirements.

### **Sept. 3 The American Political System – Context for Policymaking**

In this session, we will examine the central characteristics or features of the American political system and discuss how they affect policymaking in the United States. We will be evaluating how our system of government constrains the making of public policy. Additionally, we will investigate the major actors, both inside and outside government, who are involved in policymaking and consider theories or models that help us to explain the relationships among these actors.

John Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*, Chapters 2-3.

The Declaration of Independence  
The Articles of Confederation  
Federalist Papers #10, #51, and #78  
The Constitution of the United States

The above documents can be found in many American government textbooks and on the Internet at a variety of websites, for example the National Archives, [http://www.archives.gov/exhibit\\_hall/charters\\_of\\_freedom/constitution/constitution.html](http://www.archives.gov/exhibit_hall/charters_of_freedom/constitution/constitution.html), and the Liberty Library of Constitutional Classics, <http://www.constitution.org>

**Sept. 10            Politics and Policy: The Case of Social Security Reform**

In this session we will examine an instance where a seemingly intractable policy issue was somewhat successfully negotiated. This case well illustrates not only the roles of Congress and the President, but also the impact that interest groups and ideas have on the shaping of public policy. Comparisons between the process used in this case and the ones outlined by the Framers will be drawn. The current issues and politics in Social Security will also be examined.

Light, *Still Artful Work*, entire

**First Paper  
Due  
Sept. 10**

**Sept. 17            Policy Process – Formation and Formulation**

In this session we will examine Kingdon's model for understanding the processes of agenda setting (formation) and development of alternatives (formulation). We will compare his model to other models that have been developed to explain the policy process. The methodology that he used in this research will be evaluated.

Kingdon, Chapters 1, 4-10

**Sept. 24            Social Security Now – Planning for the Baby Boomers and  
Maintaining Solvency**

The issue of Social Security is back on the agenda, especially with the recent draft report of President Bush's Commission and the early stages of Campaign 2004. In this session, we will analyze the current problem, policy, and public streams related to Social Security. In other words, we will use Kingdon to help untangle what is occurring and what is likely to result.

For this session, the class will be divided into five groups to read documents and position papers on the following websites –

The President's Commission to Strengthen Social Security,  
<http://www.commtostrengthensocsec.gov>

The Century Foundation Project on Social Security: <http://www.socsec.org/>

The Concord Coalition: <http://www.concordcoalition.org/socialsecurity/>

The Cato Institute: <http://www.socialsecurity.org/>

The Social Security Administration: <http://www.ssa.gov/>

### **Oct. 1 Changes in Policymaking Processes in Congress**

This will be our first discussion of “unorthodox lawmaking,” which will expand on the understandings of congressional policymaking introduced in Light and will be refined by the presentations on Capitol Hill Day.

Sinclair, *Unorthodox Lawmaking*, Chapters 1-6

### **Oct. 3 Friday – Capitol Hill Day**

### **Oct. 8 Congressional Policy Making – continued**

We will continue our discussion of Sinclair’s explication of the congressional process and the cases illustrating the new legislative process, as well as the presentations from Capitol Hill Day.

**Capitol Hill Paper  
Due  
October 8**

### **Oct. 15 – No Class – Off for Capitol Hill Day**

### **Oct. 22 Planning/Discussion of Research Paper Topics**

Students will use an aspect of Kingdon’s analysis to examine a policy issue of their choice and may also find Sinclair helpful in their analysis and understanding of the policy process. The memo to the class will be single-spaced, contain 3-4 paragraphs, and include an initial bibliography.

**Memo to Class re. Focus of  
Research Paper  
Due  
October 22**

**Oct. 29            Courts as Policymaking Institutions**

During this class session we will discuss the courts as policy making institutions as well as initiate an analysis of the policy implementation stage of the policy process. We will focus in this session on the role of courts, the dynamics of policymaking at the appellate court level, and the statutory and constitutional background for affirmative action. We will also discuss the facts of *Johnson v. Santa Clara*. We will examine the advantages and disadvantages of the courts as policymaking institutions.

Urofsky, *Affirmative Action on Trial* (entire)

**Second Paper  
Due  
October 29**

**Nov. 5            Agencies and Courts as Policymaking Institutions**

Several of the themes about the policy processes and institutional capabilities will be further examined in a discussion of the issue of smoking, public health, and tobacco regulation.

Derthick, *Up in Smoke* (entire)

**Third Paper  
Due  
November 5**

**Nov. 12            The Shoreham Nuclear Power Plant – What Happened?**

This case will be used to illustrate the dynamics of federal/state/local policymaking and the role of public participation. The case will also further develop our understanding of the role of administrative agencies, which was discussed in *Up in Smoke*.

Aron, *Licensed to Kill?* (entire)

**Nov. 19            Research Presentations**

**Nov. 26            No Class – Happy Thanksgiving**

**Dec. 3            Research Presentations**

**Final Paper  
Due  
December 10**

**HONOR CODE POLICY**

The Honor Code policy endorsed by the members of the Department of Public and International Affairs relative to the types of academic work indicated below is set out in the appropriate paragraphs:

1. Quizzes, tests and examinations. No help may be given or received by students when taking quizzes, tests, or examinations, whatever the type or wherever taken, unless the instructor specifically permits deviation from this standard.
2. Course Requirements: All work submitted to fulfill course requirements is to be solely the product of the individual(s) whose name(s) appears on it. Except with permission of the instructor, no recourse is to be had to projects, papers, lab reports or any other written work previously prepared by another student, and except with permission of the instructor no paper or work of any type submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of another course may be used a second time to satisfy a requirement of any course in the Department of Public and International Affairs. No assistance is to be obtained from commercial organizations which sell or lease research help or written papers. With respect to all written work as appropriate, proper footnotes and attribution are required.