Public Policy for PADM

Course Overview:

The study of public policy is intended to offer every citizen an understanding of the various and vast roles played by the different branches of the U.S. federal government as well as by state, county, and local governments in various areas of contemporary American life. It is also a field that focuses on the priorities of American society as portrayed in the public policy choices that elected representatives make on the part of citizens and the size of different interest groups that advocate on behalf of particular policy goals. This course looks at the process of making public policy from beginning to end and in a wide array of particular policy areas that are of importance to contemporary American society. Moreover, because the process of public policymaking is best explored by examining particular instances of public debate over a wide array of specific policy areas, this course will adopt a case study approach to explore particular topics.

Learning Objectives:

- Discuss and identify various key concepts in the process of American public policymaking and the major steps from start to finish in the public policy process.
- Identify vital issues and specific areas of concern for contemporary American policymakers within the broad fields of economic, national security, public health, environmental, education, rural, and social policy.
- Identify key actors and agencies involved in the making of public policy within the United States and their respective roles in the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of policy.
- Analyze the various political, social, economic, military, legal, and ethical goals and cultural values that form the basis of policymaking decisions.
- Identify key debates in contemporary American public policy as well as the issues at stake and the arguments advanced by each side of the debate.
- Describe various decision frameworks used by policymakers in creating, developing, and executing various public policies.
- Explain the context, evolution, and linkages of specific policies and between certain polices within the broader context of Public Administration

Major Course Requirements

- Regular Log In 15 points
- Homework assignments 30 points
- Course Exams (2 @ 25 pts. each) 55 points
  Total Points 100 points
• **Regular Log In**: Students will receive 1 point each course week they log into the course via Blackboard on 3 or more days in a week after week 1.

• **Homework**: Assignments will be completed as a means of formative assessment. You will be responsible for completing weekly essays that pertain to that module’s learning objectives and incorporate relevant contemporary policy issues. Completing the homework demonstrates that you have engaged the material prior to the exams. Correct assignments turned in on-time via this portfolio will receive 2 points. If you want additional feedback on your assignment, it must be substantially attempted and self-corrected prior to making an appointment. These essays should be completed as though they are going to be a professional report. All course assignments must be typewritten, handwritten copies will not be accepted.

• **Course exams**: Two exams will be given during the course to assess student learning. Exam one will cover chapters 1-8 and Exam 2 will cover chapter 9-16. Exams will be released on an individual basis for each student. Students must have substantially completed the homework assignments for each module and turned the homework in via Blackboard prior to the exam being released.

**Required or Recommended Readings:**


Additional Readings on Blackboard

**Course Policies**

**Attendance/tardiness**

Students should log into Blackboard on a regular basis to download material, watch videos and turn in assignments. If students do not log in at least three times per week after week 1, they will not be able to earn “Log in Points.”

**Late work and Make-up Exams**

The course is asynchronous, therefore you are able to log in and complete course learning anytime that is convenient to you. There are requirements, however, for completion of unit work and exams. If the student is late in meeting these dates, the work will not be accepted, nor will exams allowed to be made up.

**Extra Credit**

There is no extra credit offered in this course.
Academic Integrity/Plagiarism

University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in the grade of an F for the class.

Dropping a Class

I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class.

Statement of Civility

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

Grade Appeals

As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at: http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Dr. Mark Hartlaub, Associate Dean’s for the College of Liberal; Office: FC 292; Phone: (361) 825-5990;

E-mail: mark.hjartlaub@tamucc.edu or the Office of the Provost.

Disabilities Accommodations

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation
requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**Statement of Academic Continuity**

In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

**Schedule**

**Module 1**: Policy Analysis: What Governments Do, Why They Do It, and What Difference it Makes

Reading: Chapter 1

**Assignment 1 due August 29th**

**Module 2**: Models of Politics: Some Help in Thinking About Public Policy

Reading: Chapter 2

**Assignment 2 due September 5th**

**Module 3**: The Policymaking Process: Decision-Making Activities

Reading: Chapter 3

**Assignment 3 due September 12th**

**Module 4**: Policy Evaluation: Finding Out What Happens After a Law is Passed

Reading: Chapter 4

**Assignment 4 due September 19th**

**Module 5**: Federalism and State Policies: Institutional Arrangements and Policy Variations

Reading: Chapter 5

**Assignment 5 due September 26th**
Module 6: Criminal Justice: Rationality and Irrationality in Public Policy

Reading: Chapter 6

Assignment 6 due October 3rd

Exam #1 (Chapters 1-6) must be completed by October 3rd

Module 7: Welfare: The Search for Rational Strategies

Reading: Chapter 7

Assignment 7 due October 10th

Module 8: Health Care: Attempting a Rational-Comprehensive Transformation

Reading: Chapter 8

Assignment 8 due October 17th

Module 9: Education: Group Strategies

Reading: Chapter 9

Assignment 9 due October 24th

Module 10: Economic Policy: Challenging Incrementalism

Reading: Chapter 10

Assignment 10 due October 31st

Module 11: Tax Policy: Battling the Special Interests

Reading: Chapter 11

Assignment 11 due November 7th

Module 12: International Trade and Immigration: Elite-Mass Conflict

Reading: Chapter 12

Assignment 12 due November 14th

Module 13: Energy and the Environment: Externalities and Interests

Reading: Chapter 13

Assignment 13 due November 21st
Module 14: Civil Rights: Elite and Mass Interaction

Reading: Chapter 14

Assignment 14 due November 28th (Note, this is the day after Thanksgiving, but I felt everyone would be happier with an assignment due on the 28th as opposed to the 26th)

Module 15: Defense Policy: Strategies for Serious Games

Reading: Chapter 15

Assignment 15 due December 2nd

Exam #2 (Chapters 7-15) must be completed by December 10th