PADM 5302-B01 Policy-Making and Public Administration

Course Description:

Should the homeless be legislated out of parks? Is desal workable in South Texas? Should tuition be free at public colleges and universities?

Many individuals are passionate about these and other issues and have the best intentions in trying to advocate for reform or implement policy change. But translating good intentions into good decisions is not always as easy as it seems. Public policy in the United States is the result of decision-making that is constrained by complex interactions between political preferences, embedded institutions, and limited resources. For many policy choices the correct course of action is unclear. In certain instances, the choices themselves may be hard to identify. Effective policy making requires the ability to analyze situations systematically, deal with uncertainty, make tradeoffs among conflicting interests, account for other values and institutional characteristics, and develop a strategy for working with other parties to achieve the chosen objective.

This class looks at the relationship of politics and administration from the perspective of public policy. It examines the influence of administration and bureaucracy, legislative bodies, parties, political leadership, interest groups and other forces in the formation and execution of public policy in various levels of American government. 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 policy goals. This course looks at the process of making public policy from beginning to end and in a wide array of policy areas that are of importance to contemporary American society. Moreover, because the process of public policymaking is best explored by examining instances of public debate over a wide array of specific policy areas, this course will adopt a case study approach to explore topics.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. To analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions about the role of public administrators in the analysis, formulation, implementation and evaluation of public policies at the national, state and local level of government.
2. To explain the major stages of the policy process, and the actors involved in the policy process at all levels of government.
3. To evaluate public policy issues (strengths and weaknesses) and to think critically about the criteria used for evaluation.
4. Analyze the various political, social, economic, military, legal, and ethical goals and cultural
values that form the basis of policymaking decisions.

5. 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

**Website:**
Your class will be using the Blackboard platform. If you have trouble with your log-in to Backboard, please contact Island Online Support;

Hours of Operation:  -- 8:00 A.M. to 10:00 P.M. Every day (U.S. Central)
By Phone:      By E-mail:
361-825-2825 (Local)    islandonline@tamucc.edu
1-866-353-2491 (Long Distance)


**Other Readings and Course Materials**
Course readings include academic articles and book chapters, cases, and journal articles written by some of leading scholars and practitioners in the field of public policy. All course materials are available as a link from the syllabus or on the Blackboard website for the class under the weekly content tabs.

Please complete all readings prior to coming to class. While in class, it is wise to have access to the readings, either in print or electronic form. Occasionally there may be changes to the assigned readings or other course materials. Should this occur, you will be notified in class and over email. A changed syllabus and the new reading(s) will be uploaded to Blackboard.

**Grading and Course Assignments**
There will be three homework assignments (policy memos), seven quizzes, and a cumulative final exam. A student’s course grade will be determined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Contribution to Final Grade</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Ongoing (section)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Ongoing (section)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Memo 1</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>February 25th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Memo 2</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>March 31st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Memo 3</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>April 28th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>May 12th</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A  90-100%  \  
B  80-89%  
C  70-79%  
D  60-69%  
F  59% and below
All assignments must be turned in using the appropriate Backboard assignment portal. Acceptance of late hand-ins or postings is at the sole discretion of the instructor. Points will be deducted for late hand-ins.

**Participation**

Participation in section discussions is expected and comprises a significant percentage of students’ final grade. The vast majority of your participation grade is determined by how active you are when discussing course materials during each section. Simply attending class does not count as participation. Rather, students are expected to engage in active discussion online and in the classroom about the course materials with their instructor and classmates regularly.

While in class and online students are expected to behave in a professional manner. Inappropriate behavior in classes will not be tolerated. Specifically, please arrive on time, be respectful of your fellow students and instructor, and refrain from distracting activities such as side conversations, updating social media, or misusing computers. We will be addressing some sensitive issues this semester. Some people may feel uncomfortable at times. Try to be aware of how your actions affect others in the class. This does not mean that you cannot voice your opinion – just do not attack others or behave in an overly aggressive or disrespectful manner. Everyone comes to this class with their own set of values and preconceptions, and these may or may not align with yours. Part of being a successful in the policy process is the ability to bridge ideological or value-based divides to either find common ground or shared understanding.

**Policy Memos**

Three times this semester, students will write policy memos in response to real-world cases. These memos are the chance for students to apply the coursework to a current policy problem, build their writing skills, and think analytically about a particularly challenging public policy dilemma. The memos will get progressively shorter over the quarter, requiring students to maximize the value of each word. Students will be given one week (seven days) to read the case and respond with a policy memo. Generally, memos involve placing yourself within the case, leveraging literature and lectures from the course, and providing recommendations on strategy for leaders in the policy field or organization. Additional information on memo writing will be provided in class and in discussion section.

**A few important notes regarding written assignments:**

For written assignments, please use standard font, such as Times New Roman, 12-point font, 1-inch margins, and double-spacing, unless otherwise instructed. Citations and note style should be consistent throughout, using APA Style citations. Papers should be of professional quality, thoroughly proofread, and clear of spelling and grammatical errors. Deductions will be made for such infractions.

References or sources of information for papers must consist of scholarly (peer-reviewed) articles or journals, government reports, or the readings for the class. The use of Wikipedia or other Internet encyclopedia for any paper is not acceptable for graduate level work and will not be accepted.

For more information on APA style citations, access this useful guide: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/10/
Submissions must be turned in via the appropriate Blackboard assignment portal on time! Do NOT email or personally deliver a hard copy without prior approval! Late submissions will be subject to a ten-percentage deduction per day late.

Course Schedule:

Section 1: Introduction

January 21: Meet in classroom – Introduction: What is Public Policy?

January 28: Meet online
Watch: Origins and Conflicts of Modern Politics – about 35 minutes
Why Political Philosophy Matters – about 35 minutes
Public Policy and Analysis – about 10 minutes
The influence of policy – about 20 minutes
Making public policy more fun – about 10 minutes
Discussion forum 1
Quiz 1 Due

Section 2: The Policy-Makers and Their Environment

February 4: Meet in Classroom

February 11: Meet online
Watch: What is Public Policy? – about 45 minutes
Discussion forum 2
Quiz 2 Due

Section 3: Policy formulation: Problems, Agendas, and Formulation

February 18: Meet in classroom
Policy Memo 1 case assigned

February 25: Meet online – Policy Memo 1 Due
Readings: Posted in Blackboard
Discuss policy memo 1
Discussion forum 2
Quiz 3 Due

Section 4: Policy Adoption

March 2: Meet in classroom
March 9: **Spring Break**

March 17: **Meet online**
Readings: Posted in Blackboard
Discussion forum 4
Quiz 4 Due

**Section 5: Budgeting and Public Policy**
March 24: Meet in classroom
Policy Memo Case 2 assigned

March 31: **Meet online – Policy Memo 2 Due**
Readings: Posted in Blackboard
Discuss policy memo 2
Discussion forum 5
Quiz 5 Due

**Section 6: Policy Implementation**
April 7: **Meet in classroom**

April 14: **Meet online**
Readings: Posted in Blackboard
Discussion forum 6
Quiz 6 Due

**Section 7: Policy Impact, Evaluation and Change**
April 21: **Meet in classroom**
Policy Memo 3 Case assigned

April 28: **Meet online –Policy Memo 3 Due**
Readings: Posted in Blackboard
Discussion forum 7
Quiz 7 Due

**Section 8: Reflections and Observations**
May 5th: **Meet in classroom**
Discuss Policy Memo 3 in class

**Cumulative Final Exam Due**
May 12th: **Cumulative Final Exam Due**
Course Policies:

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.

Grade Appeals
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C0.03, 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.C0.03, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught or the Office of the Provost. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at: http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.c0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf.

Academic Advising
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

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 your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. 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. April 10, 2020 is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.
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.

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 the 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.