

COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Title: EDPL 620 Education Policy Analysis
Date: Fall 2006
Time/Location: Wednesday 4:15-7P.M. Benjamin 1107
Instructor: John B. Williams
Office: Benjamin 2204
Telephone: 301-405-1514
E-Mail: jbwms@wam.umd.edu
Office Hours: By Appointment

Overview

This course introduces policy analysis as a set of applied research practices and approaches undertaken within a diverse community of scholars and analysts. It also introduces knowledge about important education policies derived from representative work in the field. Policy analysis contributes information useful for government policymaking. Its concepts and approaches derive from academic disciplines – in particular political science, economics, sociology and history - and members of the community conduct their work in a variety of professional settings. Similarly, contributions of policy analysis emerge within many different government arenas. For aspiring administrators, government officials, policy analysts, and campus scholars, familiarity with education policy analysis is useful for successful job performance, especially for leadership and for problem solving.

Goals and Objectives

From a student perspective, the course provides:

- (1) Recognition of education policy analysis as an important area of applied social science research;**
- (2) Familiarity with important roles for analysis for government policymaking;**
- (3) Beginning familiarity with current policy analysis approaches and literature bases useful for examining public policy goals, processes, content and outcomes;**
- (4) Practice applying policy analysis skills derived from different approaches and perspectives;**
- (5) Capacity to assess and critique important public policy approaches and perspectives;**
- (6) Knowledge of the content and findings of policy research on important education topics.**

Requirements:

All students must prepare for class, actively participate in class sessions, and complete three written assignments.

Class preparation involves completing all weekly reading assignments. Successful participation involves making useful contributions of other students' learning; regularly expressing clear, original and thorough insights in topics under discussion; and taking initiative to make class discussion work well. To assess students' class preparation and participation the instructor will use a value added approach – grades will be raised one-third or more once a satisfactory minimum of participation is accomplished.

Assignment 1: "Reauthorizing the Higher Education Act"

For the first written assignment, students are asked to summarize and critique education policy alternatives currently being debated for the 8th reauthorization of the federal "Higher Education Act". The alternatives are advanced by active participants in on-going Washington discourse, including professional associations, independent policy analysis agencies and scholars, Congressional committees, individual legislators and White House officials

This assignment entails obtaining information posted on the internet about various proposals being offered and discussed, summarizing them, and reflecting upon them using concepts and information drawn from course readings and discussions (representative web pages designated below). This assignment should consist of no more than 15 typewritten, double-spaced pages. It should adopt the perspective of a staff member informing a new member of Congress about on-going policymaking. It should be completed and submitted by the beginning of class session 5 on October 10th.

Assignment 2: Implementation of "No Child Left Behind"

The second written assignment entails analyzing a study of initiation, enactment, and implementation of NCLB. The study is available on the internet (as designated below). The analysis should demonstrate familiarity with and capacity to apply important concepts from policy process analysis introduced in readings and class discussions. It should not exceed 15 typewritten, double-spaced pages, and should be completed and submitted by the beginning of class session 8 on October 31st.

Assignment 3:

The third written assignment involves preparing an original case study of an important set of policymaking events within a K-12 public school district, a higher education system, or an agency of local, state and federal government. For purposes of this assignment, a case study is a written account of important events and that together illustrate policymaking occurring through different stages as illustrated in relevant course materials and discussion. The case study should provide evidence of events constitutes policymaking stages. It is intended for students to illustrate capacity to identify, describe and analyze actual policymaking situations. It should

demonstrate capacity to utilize the analytic perspectives and concepts introduced in the course, especially section 3 of the course syllabus.

It should at minimum describe: (1) the institutional setting; (2) the demographic, legal, administrative or political problem(s) giving rise to the portrayed events; (3) the political actors and their important actions; (4) important events together constituting different stages in the process; (5) conflicts that unfolded and how decisions were reached; (6) information sources used to develop the case study; (7) systematic reflection upon the information provided in the case study using course concepts. In order to complete this assignment, students through various approaches – fieldwork, internet searches, document reviews - must collect primary and secondary evidence and other information. Students are urged to submit outlines and preliminary drafts of their work for early comment by the instructor.

The final drafts of case studies must be submitted at the final class session on December 12th. The completed case studies should consist of 15-25 typewritten, double-spaced pages. Some students may be asked to present their case studies during the final class session.

ALL WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE SUBMITTED IN PRINT FORMAT. ASSIGNMENTS MAY NOT BE E-MAILED OR FAXED.

In addition to these requirements, all students are expected to abide by the code of academic integrity throughout the course. Academic dishonesty, including cheating, fabrication and plagiarism will not be tolerated and will be reported. The full text of the student honor code is available on the web at [HYPERLINK http://www.Inform.umd.edu/Campus Info/Departmes/jpo/codeacinteg.html](http://www.Inform.umd.edu/Campus Info/Departmes/jpo/codeacinteg.html)

A student with a documented disability or any other special needs who wishes to discuss academic accommodations should contact the instructor as soon as possible. Students will not be penalized because of observances of their religious beliefs. Whenever possible, students will be given reasonable time to make up any academic assignment that is missed due to participation in a religious observance. It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor as soon as possible on any intended absences for religious observances.

Grades

As indicated above, students' preparation and participation will be used to raise grades once a minimum level of adequacy is attained. Beyond this provision, each of the first two written assignments contributes 30% of a student's grade, and the final project contributes 40%. Students must meet all deadlines. Except in cases of family emergency or personal illness, grades for late assignments will be reduced by one-

third (i.e. A+ to A), and no incomplete grades will be awarded except under similar circumstances.

**SCHEDULE OF CLASS SESSIONS, DISCUSSION TOPICS,
AND READING ASSIGNMENTS
August 30 – December 6, 2006**

Session 1: August 30th
Topic: Introduction and Overview of the Course
Reading Assignment: None

THE POLICY ANALYSIS COMMUNITY

Session 2: September 6th
Topic: Role of Policy Analysis in Government Operations
Reading Assignment: Williams, pp. 1-91; 148-192; 210-257

**“RATIONAL CHOICE” POLICY ANALYSIS
APPROACHES AND PERSPECTIVES**

Session 3: September 13th
Topic: Overview of Rational Choice Approaches
Reading Assignment: MacRae and Whittington, pp. 1-127.
Note: The material covered in this assignment provides the basis for the next two class sessions including the first written assignment. Please deeply familiarize yourself with the various analytic elements of rational choice policy analysis.

Session 4: September 20th
Topic: Rational Choice Methods and Techniques
Reading Assignment: MacRae and Whittington, pp. 145-170; “Increasing the Social Value of the BC Pacific Salmon Fishery” in Weiner and Vining, pp. 3-26.

**THE FIRST WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT MUST BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO
CLASS SESSION 5 ON October 10**

Session 5: September 27th
Topic: Reauthorization of the Federal “Higher Education Act”.
Consult the following website sources:

<http://thomas.loc.gov> (In particular see documents describing current “HEA Senate Bill S1614” and “House Bill HR609”)
<http://edworkforce.house.gov/issues/108th/education/highereducation/highereducation.htm>
<http://Edworkforce.house.gov/democrats/higheredinfo.html>
www.nchelp.org/iniatives/index.cfm
www.ihep.org (see T. Wolanin “Reauthorizing the Higher Education Act” under the headings “Publications” and “New and Coming”)

POLICY PROCESS ANALYSIS

Session 6: October 4th
Topic: Overview of Policy Process Models
Reading Assignment: Brewer and DeLeon, pp. 1-26;31-53;61-67;87-111; 249-274; 319-366.

Session 7: October 11th
Topic: Policy Initiation – Multi-Streams Approaches
Reading Assignment: Kingdon, pp. 1-164

Session 8: October 18th
Topic: Multi-Stream Approaches
Reading Assignment: Kingdon, pp. 165-230; Stout and B. Stevens, "The Case of the Failed Diversity Rule: A Multiple Streams Analysis".

Session 9: October 25th
Topic: Policy Implementation Analysis
Reading Assignment: Werner, pp. 1-146.

Session 10: November 1st
Topic: Policy Implementation Analysis -
Study of Implementation of “No Child Left Behind”
Reading Assignment: "From the Capital to the Classroom: Year 4 of No Child Left Behind"
www.ctredpol.org/nclb

STUDENTS MUST SUBMIT THE SECOND WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT BY THE BEGINNING OF CLASS SESSION 8 ON OCTOBER 18th.

Session 11: November 8th

Topic: Discussion and Review of Written Assignment 2 & Analysis of Implementation Study

Reading Assignment: James Quint, et. al. "Scaling Up First Things First: Findings from the First Implementation Year"

www.mdrc.org/publications/88/execsum.pdf

Session 12: November 15th

Topic: Advocacy Coalition Approaches

Reading Assignment: Sabatier and Jenkins Smith, pp. 1-104; 211-234

NO CLASS SESSION ON NOVEMBER 22ND.

REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF REPRESENTATIVE POLICY STUDIES

Session 13: November 29th

Topic: Mathematics Curriculum Reform

Reading Assignment: Wilson, pp. 1-215

STUDENTS PRESENT CASE STUDIES

Session 14: December 6th

Topic: Selected Student Case Study Presentations.

COMPLETED CASE STUDY ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE SUBMITTED AT THE START OF CLASS SESSION 14 ON DECEMBER 6th.

List of Required Reading

(Available at the book store and on print reserve at the library)

John Kingdon. **Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies**. NY: Longman, 1995. ISBN 0673523896.

Duncan MacRae and Dale Whittington. **Expert Advice for Policy Choice: Analysis and Discourse**. Washington, D.C. Georgetown University Press, 1997 ISBN 0878406417.

Paul Sabatier and Hank Jenkins-Smith. **Policy Change and Learning**. Boulder, CO: Westview, 1993. ISBN 0813316499

Walter Williams. **Honest Number and Democracy**. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1998. ISBN 0878406840

Susanne Wilson. **California Dreaming: Reforming Mathematics Education**. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003. ISBN 0300094329

Alan Werner. **A Guide to Implementation Research**. Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute Press, 2004. ISBN 0877667241

(Available on electronic reserve at the library)

Gary Brewer and Peter De Leon. **Foundations of Policy Analysis**. Homewood, IL: Dorsey, 1983. ISBN 0256023239, pp. 1-26; 31-53; 61-67; 87-111.

K. Stout and B. Stevens, "**The Case of the Failed Diversity Rule: Multiple Streams Analysis**"

David Weimer and A. Vining. **Policy Analysis Concepts and Practice**. Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1999. ISBN 13109836, pp. 3-26.

(Available via the internet)

Center for Education Policy, "**From the Capital to the Classroom: Year 4 of NCLB**"
www.ctrepol.org/nclb

James Quint, et. al. "**Scaling Up First Things First: Findings for the First Impelmentation Year**"
www.mdrc.org/publications/88/execsum.pdf

George Vernez, et al. **“Closing the Education Gap”**
<http://rand.org/publications/MR/MR1036/index.html>