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Office Hours: By Appointment

PADP 8620: Policy Process
University of Georgia
Spring 2020

Class Information

- Class Meetings Wednesdays 3:35pm - 6:35pm
- Class Location: Baldwin 102

Course Description

This course will provide students with an introduction to the process of public policymaking in the United States. Students will understand how policies are formed, implemented, and evaluated. Additionally, the course will delve into specific policy areas, such as environmental and health policy. Students will understand how key events have shaped public policy, and stay abreast of current events and their potential implications to policy.

Required Text

- Peters, Guy B. (2019). *American Public Policy: Promise and Performance*. Sage Publications. 11th edition
- Additional reading will be disseminated via email or posted on ELC

Course Requirements and Evaluation

- 20% Attendance, In Class Assignments
- 20% Memos
- 25% Midterm Exam
- 35% Final Paper

The plus/minus letter grading system (i.e. A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D, F) is the official grading system approved by the Board of Regents and the only grading system approved for the University of Georgia. The assignment of letter grades in a course is the responsibility and at the sole discretion of the instructor.

No “extra credit” will be assigned in this course under any circumstances. The final grades may only be changed in the event of a clerical error (e.g., points summed incorrectly). In case of a grade dispute, a student must submit a one-page memo presenting evidence for their case and attach supplemental information as appropriate. The original assignment will be reviewed and re-graded. This review can create a grade increase but may also create a grade decrease based on the new review.

General Expectations

All students are expected to behave professionally in this class. This means attending class regularly, being on time, and *respectfully* participating in discussions. You are responsible for all material in the readings and meeting all specific deadlines or dates posted on the syllabus. Assignments must be completed on time. This course will include a heavy amount of class discussion. You should come to class prepared to share your insights and raise questions based upon reading assignments. As an incentive, a portion of the course grade will be determined by my assessment of your preparation and contribution to the course.

As this is a class that necessarily requires discussions about politics, policies, government services, and democratic rights and participation, there will be views from across the political, economic, and social spectrums. It is essential that a courteous and encouraging environment be maintained. Please refrain from participating if you feel that you cannot do so respectfully. On the other hand, it is not expected that you will agree with everything that the instructor or your classmates say or believe. Therefore, you are encouraged to question, dispute, and challenge other views in a civil manner.

Attendance policy (20%)

Ten percent of your grade will be based on class attendance and the quality of your participation in class. Students are expected to participate through asking questions and answering inquiries raised in class. There will also be frequent in-class activities and assignments that you will complete in groups. Keep in mind that it may be difficult to participate without being physically present. Absenteeism will result in reduced final grade. To adequately prepare for class, all assigned readings should be completed by the dates indicated on the course schedule. Not all assigned readings may be discussed in class; nonetheless you are responsible for familiarizing yourself with them.

Students who are frequently late to class or who leave early should expect to have their grade reduced. Should a student need to miss class for a reason out of their control, they should discuss it with the professor beforehand. Every unexcused absence will result in a 1% decrease in the *final* grade. I reserve the right to not approve an absence. Additionally, any disruptive or disrespectful behavior will result in the individual being asked to leave the class, which will negatively affect student's participation grade. Further, inappropriate behavior such as using cell phones, sleeping, or surfing the web during class will cause a deduction in your participation grade.

Midterm Exam (25%)

There will one in-class, closed book exam. This will consist of both multiple-choice and short answer questions. The exams will cover material from the readings, lectures, and other in-class materials.

Policy Memos (20%)

Students will be required to work together in groups to produce two brief memos on the topic of their choice, relating to that week's chapter material. Students will identify a policy issue, briefly

describe the issue, and propose a solution using material learned in class. A rubric will be distributed separately.

Final Paper (35%)

Each student must submit a public policy paper not later than Wednesday, April 22nd at 6:35pm. The paper will constitute 35% of the semester grade. For this assignment you will pick a substantive issue in one of the policy areas discussed in this course (approved by the professor earlier in the semester). The issue must be within the jurisdiction of the U.S. Federal Government, state governments, local governments or one of their agencies. In your paper, you should clearly define the substance of the problem, its significance, and the existing arguments around it. Next, you should take a stance on the issue, describe a potential policy solution and make a case for it. You should develop a convincing argument based on evidence to support your choice. You will need to conduct your own research to provide reliable evidence. A good paper will be well organized, concise, well researched and convincing.

This assignment has several objectives. It should help you increase your familiarity with a substantive issue in public policy and the debates that surround that issue. The second is to increase your familiarity with relevant sources of information, such as government reports, academic and professional journals. The third is to help you improve an important skill of writing a clear and convincing arguments supported by reliable evidence.

The policy paper should be no longer than 1,800 words in typed, double-spaced format with one-inch margins on each side using Times New Roman font size 12. References (APA), title page and appendices do not count toward the word limit. Your grade will be penalized for grammatical or spelling errors. Papers turned in after the due date will lose 15 points for each day they are late. A rubric will be distributed separately.

PhD Students

PhD Students will complete a final 10-12 page research paper on a policy topic of their choice. We will meet briefly throughout the semester to review their progress. A rubric will be distributed separately.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a condition that makes it difficult to complete the work described in this syllabus, please notify the Disability Resource Center and the instructor within the first two weeks of class in order to develop alternative arrangements. All information and documentation of the disability will be confidential. All documentation must be received and relayed to the instructor within the first four weeks of class.

Plagiarism and Academic Honesty

You should abide The University of Georgia's Academic Honesty Policy and the Student Honor Code. Any kind of violations will not be tolerated. You can refer to the UGA's Academic Honesty Policy at <http://ovpi.uga.edu/academic-honesty/academic-honesty-policy>. Contact me or honesty@uga.edu if you have any questions.

Administrative Details

- The course schedule is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.
- Please put your cellphone on mute. I will notify you if you may use your computer for the day's work. Otherwise, notes should be taken on paper.

Course Schedule

January 8

- Introduction and Overview of Course

January 15

- Peters, Chapter 1: What is Public Policy

January 22

- Peters, Chapter 2: The Structure of Policymaking in American Government

January 29

- Peters, Chapter 4: Agenda Setting and Public Policy

February 5

- Peters, Chapter 5: Legitimizing Policy Choices

February 12

- Peters, Chapter 7: Budgeting: Allocation and Public Policy
- Out of Class Activity, *Class will not physically meet*

February 19

- Peters, Chapter 8: Evaluation and Policy Change

February 26

- Peters, Chapter 10: Tax Policy
- Inequality for All

March 4

- Midterm Exam

March 11

- Spring Break, No Class

March 18

- No Class

March 25

- Peters, Chapter 11: Healthcare Policy

April 1

- Peters, Chapter 12: Social Security and Welfare

April 8

- Peters, Chapter 13: Education Policy

April 15

- Peters, Chapter 16: Social Values and Public Policy

April 22

- Final Paper Due