

PADP 8620: Policy Process

Spring 2021

*University of Georgia
School of Public and International Affairs
Department of Public Administration and Policy*

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Request a Meeting: <https://calendly.com/evbell>
Email: evbell@uga.edu
Class Schedule: Tuesdays, 3:55 PM to 6:45 PM
Class Location: ONLINE

Office Hours: Meetings will take place by request using Zoom

Note on COVID-19 Course Modifications: Alterations to class management procedures related to the COVID-19 pandemic are written in red text in this document for easy reference.

Course Description

Key concepts in the study of public policy. Among the topics covered are description of policy process to include agenda setting, policy formulation, and policy adoption.

This course is designed to familiarize you with the policy process and how to communicate complex policy information to different audiences. Two competencies students can expect to gain from this course are (1) understanding and communicating the policy cycle, and (2) an ability to critically analyze policy concepts and how these relate to your role as a professional. These skills will be valuable for careers in public administration and provide a foundation for students interested in policy-related research. These competencies will be developed through individual writing exercises and in-class discussion.

How will we approach these discussions and exercises?

This course will be delivered online through pre-recorded modules (asynchronous) and a class discussion once per week through live (synchronous) Zoom meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Student Learning Objectives

- Students will become familiarized with the roots of policy process studies and how the field has evolved over time.
- Students will develop and improve their command of theoretical concepts in order to conceptually frame and communicate policy information.
- Students will link concepts covered in the course to their own role in the policy process.
- Students will complete regular exercises and assignments to convey policy process information for different audiences.

Birkland, Thomas A. *An introduction to the policy process: Theories, concepts, and models of public policy making*. Routledge, 2019.

You will need to purchase your book either from the UGA bookstore or from your favorite online vendor.

Recommended Books

Peters, B. Guy. *American Public Policy: Promise and Performance*. Sage, 2019.

Sabatier, Paul A., ed. *Theories of the Policy Process*. Westview Press, 2014. (The 2018 edition has some of the most recent updates in theoretical advancement, but much of the same content).

eLearning Commons and Online Resources

In addition to the required textbooks, additional reading is posted in a folder in the eLearning Commons (eLC). Students can access online information about our class at <http://elc.uga.edu>. Graduate students should become familiar with searching for journal articles and books using the library's holdings and electronic databases. Many journals are free to you through your status as a student at the University of Georgia, and you should make use of these resources.

Grade Distribution

Assignments will be evaluated using a point system, with 100 points possible for the class. Note, the grade "A" indicates "outstanding" achievement. The following scale will be used to assign letter grades in this class:

100 – 94 points A	86.9 – 83 points B	75.9 – 70 points C
93.9 – 90 points A-	82.9 – 80 points B-	69.9 – 60 points D
89.9 – 87 points B+	79.9 – 76 points C+	59.9 – 0 points F

Assignment	Due Date	Points
Discussion Board Entries	Weeks 2-13	20
Case Study Review 1	February 23	20
Case Study Review 2	March 16	20
Policy Brief Presentation	Assigned Dates	10
Policy brief	May 7	30

PhD Students: please contact me to discuss readings.

Discussion Board Posts: Students will post **4** discussions (5 points each). You may choose which weeks you post (from Weeks 2-13), but you may only write one post for each week you choose (for example, you cannot write four posts for one week). Discussions will be posted on the eLearning Commons (eLC) discussion board to answer the prompt for that week. These discussions will be *at least* 1 paragraph long and draw on or synthesize insights from the readings and modules covered that week (instructions on eLC). Discussions are to be posted by **Sunday before class at 11:59pm EDT**. This will ensure that everyone has sufficient time to read the posts before class. Discussion posts are to be respectful and professional. The goal of

discussion is to stimulate dialogue as we work through class concepts together. Discussions are to correspond to the content of the week in which they are posted.

Case Study Reviews: The case study review is a writing assignment that challenges students to i) articulate how the policy case illustrates concepts of the policy process and ii) what strategies, as a practitioner, they would employ to address what they consider challenges. Case studies will correspond to a 'stage' of the policy process (see '*Note: Use this case to write Case Study Review*' for the corresponding weeks). Details for the assignments are summarized in an assignment information sheet found in the eLC. The assignment information sheet contains the rubric that will be used to evaluate the two reviews. Prior to the first review, we will cover review writing strategies and resources. Case study reviews are due **February 23 by 11:59pm EDT** and **March 16 by 11:59pm EDT**.

Virtual Presentation: Quickly communicating key points discussed in longer documents (such as policy briefs) is a critical skill, especially for when your target audience has limited time to read. You will give a 5-minute PowerPoint presentation of key points from your policy brief. As a supportive exercise, students will ask questions and offer recommendations to improve the content. Presentations will take place across two days—**April 20 and 27** during live classtime. If you prefer to switch days, you will need to find a classmate willing to swap with you. Once this has been arranged, please inform me ASAP. Instructions for developing and giving a presentation will be posted on eLC.

Policy Brief: A policy brief is a key resource for framing policy issues, discussing what is known about the issue, how this relates to policy goals, and recommending solutions to decision makers or other target audiences. Like the op-ed, this assignment will focus on your policy issue of choice. Instructions will be posted to eLC. The policy brief is due on **May 7 by 11:59pm EDT** on eLC.

All grades will be posted in a timely manner in eLC. Students are encouraged to frequently check their progress during the semester. Students have two weeks after a grade is posted to meet with me regarding grading issues. After two weeks, the grade WILL NOT be changed.

Should you wish to discuss your grade, you must meet with me via Zoom or by phone. I am not able to discuss grades by email.

Expectations and Guidelines

Class Preparation and Discussion: Complete the reading assigned and modules before each class meeting and be prepared for discussion. Make sure everyone has an opportunity for input. We are interested in each person's contribution, so please understand if I ask for brevity or a conclusion to a chain of discussion. Finally, your dedication each week will be necessary for gaining the knowledge and tools necessary for the writing assignments and presentation.

Synchronous Lecture Protocols: Recording or distribution of synchronous online class sessions (video or audio) is prohibited. If a student wishes to record synchronous material, they must first gain approval from the instructor and other students that may be included in the recording. Students that require recording for purposes of special accommodation must have relevant written accommodations from the UGA Disability Resource Center. Please see the [DRC guidelines](#) for more information.

Freedom of expression is welcome, but decorum must be professional and respectful. In accordance with UGA [here](#), expressive activities must not disrupt the class.

Academic Honesty: As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University's academic honesty policy, "A Culture of Honesty," and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in "A Culture of Honesty" found at: <https://honesty.uga.edu/Academic-Honesty-Policy/>. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

Plagiarism: Our capacity to learn and synthesize knowledge within the public administration profession depends upon our ability to build on the foundation of existing knowledge and research. Recognizing and documenting the work of others is critical for all students, but especially for graduate students. When writing, students must take great care in how they reference ideas and information sources. Never use someone else's words or ideas in your writing without proper attribution. Serious penalties exist for academic misconduct and plagiarism. Students should read and be familiar with the following resources:

o UGA Academic Honesty Policy: Plagiarism

https://honesty.uga.edu/Academic-Honesty-Policy/Prohibited_Conduct/

o UGA Libraries Research Guide: Writing and Citing

<http://www.libs.uga.edu/researchguide/writing/index.html>

Mental Health and Wellness Resources: If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care and Outreach in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-7774 or visit <https://sco.uga.edu>. They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services.

- UGA has several resources for a student seeking mental health services (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) or crisis support (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>).
- If you need help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit BeWellUGA (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) for a list of FREE workshops, classes, mentoring, and health coaching led by licensed clinicians and health educators in the University Health Center. Additional resources can be accessed through the UGA App.

Electronic Devices: Silence all phones and other electronic noise-making devices while you are in the classroom. Save text messages and emails for the break or after class. Laptop computers or tablets may be used for taking notes, but students must refrain from participating in any online activities during class. Before using electronic devices with online access in class, students should be aware of the learning distractions associated with these technologies in the classroom (e.g., <http://tinyurl.com/q7pdtgc>).

Attendance and Accommodations: Active engagement in the class is critical for the success of graduate students; however, this semester brings unique constraints due to health precautions, family and childcare demands, and the potential for illness. You are responsible for staying up to date on class content. If you fall ill, please communicate with the instructor so that we can make appropriate accommodations. If health concerns develop and you require an accommodation, please reach out to the instructor and/or the Disability Resource Center

(DRC) on campus, as appropriate. The DRC can be reached at drc@uga.edu or 706.542.8719.

Late Assignments: Deadlines have been structured so that the instructor can provide regular and periodic feedback on your understanding and application of the course material. Late penalties will not be applied to course work this semester; however, late material will delay feedback and reduce the value you derive from the class. No late material will be accepted after May 5, 2021.

Communication with the Instructor: What you can expect from me: Throughout the semester, you can contact me by email. You can expect me to return correspondence in a timely manner (at most 48 hours, not including weekends). If you have questions or if there are topics you would like to discuss in greater detail, schedule an appointment with me through my calendar: www.calendly.com/evbell. While I have not scheduled regular office hours this semester, each week I have many time slots available for student meetings. When you schedule with me, you will receive a Zoom meeting link for our conversation. If the available meeting times do not align with your schedule, contact me by email so that we can identify a good meeting time.

Disabilities and Accommodations: If you plan to request accommodations for a disability, please register with the Disability Resource Center. They can be reached by visiting Clark Howell Hall, calling 706-542-8719 (voice) or 706-542-8778 (TTY), or by visiting <http://drc.uga.edu>

Syllabus and Schedule Changes: The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary. The instructor will communicate changes in writing through your UGA email account.

Other Logistics:

- Please go [here](#) to learn more information on the confidentiality of student records.
- Requests for incompletes (I) and withdrawal (W) must be made in accordance with university policies. For information on incompletes, please go to [here](#); for withdrawals go [here](#).

Coronavirus Information for Students

This course will be taught online, so an in-person classroom protocol does not apply. However, information on resources for dealing with COVID-19 are outlined here.

- **DawgCheck:** Please perform a quick symptom check each weekday on DawgCheck—on the UGA app or [website](#)—whether you feel sick or not. It will help health providers monitor the health situation on campus.
- **What do I do if I have symptoms?** Students showing symptoms should self-isolate and schedule an appointment with the University Health Center by calling 706-542-1162 (Monday-Friday, 8am–5pm). Please DO NOT walk-in. Please go to the UGA [emergencies and after-hours care website](#) for more information.
- **What do I do if I am notified that I have been exposed?** Students who learn they have been directly exposed to COVID-19 but are not showing symptoms should self-

quarantine for 14 days consistent with Department of Public Health (DPH) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines. Please correspond with your instructor via email, with a cc: to Student Care & Outreach at sco@uga.edu, to coordinate continuing your coursework while self-quarantined. If you develop symptoms, you should contact the University Health Center to make an appointment to be tested. You should continue to monitor your symptoms daily on DawgCheck.

- ***How do I get a test?*** Students who are demonstrating symptoms of COVID-19 should call the University Health Center. UHC is offering testing by appointment for students; appointments may be booked by calling 706-542-1162. UGA will also be recruiting asymptomatic students to participate in surveillance tests. Students living in residence halls, Greek housing and off-campus apartment complexes are encouraged to participate.
- ***What do I do if I test positive?*** Any student with a positive COVID-19 test is required to report the test in DawgCheck and should self-isolate immediately. Students should not attend classes in-person until the isolation period is completed. Once you report the positive test through DawgCheck, UGA Student Care and Outreach will follow up with you.

Mental Health and Wellness Resources

If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care and Outreach in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-7774 or visit <https://sco.uga.edu>. They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services.

UGA has several resources for a student seeking mental health services (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) or crisis support (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>).

If you need help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit BeWellUGA (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) for a list of FREE workshops, classes, mentoring, and health coaching led by licensed clinicians and health educators in the University Health Center.

Additional resources can be accessed through the UGA App.

Schedule

Our class uses a combination of pre-recorded mini lectures or (“modules”) that will accompany required readings for the week. Students are expected to complete the assigned readings and modules *before* the class. We will then discuss case studies and students will engage in application exercises. Throughout the entire semester, the class will be held online. The instructor will continue to be available for student meetings through Zoom during this time. If you have any questions about this schedule, contact me at evbell@uga.edu.

Course Outline

Week 1 (January 19, 2021): Syllabus Review and Course Overview

This week is only synchronous. We will meet online to discuss the syllabus and to introduce ourselves.

Assignments:

There will be a Q&A session during class time. Please bring your questions.
Please complete the online survey (link posted on eLC) for class on or before January 19.

Week 2 (January 26, 2021): The Policy Process as Part of a System

Readings (complete **before** January 26):

- Birkland Ch. 1: Introducing the Policy Process, pp. 1-27.
- Birkland Ch. 2: Elements of the Policy-Making System, pp. 33-37.
- [Paul Cairney: Politics and Public Policy](#)

Assignments:

Post to discussion board by Sunday (January 24) at 11:59pm EDT.

Week 3 (February 2, 2021): Policymaking and the Structure of US Government

Readings (complete before February 2):

- Birkland Ch. 2 (*continued*), pp. 37-69 & 75-105.
- Peters pp. 28-33 (posted on eLC).

Assignments:

Post to discussion board by Sunday (January 31) at 11:59pm EDT.

Week 4 (February 9, 2021): Official and Unofficial Actors in the Policy Process

This week we will begin with discussion of actors in the policy process, and then pivot to discuss the upcoming case study review assignment.

Readings (complete before February 9):

- Birkland, Ch. 4 and Ch. 5
- Weible, C.M. & Karin Ingold. 2018. "Why advocacy coalitions matter and practical insights about them." *Policy and Politics*, 46(2), 325-43. (posted on eLC)

Assignments:

Post to discussion board by Sunday (February 7) at 11:59pm EDT.

Week 5 (February 16, 2021): Problem Definition, Agenda Setting, and Politics of Attention

Readings (complete before February 16):

- Birkland, Ch. 6
- Peters Ch. 4, pp. 61-65 (posted on eLC)
- **Case Study Discussion**—*Formulating Policy: The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act* (posted on eLC)
Note: Use this case to write Case Study Review #1.

Assignments:

Post to discussion board by Sunday (February 14) at 11:59pm EDT.

Week 6 (February 23, 2021): Policy Analysis

Readings (complete before February 23):

- Birkland, Ch. 8
- "Policy Analysis in the Policy Process" by Dunn (2012) (posted on eLC)

Assignments:

Case Study Review #1 Due

Post to discussion board by Sunday (February 21) at 11:59pm EDT.

Week 7 (March 2, 2021): Policy Design, Tools, and Types

Readings (complete before March 2):

- Birkland, Ch. 7
- Birkland, Ch. 9

Assignments:

Post to discussion board by Sunday (February 28) at 11:59pm EDT.

Week 8 (March 9, 2021): Policy Implementation and Failure

Readings (complete before March 9):

- Birkland, Ch. 10, pp. 343 – 354
- Riccucci, N. M. (2005). Street-level bureaucrats and intrastate variation in the implementation of temporary assistance for needy families policies. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 15(1), 89-111. (posted on eLC)

Assignments:

Post to discussion board by Sunday (March 7) at 11:59pm EDT.

Week 9 (March 16, 2021): Evaluation and Policy Change

Readings (complete before March 16):

- Peters Ch. 8, pp. 159-175 (posted on eLC)
- Bovens, M., P. 't Hart, and S. Kuipers. (2008). The Politics of Policy Evaluation. In R.E. Goodin (Ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Public Policy* (319-335). Oxford University Press. DOI: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199548453.003.0015
- Case Study Discussion—The Politics of Evaluation: Head Start Policy Termination (posted on eLC)
Note: Use this case to write Case Study Review #2.

Assignments:

Post to discussion board by Sunday (March 14) at 11:59pm EDT.

Read instructions for policy brief; bring to class any questions about the assignment.

Week 10 (March 23, 2021): Policy Learning

Readings (complete before March 23):

- Birkland, Ch. 10, pp. 354-366
- Bennett, C. J., & Howlett, M. (1992). The lessons of learning: Reconciling theories of policy learning and policy change. *Policy sciences*, 25(3), 275-294. (posted on eLC)
- May, P. J. (1992). "Policy learning and failure." *Journal of Public Policy*, 12(4), 331-354. (posted on eLC)

Assignments:

Post to discussion board by Sunday (March 21) at 11:59pm EDT.

Work on policy brief, due by May 5 at 11:59pm EDT.

Read instructions for the presentation; bring to class any questions about the assignment.

Week 11 (March 30, 2021): Belief Systems and Behavior

Readings (complete before March 30):

- Jenkins-Smith, Hank, Daniel Nohrstedt, Chris Weible, and Karin Ingold. 2018. "Chapter 4: The Advocacy Coalition Framework." In *Theories of the Policy Process*. pp. 140-141.
- Peters, Ch. 16
- Sabatier, P., Hunter, S., & McLaughlin, S. 1987. "The devil shift: Perceptions and misperceptions of opponents." *Western Political Quarterly*, 40 (3), 449-476.

Assignments:

Post to discussion board by Sunday (March 28) at 11:59pm EDT.
Work on policy brief, due by May 5 at 11:59pm EDT.

Week 12 (April 6, 2021): Drivers of Policy Innovation

Readings (complete before April 6):

- Berry, Frances Stokes and William Berry. 2014. "Innovation and Diffusion Models in Policy Research." In *Theories of the Policy Process*, 3rd edition, 307-338. Edited by Paul Sabatier. Boulder, CO: Westview Press. (posted on eLC)
- Mintrom, M. 1997. "Policy entrepreneurs and the diffusion of innovation." *American journal of political science*, 738-770. (posted on eLC)
- Pp. 840 – 845 of Shipan, C. R., & Volden, C. (2008). The mechanisms of policy diffusion. *American journal of political science*, 52(4), 840-857. (posted on eLC)

Assignments:

Post to discussion board by Sunday (April 4) at 11:59pm EDT.
Work on policy brief, due by May 5 at 11:59pm EDT.
Read instructions for the presentation; bring to class any questions about the assignment.

Week 13 (April 13, 2021): Policy Theory and Its Applications

Readings (complete before April 13):

- Birkland, Ch. 11
- Cairney, Paul. "Standing on the shoulders of giants: how do we combine the insights of multiple theories in public policy studies?" *Policy Studies Journal* 41, no. 1 (2013): 1-21. (posted on eLC)

Assignments:

Post to discussion board by Sunday (April 11) at 11:59pm EDT.
Work on policy brief, due by May 5 at 11:59pm EDT.
Work on presentation: Group 1 presents on April 20, Group 2 presents on Apr. 27

Week 14 (April 20, 2021): Policy Brief Presentations, Part 1

Assignments:

Work on policy brief, due by May 5 at 11:59pm EDT.

Group 1: prepare 5-minute PowerPoint presentation of policy brief for class on April 20.
(Instructions on eLC)

Week 15 (April 27, 2021): Policy Brief Presentations, Part 2

Assignments:

Work on policy brief, due by May 5 at 11:59pm EDT.

Group 2: prepare 5-minute PowerPoint presentation of policy brief for class on April 27.
(Instructions on eLC)