

Eastern Michigan University
Political Science Department

PLSC 381, PUBLIC POLICY ANALYSIS
T/Th 2:00-3:15

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INTRODUCTION

This course focuses on the study of public policy which is the “who gets what” of political science. We want to know how and why some issues (such as unemployment, health insurance, K-12 education, regulation of finance industry – all issues in 2008) get onto the public agenda and get action while others (such as racial inequality and college affordability) do not. We want to know what difference it makes in the lives of individuals if prescription drug benefits are enacted or if health insurance through Medicaid is extended to the working poor - what are the consequences? Each student will become familiar with a variety of analytic models of policy making as well as the substance of various domestic policy issues of the United States today. Rather than focus on a single policy area, this semester, we will explore a wide array of issues that are high on the agenda of the Trump administration: health insurance, border security, illegal immigrants, infrastructure improvements, deregulation of finance industry, and deregulation of environment-related policies.

COURSE ADMINISTRATION

Each student is responsible for reading the assigned materials before class, for the class will be combined lecture/discussion format.

Grades will be determined as follows:

Midterm exam (in class)	20%
3 policy papers (3-4 pages)(15% each)	45%
2 Peer reviews	05% extra credit
Class attendance & participation	05% extra credit
Research paper presentation	05%
Final major research paper	30%

University Writing Center. Students are required to attend at least two workshops sponsored by the University Writing Center (115 Halle, 487-0694) by the end of October. The UWC offers small group workshops on all aspects of the writing process (e.g., Peer Review, Incorporating Evidence, Incorporating Evidence Using APA Style, Revising Your Writing). You can see descriptions of all UWC workshops and the schedule at www.emich.edu/uwc. It is my expectation that they will provide me a schedule that I will distribute in class for you to sign up. Failure to attend a workshop will result in a one-third letter grade penalty on the Final major research paper (example B paper becomes B-).

The **University Writing Center** also offers one-to-one writing consulting for undergraduate students. Students can make appointments or drop in between the hours of **10 a.m. and 6 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays and from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Fridays**. Students are encouraged to come to the UWC at any stage of the writing process.

The UWC also has several satellite locations across campus (in Owen, Marshall, Pray-Harrold, and Mark Jefferson). These satellites provide drop-in writing support to students in various colleges and programs. **Satellite locations and hours can be found on the UWC web site:** <http://www.emich.edu/uwc>.

Students seeking writing support at any location of the University Writing Center should bring a draft of their writing (along with any relevant instructions or rubrics) to work on during the consultation.

Academic Projects Center. Students are also encouraged to utilize the Academic Projects Center located in 116 Halle Library (www.emich.edu/apc). The Center is staffed by University Writing Center consultants, Halle Librarians, and Information and Communications Technology staff. These individuals can provide assistance with writing, research, or technology needs. No appointment is necessary. Students visiting the Academic Projects Center should bring with them a draft of what they're working on and their assignment sheet.

The three **policy papers** will be three to four page (maximum) policy memos in which you analyze some public policy issue focusing upon one of the key elements of the policy-making process. Students will select a single policy topic to explore in all three of these short papers.

1. The first paper will focus on defining and substantiating a public **problem** with an emphasis on policy definition and substantiation through hard documented facts.
2. The second paper will focus on describing and analyzing the major policy **solutions** that are being considered within the policy community to address the problem explored in the first memo. The focus is not on current policy, but rather policy proposals that are being considered somewhere in the policy community to further change policy from the status quo. Given the Trump Administration's initial policy positions, there should be no shortage of policy reforms being considered. But likewise, remember that there are advocates of policy reform in a very different direction coming from other policy communities. Be sure to systematically analyze the pros and cons of some of the policy alternatives.
3. The third paper shall focus on the **political environment** or political issues/divides around the public policy issue. Who is in support and who is in opposition to what kinds of positions? Consider political parties, sub-national governments, interest groups, think tanks and public opinion in your analysis of the political environment.

Papers will be evaluated on style and content. These are research papers, and as such should be carefully researched using a minimum of six highly reputable resources (including two national news sources (select from: New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, New York Post, Chicago Tribune, The Economist, Politico), two think tank reports and two government web sites) and should be meticulously documented with both complete list of references (include all sources consulted and utilized for your research) and in-text documentation following the APA Style. You should document the source of all statistics, facts that are not commonly known, and analysis/evaluation/opinion of others. For

materials obtained from the Internet, you should provide the complete http address. All papers must be appropriately documented following the APA Style <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01>

Each student will also have an obligation to conduct a **peer review** of another student's first and second policy memos. The focus of your review should be on both style and content. The Canvas system will automatically assign and notify you of your assigned paper to be reviewed. Your peer review must be completed no later than five days after your notification. Your two peer reviews will be worth 5% in extra credit based upon the quality of your review comments. Failure to conduct a serious peer review will result in a letter grade penalty on your own policy paper!

The **major research paper** will be an eight to ten-page exploration of any major public policy issue that you have ***not studied*** for the policy memos. Your objective will be to cover the following:

1. Policy Problem: clearly state and substantiate the public policy problem along with a causal model;
2. Existing Programs: describe the context of current policy related to this policy problem;
3. Policy Alternatives: present several policy alternatives that are being considered to resolve a particular aspect of the problem;
4. Analysis of Alternatives: weigh the pros and cons of several major solutions;
5. Policy Recommendation: make a policy recommendation, explain why you are making your recommendation and why are you willing to ignore the shortcomings of this option as well as the strengths of other options;
6. Political Analysis: provide a political analysis indicating the political constraints and strengths of key actors (interest groups, political parties, industries) within the policy arena.

This paper should be based on extensive library and Internet research to provide a theoretical understanding of the problem and a programmatic understanding of existing public policies. Be sure to document your research (in-text citation and references as noted above). You should utilize the six headings listed above as your topical headings in your text. This paper will be evaluated on both style and content. Students are expected to schedule a one-on-one meeting with the instructor by November 10. The complete final paper is due December 12.

Students will also give a ten-minute class presentation on their major research paper during the last two weeks of the semester. Powerpoint slides are expected and presentations should be well-rehearsed.

If a student is unable to meet a deadline for assignments or exams, they should see the instructor as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements. All papers handed in late will be penalized one letter grade. Make-up exams are only possible for a week after the scheduled date.

BOOKS

Anderson, James E. 2015. Public Policymaking: An Introduction, 8th Edition. Boston: Cengage Learning. **ISBN-10: 1285735285 | ISBN-13: 9781285735283**

TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Sept. 7, 12, 14, 19	1.	<u>What is Public Policy?</u> Anderson, Ch. 1 Read: https://www.brookings.edu/research/meet-the-out-of-work/ https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/23/upshot/dismal-results-from-vouchers-surprise-researchers-as-devos-era-begins.html?smprod=nytcore-iphone&smid=nytcore-iphone-share
Sept. 21		Halle Library Session
Sept. 26, 28	2.	<u>Policy making environment and Policy Participants</u> Anderson, Ch. 2
Oct. 3, 5	3.	<u>Agenda Setting</u> – problems, proposals Anderson, Ch. 3 http://www.politico.com/story/2017/02/obamacare-republicans-repeal-replace-234821?utm_campaign=KHN%3A+First+Edition&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&utm_content=42290624&hsenc=p2ANqtz-86WDXLnrQ2g5P5jqvtbd6piCHsZMqPRKPylQQ6GG1drNJpYnS8deBAgH2AHthTG4BHJeqyaIKwLGQtahcrFJGu4Uh-Bg&hsmi=42290624
Oct. 10, 12	4.	<u>Policy Adoption</u> Anderson, Ch. 4 FIRST POLICY PAPER DUE Oct. 10
Oct. 17		Review
Oct. 19		MID-TERM EXAM
Oct. 24, 26	5.	<u>Implementation and Administrative Rules</u> Anderson, Ch. 6 https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/04/us/politics/republicans-oil-gas-regulations.html?smprod=nytcore-iphone&smid=nytcore-iphone-share
Oct. 31, Nov. 2	6.	<u>Budgeting</u> Anderson, Ch. 5 SECOND POLICY PAPER DUE Nov 2
Nov. 7, 9	7.	<u>Policy Evaluation</u> Anderson, Ch. 7 MEET W/INSTRUCTOR BY November 10
Nov. 14, 16		Ad hoc discussion of policy issues
Nov. 21, 26		Thanksgiving week: no classes THIRD POLICY PAPER DUE November 21
Nov. 28, 30, Dec. 5, 7, 12, 19 (final period)	8.	<u>Student Presentations on Major Policy Papers</u> Problem Definition, Solutions, Politics RESEARCH PAPER DUE Dec. 12

NOTE:

9/15/17 Last date for 100% tuition refund (individual or total withdraw from term)

11/14/17 Last date for individual class withdrawal (with W grades) - No Refund

EMU Policies and Regulations

In addition to the articulated course specific policies and expectations, students are responsible for understanding all applicable University guidelines, policies, and procedures. The EMU Student Handbook is the primary resource provided to students to ensure that they have access to all University policies, support resources, and students' rights and responsibilities. Changes may be made to the EMU Student Handbook whenever necessary, and shall be effective immediately, and/or as of the date on which a policy is formally adopted, and/or on the date specified in the amendment. **Please note:** Electing not to access the link provided below does not absolve a student of responsibility. For questions about any university policy, procedure, practice, or resource, please contact the Office of the Ombuds: 248 Student Center, [734.487.0074](tel:734.487.0074), emu_ombuds@emich.edu, or visit the website: www.emich.edu/ombuds

[CLICK HERE to access the University Course Policies](#)

Complete URL: <http://www.emich.edu/studenthandbook/policies/academic.php#univ>

☐ **Religious Holidays** – “Current University policy recognizes the rights of students to observe religious holidays without penalty to the student. Students will provide advance notice in writing or email to the instructor in order to make up work, including examinations they miss as a result of their absence from class due to observance of religious holidays. If satisfactory arrangements cannot be made with the instructor, the student may appeal to the Political Science Department Head.”

☐ **Academic Dishonesty** – “Academic dishonesty, including all forms of cheating, falsification, and/or plagiarism, will not be tolerated in this course. Penalties for an act of academic dishonesty may range from receiving a failing grade for a particular assignment to receiving a failing grade for the entire course. In addition, you may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards for discipline that can result in either a suspension or permanent dismissal. The Student Conduct Code contains detailed definitions of what constitutes academic dishonesty but if you are not sure about whether something you are doing would be considered academic dishonesty, consult with the course instructor. You may access the Code online at:
<http://www.emich.edu/policies/policy.php?id=124&term=student%20conduct>

☐ **Classroom Management Issues** – “Students are expected to abide by the Student Conduct Code and assist in creating an environment that is conducive to learning and protects the rights of all members of the University Community. Incivility and disruptive behavior will not be tolerated and may result in a request to leave class and referral to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (SJS) for discipline. Examples of inappropriate classroom conduct include repeatedly arriving late to class, using a mobile/cellular phone while in the class session, or talking while others are speaking. You may access the Code online at
<http://www.emich.edu/policies/policy.php?id=124&term=student%20conduct>

Tech ☑ “Materials in this course, on the course-related Web site(s) or URLs used in connection with this course are protected by copyright and may not be copied, used, lined, revised, or retained in any manner whatsoever without permission of its owner. The content of copyrighted material may be used only, and solely by and for, students officially enrolled in this course for which the transmission is made, and may not be copied, used, linked, revised, or retained in any form, or disseminated in any form or medium whatsoever without permission by an agent of Eastern Michigan University.”

Tech ☑ As availability of laptop computers and wireless access has grown, so have the opportunities for students’ attention to be distracted away from activities in the classroom.

- Computers are to be utilized for coursework and activities related to coursework. Do not use computers for entertainment during in-class sessions.
- You are encouraged to bring your computer to lecture, but, while in the class, you will use your computer only for purposes related to this course.
- Participation in Internet surfing, gaming, chatting, emailing, text messaging, Tweeting, etc., while in-class will reduce your ability to participate in and focus on in-class content / activities. In addition, it causes you to be a distraction to others sitting nearby and to the course instructor.
- Acceptable uses of computers while in-class include taking notes, following along with the instructor on PowerPoint, with demonstrations, and other whole class activities, as well as working on assigned in-class activities, projects, and discussions that require laptop use. It is easy for your laptop to become a distraction to you and to those around you. Inappropriate uses will be noted and may affect your final grade.
- You are expected to be punctual, alert, and prepared for the class. You will be considerate of the instructor and other students, which includes not keyboarding or checking e-mail while information is being presented. Please turn off instant messaging during class time and refrain from playing games on your computer.
- Please turn off cell phones when you are in the classroom.

☐ Student and Exchange VISitor Statement (SEVIS) – The Student exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) requires F and J students to report the following to the Office of International Students 244 EMU Student Center within ten (10) days of the event:

- Changes in your name, local address, major field of study, or source of funding;
- Changes in your degree-completion date;
- Changes in your degree-level (ex Bachelors to Masters)
- Intent to transfer to another school.

Prior permission from OIS is needed for the following:

- Dropping ALL courses as well as carrying or dropping BELOW minimum credit hours;
- Employment on or off-campus;
- Registering for more than one ONLINE course per term (F visa only)
- Endorsing I-20 or DS-2019 for re-entry into the USA.

Failure to report may result in the termination of your SEVIS record and even arrest and deportation. If you have questions or concerns, contact the Office of International Students at 734.487.3116, not the course instructor.

❑ **Special Needs Accommodations** – “If you wish to be accommodated for your disability, EMU Board of Regents Policy 8.3 requires that you first register with the Students with Disabilities Office (SDO) in 246 EMU Student Center. You may contact SDO by telephone (734.487.2470). Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with the SDO promptly as you will only be accommodated from the date you register with them forward. No retroactive accommodations are possible.”

NOTE: Federal law and good pedagogical practices require instructors to provide reasonable accommodations to students who have provided documentation of a disability. The Students with Disabilities Office, 240 EMU Student Center, or at www.emich.edu/disabilities can provide you with detailed guidance.

❑ **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)** – “The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law designated to protect the privacy of a student’s education records and academic work. The law applies to all schools and universities which receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education and is applicable to students at EMU. All files, records, and academic work completed within this course are considered educational records and are protected under FERPA. It is your right, as a student in this course, to expect that any materials you submit in this course, as well as your name and other identifying information will not be viewable by guests or other individuals permitted access to the course. The exception will be only when you have given explicit, written, signed consent. Verbal consent or email is insufficient.