

**The Ohio State University
Department of Political Science**

SBS 591: Capstone Course in Public Policy

Winter 2009
TTh 2:30-4:18
DB 0048

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Office Hours: W 2:00-3:00

Course Overview

The Capstone Course in Public policy is intended for students who are minoring in Public Policy: Social and Behavioral Sciences Perspectives. All students who enroll in the course are presumed to have completed all of requirements for the minor. More specifically, all students should have successfully completed Economics 200 or AED Econ 200 (a prerequisite to the minor), Political Science 305, and either Economics 532, AED Econ 631, or Public Policy and Management 522. Moreover, all students should have completed two courses in a specialized subject area of their choice, yet exceptions are possible, in the case of scheduling complications.

The course is conducted on a seminar and workshop basis that is meant to reinforce the principles of previously completed coursework in an applied setting. A typical class section will contain a short lecture that addresses a theoretical approach or conceptual tool and provides a setting for the material being discussed. As students in the class begin to undertake their policy research projects, the majority of class time will be devoted to analyzing the progress that students are making in their projects and identifying further avenues for exploration.

Readings

The course will draw on numerous topical readings as well as several chapters in different texts. There are two required texts, which will illustrate various theoretical and empirical debates and perspectives that speak to the contemporary policymaking process, and matters of environmental policy, in particular.

Layzer, Judith A. 2006. *The Environmental Case*, 2nd Edition. CQ Press.

Rothenberg, Lawrence S. 2002. *Environmental Choices: Policy Responses to Green Demands*. CQ Press.

Course requirements and grading

Grades will be assigned a weighted average of three components—class participation (20%), the class project (60%) and peer evaluation (20%).

The class participation component will be based largely on the student engagement over the course of the quarter (totaling 10% of the student's total grade), but will also weigh brief written assignments (totaling 10%). Each week (on Thursday), students will be required to hand in a brief (2-3 pages) writing statement that summarizes the progress to date on the policy research project, identifies complications that have arisen, and highlights the next direction that will be taken. These writing assignments, combined with other brief writing assignments that will arise during the quarter will fill out the remaining portion of the student's participation grade (totaling 10% of the total course grade). Students are, of course, expected to have read the material and to be prepared for discussion for each class. Because of the participatory-intense nature of the workshop environment in SBS 591, attendance is mandatory, and failure to attend will significantly detract from students' participation grades.

Engagement of class projects will be conducted on a continuous basis throughout the quarter will involve participation by all class members. The project topics for the Winter 2009 version of SBS 591 will focus on two topics: climate change in the mid-Ohio region, and ballot initiatives in the State of Ohio. Partnerships have been formed between the public policy minor, the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), and the Ohio Business Roundtable to help students investigate these topics. Students will engage in original policy research and analysis addressing one of these two topics, and turn in a report in the final week of the quarter (both to Prof. Wiseman and to the partnering organizations). Students will ultimately present their arguments orally in class and to representatives from these partnering organizations. The written component and the presentation component of the class project will comprise 40%, and 20% of the student's total grade, respectively.

Finally, the remaining 20% of a student's grade will be based on the evaluation of his/her contribution to the class project by his/her peers. Further details will be discussed regarding the specific evaluation procedures.

No late work will be accepted unless previously arranged with Prof. Wiseman. Such arrangements require well-substantiated and sound reasons, and will result in progressively lowered grades depending on how late the work is finally produced.

Academic Misconduct

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp).

Disability Services

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs.

The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

Course Outline

1. Tues. Jan 6: Introduction to the Course
2. Thurs. Jan 8: Discussion of Public Policymaking Process and Course Projects
Reading: Layzer, Chapter 1, Rothenberg Chapter 1
3. Tues. Jan 13: Background on Lawmaking, Rulemaking and Implementation
Reading: Rothenberg, Chapter 3
4. Thurs. Jan 15: Guest Visitor: Ms Juliette Lester (Formerly of Dept. of Education)
5. Tues. Jan 20: Cost benefit analysis
Background Reading: Leroy Gill: *Perspectives on Cost-Benefit Analysis*
6. Thurs. Jan 22: Workshop Day
7. Tues. Jan 27: Role of Government in Environmental Protection
Reading: Rothenberg, Chapter 2
8. Thurs. Jan 29: Guest Visitor: Ms. Ashley Lester and Ms. Laura Kaprowski (MORPC)
9. Tues. Feb 3: National Interests and Debates in Environmental Policy
Reading: Rothenberg, Chapter 4; Layzer, Chapter 2
10. Thurs. Feb 5: Guest Visitor: Mr. Robert Edmund (Ohio Business Roundtable)
11. Tues. Feb 10: Environmental Policy Development and Enforcement
Reading: Rothenberg, Chapter 5, Chapter 8
12. Thurs. Feb 12: Workshop Day
13. Tues. Feb 17: Local Activism and Environmental Policy
Layzer, Chapter 5
14. Thurs. Feb 19: Workshop Day
15. Tues. Feb 24: Federal and Local Control, and Wise Use Debates
Rothenberg, Chapter 6, Layzer Chapter 13
16. Thurs. Feb 26: Workshop Day

17. Tues. Mar 3: Market-Based Solutions and Collaborative Problem Solving
Layzer, Chapter 14, 16
18. Thurs. Mar 5: Workshop Day
19. Tues. May 10: Tradeoffs in Environmental Policy
Layzer Chapter 17, Chapter 18
20. Thurs. May 12: Student Presentations (tentative)