

**RUTGERS UNIVERSITY: Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy**  
**Principles of Public Policy – Spring 2013**  
**Class Meetings: Tuesday 2:15 – 3:35 pm, TH 101**  
**Instructor: Debbie Borie-Holtz, PhD**  
**CSB Room 545, 848-932-2968**  
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**Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday by appointment - Thursdays 10:30-12 noon**  
**(Check Sakai Sign-up Tool for additional weekly hours)**

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## **Course Description**

This course is a primer on the “who, what, when, where and why” of public policy in which we explore the intersection of problems, politics, and policy. A major goal of the course is to instill a basic knowledge of how public policy works in America. We will focus on the role of institutions, the actors involved, agenda setting, problem identification, policy options and implementation. Our focus will include both the state system in New Jersey as well as the federal system.

At the end of the course, you should have a clearer understanding of the policymaking process and the actors involved. You should gain an increased awareness of how three process streams: problems, policies and politics must converge in order for public policies to rise to the decision agenda. From a skills perspective, you will have gained experience in researching, analyzing and writing about public policy issues through short written assignments, class presentations and a final team project. The usual class approach will be accomplished through 1) seminar format discussions, 2) guest lecturers experienced in policy formation 3) media and forum presentations as well as 4) team projects & peer reviews.

## **Hybrid Format**

Although we only meet once a week in-person, we do have a weekly online requirement as well. Each of you will be assigned to lead a forum discussion ONCE during the first half of the semester (7% of grade). All students must respond to the question(s) posed by the student leaders each week (2 to 4 leaders per week). Completion of online work counts as attendance for those sessions held virtually (8 % of your grade). If you do not participate online, it will be counted as an absence and you will lose participation points.

Student-led forum modules must be posted by Thursday 12 noon. This module should provide an example, ignite a discussion or pose questions centered around the upcoming lecture topic planned for the following week. Students will respond to the module prompts every week by Monday 6pm. Student leaders should consult with the lecture notes and/or power points I have created to help guide the discussion -- these resources can be found under Resources > Lecture Materials. These materials do not supplant the need for all students to read the assigned text for the week. I will lead the first discussion as an example -- though it is not intended to be the only means by which one can generate student discussion on the weekly text material. Student leaders may partner with their co-leader for the week to offer one learning module per topic. Alternatively, each leader may create his/her own forum module; however, if two forums are created, the class must participate in both forums. On 2.14, there will actually be two topics and four leaders since we are covering 2 chapters of the text.

All forum modules are to be posted in the Sakai Forum. Once a module is posted, students will receive a Sakai email. Student response to the forum module will occur within our Facebook Group established for the class, so students should post discussion comments here as well as in the Forum after uploading the Module. We will then be able to draw upon the text and the online class discussion during our in-person class meetings on Tuesdays. If you do not have a Facebook account, you will be provided with a general log-in in order to participate in the discussion.

## SAS Learning Goals

- *Goal j: Identify and critically assess ethical issues in social science and history. (Assessed by Assignment 1 & Midterm)*
- *Goal m: Understand different theories about human culture, social identity, economic entities, political systems, and other forms of social organization. (Assessed by Midterm)*
- *Goal s1: Communicate complex ideas effectively, in standard written English, to a general audience. (Assessed by Forum Module)*
- *Goal t: Communicate effectively in modes appropriate to a discipline or area of inquiry. (Assessed by Policy Memo 2)*
- *Goal u: Analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insights. (Assessed by Policy Memo 2 & Final Team Presentation)*

## Course Requirements

1. Class participation and attendance
2. Weekly assigned readings, forum participation & forum module
3. Complete two policy memos (varying lengths)
4. A midterm exam
5. Team project presentation to the class

## Course Grading

The course grade will be calculated as follows:

<b>Class participation and attendance:</b>	<b>25 percent</b>
<i>Forum Presentations (7%) - Current Topic Presentation (5%) - Team Peer Review (5%)</i>	
<b>Policy memos:</b>	<b>30 percent</b>
<i>Assignment 1 (10%) &amp; Assignment 2 (20%)</i>	
<b>Midterm exam:</b>	<b>20 percent</b>
<b>Team Project:</b>	<b>25 percent</b>
<i>Final Team Project Evaluation (15%) - Class PR (5%) - Team PR (5%)</i>	

## Text

John Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 2003. There may be additional selected readings and assignments that will be made available through Sakai.

## Class Policies

- Be sure to utilize all the tools on our Sakai course site including **Semester Calendar** and **Class Assignment** links. These two links will provide the most current information!
- Help yourself by signing up for text/fav email alerts!

- Participation is a significant portion of your grade – it will be difficult to participate if you are absent. This is particularly important since we only meet one time during the week. Because this policy is designed to ensure active participation in class and the creation of a shared learning environment, your participation is essential to the seminar format. Participation (25%) consists of weekly attendance, engagement in the class discussions, a media presentation, as well as periodic peer reviews.
- Attendance at all classes is expected. If you expect to miss a class, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. A link appears on our Sakai course home page.
- Grade deductions will be made for late submissions. Papers will not be accepted more than two weeks late and will receive a failing grade.
- Papers must be submitted through your Sakai drop box AND a printed copy in class on the due date. Papers may be submitted electronically if you are absent on the day an assignment is due and you want to avoid a late assessment.
- Students whose written submissions exhibit significant punctuation, grammar, spelling, syntax, or other errors (generally, three or more errors per page) risk failing the assignment or incurring a significant grade deduction.
- Students are expected to review and abide by the University’s code on plagiarism. Note: All sources require proper attribution of the idea or textual protocols. Please review the University’s policy on academic integrity: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml>
- All cell phones must be turned off or silenced during class. No use is permitted. Lap tops may be used to take notes and participate in team projects – NOT to surf the net.
- Students must wait 20 minutes from the start of class before leaving if an instructor does not arrive. In the event of any delays or changes to the schedule, a Sakai email will be sent to students 2 hours prior to the start of class.
- If any questions or concerns arise, please come see me during office hours or please make an appointment. If you desire a more immediate response, please send me an email or text. If you plan to come to my on-campus office hours, please try to let me know in advance by using the Sign-up Tool which ensures you have a reservation.
- Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating his or her abilities should contact me as soon as possible so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and to facilitate your educational opportunities.

### Course Topic Outline

*(This schedule is subject to some small variation as it pertains to guest lecturers and the reading assignments. In general, guests will be confirmed in advance.)*

Wk	Date	Reading	Forum Focus	Assignments Distributed	Assignments Due	Current Event Topic Presentations
<b>1</b>	1.22	No assigned reading. Introduction to class and requirements		<b>HW: Representation List (distributed)</b>		
<b>2</b>	1.29	Readings: Kingdon Introduction and Chapter 1	“When an Idea’s Time Comes”		<b>HW: Rep List Due</b>	X

3	2.5	Readings: Kingdon Chapters 2	"Inside Participants"			X
4	2.12	Readings: Kingdon Chapters 3	"Outside Participants"	<b>Assignment 1: Critiquing a Policy Website Assigned</b>		X
5	2.19	Readings: Kingdon Chapters 4 & 5	"Processes" & "The First Stream: Problems"			X
6	2.26	Readings: Kingdon Chapters 6	"Second Stream: Policies"	<b>Assignment 2: Policy Assigned</b>	<b>Assgn 1 Due: Critique Policy Website</b>	Guest Lecturer
7	3.5	Readings: Kingdon Chapters 7	"Third Stream: Politics"			X
8	3.12	Readings: Kingdon Chapters 8	"The Policy Window"	<b>Team Project Proposals &amp; Midterm (assigned)</b>	<b>Assgn 2 Due: Policy Issue</b>	X
9	3.19	Spring Break				
10	3.26	<b>Team Presentations Planning Session - NO CLASS</b>			<b>Midterm Due</b>	
11	4.2	Team Presentations				
12	4.9	Team Presentations				
13	4.16	Team Presentations				
14	4.23	Team Presentations				
15	4.30.13	Team Presentations- Make-up				

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Distribution Date</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Current Policy Topics & Forum Debates	Jan 29	Jan 29 - Mar 12
Assgn1: Critique Website	Feb 12	Feb 26
Assgn2: Policy Issue	Feb 26	Mar 12
Teams Assigned		Mar 12
Midterm		Mar 26
Team Project Presentations	Apr 2	Apr 30

**Letter grades will be assigned as follows:**

A = 90 - 100; Excellent or Superior

B+ = 86 - 89; Very Good

B = 80 - 85; Good

C+ = 76 - 79; Solid Overall, but some flaws

C = 70 - 75; Average

D = 60 - 69; Significant problems in the work, effort or writing

F = 59 or below; Failing