

School of Planning, Public Policy and Management



PPPM 201 – INTRODUCTION TO PUBLIC POLICY

CRN 42390

CLASS SYLLABUS — SUMMER 2021

Instructor:	Bob Choquette
E-Mail:	choquett@uoregon.edu
Phone:	541.346.3851
Office Hours:	By appointment
Course Location:	http://bit.ly/SU21PPPM201
Meeting Dates and Time:	MW 9:00-11:20 am June 21 – August 11

Course Description

Public policy is what public officials within government, and by extension the citizens they represent, choose to do or not to do about public issues. Public policy decisions affect us at the national level (e.g., health care and national defense) and at the local and individual level (e.g., student housing construction, tuition rates).

In designing this introductory course, I want to expose you to both the environment within which policy is developed, by discussing the context and actors involved in the policy process, and examine the origin, implementation, and effect of specific policies influencing us on a regular basis.

Learning Outcomes

I have several objectives I want to achieve in this class.

1. Provide students with a better understanding of the policy process, including the key elements, inputs and outputs, official and unofficial actors, agenda setting, power, and groups;
2. Expose you to the origins, impacts, and consequences (both intended and unintended) of some of the policies that affect us on a daily basis;
3. Give you a chance to learn more about a policy that interests you by providing an opportunity to conduct research and write about that policy;

4. Develop your ability to work in a team, an essential element of success in the professional world;
5. Observe and engage in the policy development process.

Teaching Philosophy

I subscribe to three models of learning that guide my classroom instruction:

- *Constructivism* (Duffy and Jonassen, 1992) posits that people construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world by experiencing things and reflecting on those experiences. New knowledge builds upon our previous ideas and experience. Ideally, learning happens in collaboration with others.
- *Experiential learning* (Kolb, 1984) supports students in applying the knowledge and conceptual understanding gained in the classroom to real-world problems or situations. Experience (including mistakes) provides the basis for the learning activities. Adults are most interested in learning that has immediate relevance and impact to their career or personal life, and their learning is problem-centered rather than content-oriented.
- *Relational-cultural theory* (Miller, 1976) proposes that successful relational connections—interactions that are mutually empathic and mutually empowering—are vital to individual and shared learning, as well as emotional growth and health (Miller & Stiver, 1997). RCT’s key tenets are trust, mutual empathy, and growth-in-connection, which is essentially the enhanced ability to learn and progress through healthy, growth-fostering relationships.

Textbooks and Course Materials

Birkland, Thomas A.: *An Introduction to the Policy Process: Theories, Concepts, and Models of Public Policy Making (Fifth Edition)*. M.E. Sharpe. (2020). ISBN 781138495616. Available through the Duck Store, or as an e-book from the UO Library

Additional readings available at <http://canvas.uoregon.edu>

Grading

This class is offered on either a graded or pass/no pass basis. Your grade will be determined based on the following:

1. Attendance and Participation	10%
2. 3-2-1 reading responses (6 of 8)	15%
3. Chapter discussions	10%
4. Team policy presentation	20%
5. Team evaluation	10%
6. Policy presentation responses	10%
7. Meeting critique	10%
8. Final assignment	15%
TOTAL	100%

Course Structure

This course intends to expose students to the broad topic of public policy. Within the topic, there is significant room for flexibility. I want to use this opportunity to engage you in the topic by incorporating your interests and feedback in designing many of the elements of the course.

Course Website

The course website is located on the University of Oregon's Canvas system (<https://canvas.uoregon.edu>). The class syllabus, supplemental readings, and other materials will be posted on the Canvas site. Please check the course website frequently for updates. In addition, make sure that the University registrar has your correct email address, as I will use this email address to communicate with you.

Accessibility

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Center (formerly Disability Services) in 164 Oregon Hall at 541.346.1155 or uoaec@uoregon.edu.

Diversity

The University of Oregon values our diversity and seeks to foster equity and inclusion in a welcoming, safe, and respectful community. This course is committed to upholding this principle by encouraging the exploration, engagement, and expression of different perspectives and diverse identities. I will value each class member's experiences and contributions, and communicate disagreements respectfully. Please notify me if you feel aspects of the course undermine these principles. For additional resources, you are also encouraged to contact the following campus services:

- Division of Equity and Inclusion: 1 Johnson Hall or 541.346.3175 or <http://inclusion.uoregon.edu/>
- Center on Diversity and Community: 54 Susan Campbell Hall or 541.346.3212 or <http://codac.uoregon.edu/>
- Bias Response Team: 164 Oregon Hall or brt@uoregon.edu or <http://bias.uoregon.edu>

Statement Regarding Title IX and a Safe Learning Environment free from Discrimination and Harassment

The UO is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination, harassment, and assault. This includes conduct that unreasonably discriminates among individuals on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, ethnicity, age, religion, marital status, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity,

or gender expression. It also includes sexual and physical assault, domestic and dating violence, and gender based stalking. We support Title IX.

If you, or someone you know, has experienced or experiences harassment or discrimination that is sufficiently severe or pervasive that it interferes with work or academic performance—or if you have experienced sexual or physical assault in any form—the UO has staff members trained to support and make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and have access to the resources you need. You may choose whether or not to access these resources.

Students wishing to pursue a complaint involving discrimination or harassment should contact the Office of Affirmative Action & Equal Opportunity at 541.346.3123 or <http://aaeo.uoregon.edu>. If you wish to speak to someone confidentially regarding sexual assault or harassment, call 541.346.SAFE, UO's 24-hour hotline, or visit the SAFE website, <http://safe.uoregon.edu>. The University Health Center and University Counseling and Testing Center can provide assistance and work confidentially with students.

Inclusion Statement

The College of Design is a community that values inclusion. We are committed to equal opportunities for all faculty, staff and students to develop individually, professionally, and academically regardless of ethnicity, heritage, gender, sexual orientation, ability, socio-economic standing, cultural beliefs and traditions. We are dedicated to an environment that is inclusive and fosters awareness, understanding, and respect for diversity. If you feel excluded or threatened, please contact your instructor and/or school head.

Center for Multicultural Academic Excellence

The CMAE is a place where students are empowered, engaged, and nurtured for success. Their vision is to build and empower an inclusive and diverse community of scholars who exemplify academic excellence and inspire positive change. CMAE's mission is to promote student retention and persistence for historically underrepresented and underserved populations. They develop and implement programs and services that support retention, academic excellence, and success at the UO and beyond. Call 541.346.3479, email cmae@uoregon.edu, or visit Suites 164 and 165 in Oregon Hall.

Mental Health

As a student, you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may impact your academic performance or reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. The University of Oregon is committed to advancing the mental health and well-being of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on

campus via <https://health.uoregon.edu/mental-health> or by calling 541.346.2770.

Life's Challenges

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in school, is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. Furthermore, please let me know as well if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable me to provide any resources that I have access to. **I care about you as an individual and your health and well-being beyond your role as a student in this class.**

Late Assignment Policy

If you are unable to make it to class on the day an assignment is due, you may email your assignment to me prior to the class time and date that assignment is due. Late assignments receive only partial credit. If an answer key is posted to the website, however, no late homework assignments are accepted (no credit).

Incomplete Policy

Students are expected to behave in a professional manner and to turn in all materials at the designated time. In accordance with university regulations, an incomplete will only be given when “the quality of work is satisfactory but a minor yet essential requirement of the course has not been completed for reasons acceptable to the instructor.”

Academic Misconduct

You are expected at all times to do your own work. Copying content from other students and submitting it as your own work is grounds for failing the class. The University Student Conduct Code (available at <http://conduct.uoregon.edu>) defines academic misconduct. Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. By way of example, students should not give or receive (or attempt to give or receive) unauthorized help on assignments or examinations without express permission from the instructor.

Plagiarism

Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations, paraphrases, ideas) and use only the sources and resources authorized by the instructor. If there is any question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is the students' obligation to clarify the question with the instructor before committing or attempting to commit the act. For additional information about a common form of academic misconduct, plagiarism, visit: <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students>.

Assignments

There is a variety of requirements for this class. Listed below are descriptions of each assignment; I will provide additional detail on each as the term progresses.

Attendance and Participation (10%)

You registered for this class because you were interested in learning more about public policy, so the best way to accomplish that goal is to attend class. I'll expect you to attend most times we meet.

When present, you can earn participation points by contribution to discussions, either by speaking or engaging in the chat box by posting questions or adding to ongoing discussions.

If you miss a class and you want to make up your A&P grade, watch the recording (see Panopto Recordings section of Canvas) and post a summary under Missed class makeup in the Attendance and Participation section of Assignments on Canvas. Use the same format as the 3-2-1 reading responses, where you identify the three most important points from the class, two things you didn't understand, and one question you would pose.

Introduce Yourself to your Classmates

It's easier to feel confident asking questions and participating in class discussions if you feel like you know the instructor and other students in the class and that you are part of a supportive community. In a course like this, where we won't get to meet each other in person, we have to work extra hard to get to know each other. This discussion is meant to help us get started with that process. See Canvas for details.

3-2-1 Reading Responses (15%)

During the first part of the term, we will be reading and discussing the Birkland book. For chapters 2-9, I would like you to post the following in a single document to Canvas by 6:00 am the morning we discuss each chapter in class (see Schedule and Readings for dates):

- After you read the chapter, choose and describe the **three** most important aspects (concepts, issues, factual information, etc.) of the reading, justifying your choices (2-3 sentences each).
- Identify **two** aspects of the reading you didn't understand, and briefly discuss why these confusing aspects interfered with your general understanding of the reading (1-2 sentences each). You may find more than two confusing elements, so put them in priority order and limit yourself to the two most important ones. If there really weren't any confusing elements in the chapter, note that instead.
- Pose **one** reading response question, written in an open-ended fashion to facilitate discussion, and in such a way that affords the opportunity for multiple valid responses (e.g., starting with *how*, *why*, or *to what extent*).

These questions will form the basis for in-class discussions of the chapter content.

Assignment Schedule and Timing Related to Birkland Readings

Before class	Read Birkland chapter Submit 3-2-1 response by 6 am the day of class
In class	Chapter lecture / discussion Discuss 3-2-1 response questions (in randomly-assigned breakout rooms)
After class	Respond (100-word minimum) to the chapter discussion prompt posted and comment on one other post by Sunday night (in pre-assigned groups of 7-8) for each chapter (most weeks we'll cover two chapters)

You need to complete six 3-2-1 assignments (of 8 possible).

Chapter Discussions (10%)

I will post a discussion prompt online based on each week's Birkland chapter's content and how it relates to current events at the end of weeks 2-5. You will be expected to post a response (100 word minimum) **and** comment on one other post within the thread in a way that advances the discussion, not simply affirms the poster's opinion.

Team Policy Presentation (20%)

As part of your team, you will be responsible for all the elements of a class presentation (50-60 minutes) devoted to a significant policy topic. Your responsibilities will include:

- Identifying 8-10 readings on the topic and developing an annotated bibliography (AB)
- Submitting the AB and identifying 1-2 specific readings for your classmates to read that will provide the background needed for your class session **10 days prior to your presentation date**
- Setting up a meeting with me **at least a week prior to your presentation** to discuss your team's approach to the presentation
- Leading the class session, which might include developing a lecture, leading / facilitating a discussion in small groups, reporting out discussion outcomes, and/or showing a short video.

I will serve as your group's advisor and will help you refine your topic and discuss presentation options.

Team Evaluation (10%)

The success of your team and your presentation relies in large part on the individual

contributions of each team member. After your teams' presentation, each team member will be asked to rate the contributions of their fellow team members.

Policy Presentation Responses (10%)

For each day of the policy presentations (1-2 presentations per day during weeks 6 and 7), you will be asked to develop two multiple-choice questions; one each from the assigned readings, and the in-class presentation. Questions will be expected to focus on higher-order cognitive processes, like analysis or evaluation. Questions that are accurate and grammatically correct will go in to a test bank, which will form the basis for the final exam, described below.

Meeting Critique (10%)

Each student will be expected to attend one policy-relevant meeting at any point during the term and then write a critique of that meeting. Course content should guide the critique. The chosen meeting might have local, state, regional, federal, or international implications. However, it must occur within the term, so the student has enough time to:

1. Propose the meeting via email for Bob's approval
2. Attend the approved meeting
3. Take detailed notes on the attended (virtual or live) meeting
4. Process meeting notes into a coherent idea for critique
5. Select a theoretical framework from Birkland or another source to guide the critique
6. Write and submit a 1000-1500 word (3-5 pages double-spaced) critique via Canvas by the due date.

Final Assignment (15%)

Your final assignment is to complete one of the two following options. Regardless of the option you choose, this assignment is due on the last day of class.

Final Paper

We will discuss only a few of the many policies that affect us at the national, state, and/or local level. I want you to choose a policy that interests you and write a 2000-2500 word (6-8 pages double-spaced) paper that connects and addresses elements of the Birkland book with your policy, including the following:

- Policy background / history
- Interest groups, official, and unofficial actors
- Proposed / potential consequences

Final Exam

The final exam will be a multiple-choice test based on the policy presentation responses submitted during weeks 6 and 7. We will discuss the specifics of this exam as we approach the end of the term.

Schedule and Readings

The following schedule may be adjusted as we move through the term, depending on student's interests and the length of time we discuss particular issues.

The reading list may be supplemented as the term progresses. Please check the Canvas site weekly to see the **additional readings**.

Week	Dates	Topic	Readings	Assignments to upload to Canvas with due date
1	6/21	Introduction to this Class		
	6/23	Identify Topics / Writing 3-2-1 reading responses	Birkland 1	Introduce Yourself to Your Classmates discussion (Sun)
2	6/28	Applying Theory to Critique / Form Teams and Develop Team Agreements		
	6/30	Elements of the Policy-Making System	Birkland 2 Bias video	3-2-1 reading response (Wed) Discussion prompt response and comment (Sun)
3	7/5	The Contexts of Public Policy Making Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Public Policy	Birkland 3 Equity readings	3-2-1 reading response (Mon)
	7/7	Official Actors and Their Roles in Public Policy	Birkland 4	3-2-1 reading response (Wed) Discussion prompt response and comment (Sun)
4	7/12	Unofficial Actors and Their Roles in Public Policy	Birkland 5	3-2-1 reading response (Mon)
	7/14	Agenda Setting, Power, and Interest Groups	Birkland 6	3-2-1 reading response (Wed) Discussion prompt response and comment (Sun)

Week	Dates	Topic	Readings	Assignments to upload to Canvas with due date
5	7/19	Policies and Policy Types	Birkland 7	3-2-1 reading response (Mon)
	7/21	Decision Making and Policy Analysis	Birkland 8	3-2-1 reading response (Wed) Discussion prompt response and comment (Sun)
6	7/26	Policy Design and Policy Tools Developing higher-order questions (Bloom's Taxonomy)	Birkland 9	3-2-1 reading response (Mon)
	7/28	Student presentations 1 & 2	See Canvas	Policy presentation questions (Sun)
7	8/2	Student presentations 3 & 4	See Canvas	Policy presentation questions (Wed)
	8/4	Student presentations 5 & 6	See Canvas	Policy presentation questions (Sun)
8	8/9	Guest Speakers / Class evaluation		
	8/11	Final exam		Meeting critique (Wed) Final paper (Wed)

No late work will be accepted after the end of our last class: Wednesday, August 11 at 11:20 am