



PADMN 6323-090 | ONLINE

# PUBLIC POLICY ANALYSIS

 Department of  
**POLITICAL SCIENCE**  
THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

Spring 2018 (January 8 – April 24)  
Professor: David P. Carter, PhD  
Office Hours: By appointment

Office: 322 South 1400 East, Bldg 73, Room 221  
Email: [david.carter@mpa.utah.edu](mailto:david.carter@mpa.utah.edu)  
Skype: carter.d.p

Teaching assistant: Ian Adams

Email: [ian.adams@utah.edu](mailto:ian.adams@utah.edu)

**---DRAFT SYLLABUS VERSION 12.6.2017---**

## COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

This course provides an introduction to public policy analysis in democratic societies, with an emphasis on the United States. The course stresses policy analysis in government organizations, however, policy analysis in nongovernmental settings—such as nonprofit organizations and think tanks—is also considered. Course topics include the ideal and actual roles of policy analysis in policy processes, assessment of data and evidence during execution of policy analysis, and traditional policy analysis methods (e.g.: cost-benefit analysis), as well as alternative approaches (e.g.: stakeholder analysis, gender analysis, race analysis, etc.).

It is expected that by the end of the course students will be able to:

1. Recognize and articulate the promise and limitations of policy analysis.
2. Critically assess the use of evidence and data in policy analysis practices.
3. Select and apply the appropriate policy analysis techniques, with consideration of given policy problems, contexts, and goals.
4. Effectively communicate, in written and spoken formats, policy analysis procedures and their conclusions.

## REQUIRED BOOKS

The three required course books are listed below. The fourth edition of Bardach's (2012) *Practical Guide for Policy Analysis* is listed to reduce the overall book cost burden; you can choose to buy the more recent fifth edition if you wish. The course will draw on additional materials, such as digital content and journal articles; with the exception of the books below, all materials will be provided (or linked to) through the course Canvas site.

Bardach, E. (2012). *A practical guide for policy analysis: The eightfold path to more effective problem solving* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: CQ Press. ISBN: 1608718425

Best, J. (2012). *Damned lies and statistics: Untangling numbers from the media, politicians, and activists* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. ISBN: 0520274709

Mintrom, M. (2012). *Contemporary policy analysis*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 0199730962

## COURSE FORMAT

This course is organized in weekly modules. Each module begins on the week's Saturday morning (12:00 a.m.), and the module closes the following Friday (11:59 p.m.). Most of the module materials will be visible before the week starts, however, materials may be changed at any point before the week begins. All module assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. on the Friday that closes the week.

### Weekly Modules

The typical weekly module is comprised of (i) a short video lecture introducing the module's topic and identifying the central questions that you should seek to answer during the week, (ii) required module materials, such as readings beyond the course texts or audio recordings, and (iii) module assignments.

### Course Groups

For the purposes of class discussions and group assignments, you will be assigned to a group with 4-6 colleagues. This assigned group is your group for the entire course. You can find your assigned group under the Canvas "People" section.

## COURSE EXPECTATIONS & REQUIREMENTS

### Respectful Conduct

Public policy processes inherently center on topics and issues on which individuals often hold strong opinions, based on their personal values, beliefs, and interests. This course will challenge students to not only acknowledge and respect perspectives that differ from their own, but may call on students to challenge their own opinions and beliefs, and "step into" another's perspective to consider the strengths and limitations of their own argument. In order to facilitate this process and ensure a socially, emotionally, and psychologically safe environment, respectful behavior is the expectation, norm, and requirement in this class. Arguments and ideas may (and are expected to) be challenged, but personal attacks and disrespectful behavior and/or attitudes towards people or groups of people will not be tolerated.

### Canvas

As this an online course, the course Canvas site is a virtual classroom and super syllabus all-in-one. There are several aids for addressing any technical difficulties experienced in Canvas, listed below. These are also linked to from the course Canvas site's Help page. Please consult these aids before contacting instructors about technical difficulties.

- University of Utah Canvas Orientation resources: <https://utahtacc.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/205654094>
- Online Canvas Guides: <https://community.canvaslms.com/community/answers/guides/>
- University of Utah IT Help Desk: 801-581-4000

### Engagement

As this is an online course, your course success and the value you derive from it are highly dependent on course engagement efforts. Effective engagement includes completing all assigned readings, critically processing the covered material, actively engaging in an integration of that material through course assignments, and online discussion postings and responses. A considerable portion of your course grade will be determined by your participation in online discussion posting and responses, as outlined below.

### **Instructor Facilitation**

This course calls on students to exercise considerable discipline digesting content and completing assignments. Such demands also require consistent and informative facilitation on the part of course instructors. You are encouraged to reach out to the instructors should you encounter roadblocks, find yourself uncertain of a course element or requirement, or simply feel you would benefit from one-on-one communication. In-person office hours or a Skype conversation can be arranged, and questions can be asked via Canvas messages or email: [david.carter@mpa.utah.edu](mailto:david.carter@mpa.utah.edu) and [ian.adams@utah.edu](mailto:ian.adams@utah.edu).

### **Communication**

All communications coming from course instructors will be sent using the Canvas message feature. Be sure to set your Canvas settings such that you are notified when course messages are sent. Links to Canvas guides are available on the course Canvas site to offer guidance on this, and other, Canvas features.

All communications between students and instructors are to be respectful in content and professional in tone. Nonprofessional communications will be responded to with a request to rewrite/rephrase according to these communication expectations. In the case of emails and Canvas messages, this means:

- Using salutations (e.g. "Hello..."), closing statements (e.g. "Thank you for your attention to..."), and closings (e.g. "Best regards").
- Stating the purpose of the email and including background information to enable the instructor to understand and respond to the email.
- Using complete sentences and refraining from using profanity.

### **Assignments**

Unless assignment instructions indicate otherwise, all assignments are to be submitted in 12 point font with one-inch margins. References and citations must follow American Psychological Association style. Assignments are to be submitted via Canvas before 11:59 p.m. on the Friday of the assigned week.

Late assignment submission policies:

- Assignments submitted after 11:59 p.m. on Friday of the assigned week are subject to a ten percent deduction.
- An additional ten percent may be deducted for each additional 24 hours the assignment is late.
- Group discussions will be closed for comment at the end of the weekly module.
- Quizzes are only available during the assigned week—if a quiz is not completed within the assigned week, a grade of zero points will be assigned.

## **ASSIGNMENTS OVERVIEW**

Assignment overviews are provided here. Detailed assignment instructions and grading rubrics are (or will be) available on the course Canvas site.

### **Course Contract and Canvas Biography**

You will complete a course contract (which includes a syllabus/course materials quiz) and fill out your Canvas biography in the first week of class.

### **Group Discussions**

Group discussions are scheduled at ten points in the semester. Grades for group discussions are determined in two manners. First, credit will be given simply for participating in the discussion as a complete/incomplete grade. Second, "group engagement" grades will be assigned at two points in the semester (halfway through and at the end). The group engagement grade reflects:

- Frequency of engagement (i.e.: Does someone participate once or frequently/consistently?)

- The extent to which participation reflects quality dialogue/exchange with group members (i.e.: Does someone just post a stand-alone comment or do they engage something that was previously stated and offer questions/comments for future discussion?)
- Constructive and critical content (i.e.: Does someone critically process what was stated and draw on course materials and real-world examples to further the discussion, contributing to the group’s knowledge base?).

### The Critical Policy Analyst’s Guide

In your course group, you will take the material covered in classes 6 and 7 (and informed by classes 2-5), and develop a guide for understanding and navigating the realities of evidence and data, politics, and policy processes. The final product is co-authored by all group members, will be a single submission, and all group members will receive the same grade on the assignment. You are required to submit a confidential “participation report” on the group assignment experience and the relative effort that each group member put forth in contributing to the assignment. The information from participation reports will be taken into account when student’s individual “group engagement” grades are determined.

### Policy Analysis 1: Public Policy Analysis Brief

This first policy analysis assignment calls on you to apply the logic and techniques of market analysis, analysis of market and government failures, surveying existing policy options, and cost-benefit analysis to an empirical case: the supply of affordable housing in Salt Lake City. The final product will be a five-page analysis brief, accompanied by a one-page executive summary. You will turn in the first two sections of the analysis - an Introduction and a Problem Description - at the end of Week 5, and then will submit a complete brief just before Spring Break.

### Policy Analysis 2: Policy Analysis for the Public

In this assignment, you will craft the findings of a second policy analysis, with the general public as your target audience. There are three choices to make for this assignment: (1) You will choose from three analysis types: stakeholder analysis, race analysis, and gender analysis. (2) You will choose from among several policy topics (available in the assignment instructions on Canvas). (3) You will choose the format of your final product: a series of infographics, a webpage, or a newspaper editorial article (i.e. an op-ed). You will turn in an outline of Policy Analysis 2 at the end of Week 11.

### Policy Analysis 2 Presentation

For this assignment you will develop and record a presentation of your Policy Analysis 2 findings. There is considerable leeway in presentation format, as discussed in the assignment instructions on Canvas, but the submission must take the final form of a recorded video that is embedded, or linked to, in a group discussion post.

## COURSE GRADING

The course grading scheme follows. When a course grade falls between integers, we apply a standard rounding procedure: any point total that ends in .0 to .49 will be rounded *down* to the nearest whole number, while any point total that ends in .50 to .99 will be rounded *up*. Note that there is no extra credit in this course.

Course Points	Letter Grade	Description
93-100	A	Outstanding work in terms of content, quality and creativity of written and oral expression.

90-92	A-	Very good work—thorough in content and generally well written, though with minor flaws and/or omissions.
87-89	B+	Good work—covers the essentials with adequate depth in substance as well as quality of written/oral expression.
83-86	B	Acceptable work—covers most of the essentials with adequate quality of written/oral expression, though lacks depth in some explanations of subject matter.
80-82	B-	Marginal work—borders on unacceptable—weak written/oral expression, coverage of subject matter lacks attention to some essential points and/or is overly vague about them.
73-79	C+/C	Below standard—lacks adequate coverage of essential points, written/oral expression is very weak.
>72	C- and below	Inadequate work/performance overall. Fails to answer questions, writing is very confusing, vague, and/or does not cover many essential points.

Assignments	Course Points
Course contract	1
Canvas biography	1
<u>Discussions and engagement</u>	
Discussion participation	10
Group engagement	
1 <sup>st</sup> half (Weeks 1-7)	10
2 <sup>nd</sup> half (Weeks 8-15)	10
The Critical Policy Analyst’s Guide	12
<u>Public policy analyses</u>	
Policy Analysis 1 - Intro and Project Description	5
Policy Analysis 1 - Complete	20
Policy Analysis 2 - Outline	4
Policy Analysis 2 - Complete	15
Policy Analysis 2 Presentation	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

## COURSE CALENDAR

The course calendar provides a starting point and roadmap for the semester. Additional materials may be posted as the semester progresses. Topics, materials, and dates may be altered. Any changes to the course calendar will be announced on Canvas and reflected in an updated syllabus posted on Canvas, as well as in the Canvas modules.

**NOTE:** 📁 = Material available on Canvas; 🙋 = Interactive Course Groups assignment

Topic & Activities	Readings & Materials	Assignments (Due Friday at 11:59PM)
<b>Week 1, Jan 8-12</b>		
<b>Course Intro</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>📁 Canvas Site</li> <li>📁 Course Syllabus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Course contract</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Canvas biography</b></li> </ul>

- 📖 Course Expectations & Guides  
[On the Course Resources page]
  - Course writing expectations
  - APA citation & referencing tips
  - Online discussion tips
  - How to read lots of stuff for grad school
- 2. Bardach, *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis*, Appendix A (pgs. 125-139)

 **Video introduction**

\*\*\*Because of the short first week of class, you have until **11:59PM on Saturday, Jan 13** to complete these assignments.

<b>Week 2, Jan 13-19</b>		
<b>What Governments Do</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mintrom, <i>Contemporary Policy Analysis</i>, Chs. 1-4 (pgs. 1-62)</li> <li>2. Bardach, <i>A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis</i>, Appendices B and C (pgs. 141-165)</li> </ol>	 <b>Post policy analysis example (govt report, think tank, etc)</b>
<b>Week 3, Jan 20-26</b>		
<b>What Policy Analysts Do, Part I</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bardach, <i>A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis</i>, Part I (pgs. 1-78)</li> <li>2. Mintrom, <i>Contemporary Policy Analysis</i>, Chs. 5-7 (pgs. 63-108)</li> </ol>	 <b>Policy analysis examples discussion and comparison</b>
<b>Week 4, Jan 27-Feb 2</b>		
<b>What Policy Analysts Do, Part II</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bardach, <i>A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis</i>, Part II (pgs. 79-108)</li> <li>2. Mintrom, <i>Contemporary Policy Analysis</i>, Ch. 8 (pgs. 109-118)</li> </ol>	
<b>Week 5, Feb 3-9</b>		
<b>Markets, Market Failure, and Govt Failure</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mintrom, <i>Contemporary Policy Analysis</i>, Chs. 9-11 (pgs. 119-208)</li> <li>2. 📖 Video: "It's a Wonderful Loaf"</li> <li>3. 📖 Haspel (2017) "Junk food is cheap and healthful food is expensive, but don't blame the farm bill"</li> </ol>	<p> <b>Policy Analysis Brief Intro and Problem Description</b></p> <p> <b>Markets, Market Failure, and govt failure discussion</b></p>
<b>Week 6, Feb 10-16</b>		
<b>The Critical Analyst's Approach to Evidence</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Best, <i>Damned Lies and Statistics</i> (Read the whole book, but with special attention to chs. 1, 2, 5, and 6).</li> <li>2. 📖 <i>On the Media's</i> "A skeptic's guide to health news and diet fads"</li> <li>3. 📖 "Scientific Studies" on <i>Last Week Tonight with John Oliver</i> (contains some comments that may be offensive to some, however, the overall message is solid)</li> </ol>	
<b>Week 7, Feb 17-23</b>		
<b>The Critical Analyst's Understanding of</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 📖 Stone (2002) <i>Policy Paradox: Intro &amp; Appendix</i>.</li> <li>2. 📖 Hoppe (1999) "Policy analysis, science and politics: from 'speaking</li> </ol>	 <b>The Critical Policy Analyst's Guide</b>

**Public Policy Processes**

truth to power’ to ‘making sense together”

3. 🗑️ Cairney & Kwiatkowski (2017). “How to communicate effectively with policymakers: Combine insights from psychology and policy studies”
4. 🗑️ [Explore](#) Paul Cairney’s page on evidence-based policy making and the content it links to.

**Week 8, Feb 24-Mar 2**

**Surveying Existing Policy Options**

1. Mintrom, *Contemporary Policy Analysis*, Ch. 12 (pgs. 209-224)
2. Bardach, *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis*, Part III (pgs. 109-124)
3. 🗑️ Shipan & Volden (2012) “Policy diffusion: Seven lessons for scholars and practitioners”
4. 🗑️ Cairney (blog post) “The theory and practice of evidence-based policy transfer: can we learn how to reduce territorial inequalities?”

🗑️ [Existing policy option analysis discussion](#)

**Week 9, Mar 3-9**

**Cost-Benefit Analysis**

1. Mintrom, *Contemporary Policy Analysis*, Ch. 13 (pgs. 225-245)
2. Carrigan & Shapiro (2016) “What’s wrong with back of the envelope? A call for simple (and timely) benefit-cost analysis”

🗑️ [Cost-benefit analysis discussion](#)

**Week 10, Mar 10-16**

**Race Analysis**

1. Mintrom, *Contemporary Policy Analysis*, Chs. 14 & 15 (pgs. 246-284)
2. 🗑️ Harper, Patton, & Wooden (2009) “Access and equity for African American students in higher education: A critical race historical analysis of policy efforts”
1. 🗑️ Fresh Air (audio recording) - “A ‘forgotten history; of how the U.S. government segregated America”

🗑️ [Race analysis discussion](#)  
 [Policy Analysis Brief](#)

**SPRING BREAK**

**Week 11, Mar 24-30**

**Gender Analysis**

1. 🗑️ Himmelweit (2002) “Making visible the hidden economy: The case for gender-impact analysis of economic policy”
2. 🗑️ Buchely (2013) “Overcoming gender disadvantages”

🗑️ [Gender analysis discussion](#)  
 [Policy Analysis 2 Outline](#)

3.  [Explore](#) the World Policy Center’s page on gender

**Week 12, Mar 31-Apr 6**

**Stakeholder Analysis**

1.  Varvasovszky & Brugha (2000) “How to do (or not to do) a stakeholder analysis”
2.  IIED’s (2005) “Stakeholder Power Analysis”
3.  The Policy Circle’s (www.policyproject.com) Policy Stakeholder Analysis Tool
4.  Check out (only download if you want to) PolicyMaker’s policy analysis software

 [Stakeholder analysis discussion](#)

**Week 13, Apr 7-13**

**Complete Policy Analysis 2 Assignments**

 **Policy Analysis 2**

**Week 14, Apr 14-20**

**Complete Policy Analysis Presentations**

1.  Anderson, C. “How to Give a Killer Presentation” Harvard Business Review [online]
2.  “10 ways to avoid death by bullet points” [blog post]

 **Policy Analysis Presentation**  
 [Post Policy Analysis 2 & Presentation](#)

**Week 15, Apr 21-27**

**Course Wrap-Up, Reflections, and Evaluation**

1. Mintrom, *Contemporary Policy Analysis*, Ch. 17 (pgs. 305-313)

 [Policy Analysis 2 & Presentation discussion](#)

**CODE OF CONDUCT POLICIES, ACCOMMODATIONS, & RESOURCES**

**Academic Honesty**

All students are expected to maintain professional behavior in the classroom setting, according to the Student Code, spelled out in the Student Handbook. Students have specific rights in the classroom as detailed in Article III of the Code. The Code also specifies proscribed conduct (Article XI) that involves cheating on tests, plagiarism, and/or collusion, as well as fraud, theft, etc. Students should read the Code carefully and know they are responsible for the content. According to the Faculty Rules and Regulations, it is the faculty responsibility to enforce responsible classroom behaviors, and I will do so, beginning with verbal warnings and progressing to dismissal from class and a failing grade. Students have the right to appeal such action to the Student Behavior Committee.

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated as public service is a calling that requires students, as future and current administrators, to understand the importance of ethical behavior in all facets of their work, including their academic coursework. The University of Utah and the Program in Public Administration expect students to adhere to generally accepted standards of academic conduct. Academic misconduct is defined in the University’s student code as follows: Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating, misrepresenting one’s work, inappropriately collaborating, plagiarism, and fabrication or falsification of information. Cases of academic misconduct will be dealt with immediately and may result

in failure of the class. It is expected that you WILL CITE for every assignment—give credit where credit is due!

Please read the entire MPA Academic Honesty Statement at: [www.mpa.utah.edu](http://www.mpa.utah.edu).

### **Addressing Sexual Misconduct**

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a civil rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran's status or genetic information. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 135 Park Building, 801-581-8365, or the Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066. For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness, 426 SSB, 801-581-7776. To report to the police, contact the Department of Public Safety, 801-585-2677(COPS).

### **General Wellness Resources**

Personal concerns such as stress, anxiety, relationship difficulties, depression, cross-cultural differences, etc., can interfere with a student's ability to succeed and thrive at the University of Utah. For helpful resources contact the Center for Student Wellness at [www.wellness.utah.edu](http://www.wellness.utah.edu) or 801-581-7776.

### **ADA Resources**

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the instructor, as well as to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

### **LGBT Resources**

I am committed to inclusivity and respect for all students in the classroom, including and not limited to LGBT individuals. Additionally, the University of Utah has a LGBT Resource Center located in the Olpin Union Building, Room 409. Their website contains more information about the support they offer, a list of events, and links to additional resources: <http://lgbt.utah.edu/>.

### **Veterans Resources**

The University of Utah has a Veterans Support Center located in the Olpin Union Building, Room 161. Their website contains information about what support they offer, a list of ongoing events, and links to outside resources: <http://veteranscenter.utah.edu/>.

### **English Language & Writing Resources**

There are several resources on campus that will support English language learners with language and writing development. These resources include the Writing Center (<http://writingcenter.utah.edu/>), the Writing Program (<http://writing-program.utah.edu/>), and the English Language Institute (<http://continue.utah.edu/eli/>).

## **ADDITIONAL READING**

Below is a list of additional resources regarding theoretical approaches to understanding public policy. While by no means comprehensive, the list identifies works that should be useful to those who wish to better familiarize themselves with a particular approach.

### Alternative Policy Analysis Textbooks

- Clemons, R. S., & McBeth, M. K. (2017). *Public policy praxis: A case approach for understanding policy and analysis*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Jenkins-Smith, H. C. (1990). *Democratic politics and policy analysis*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, Inc.
- Munger, M. C. (2000). *Analyzing policy: Choices, conflicts, and practices*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company.
- Weimer, D. L., & Vining, A. R. (2011). *Policy analysis*. New York, NY: Longman.

### Resources for Better Understanding Policy Processes

- Baumgartner, F. R., & Jones, B. D. (2010). *Agendas and instability in American politics*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Birkland, T. A. (2014). *An introduction to the policy process: Theories, concepts, and models of public policy making* (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Cairney, P. (2012). *Understanding public policy: Theories and issues*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Cairney, P. (2016). *Politics & Public Policy* [Blog]: <https://paulcairney.wordpress.com/>
- Hill, M., & Hupe, P. (2014). *Implementing public policy* (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Hupe, P., Hill, M., & Buffat, A. (Eds.). (2015). *Understanding street-level bureaucracy*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press.
- Jones, B. D., & Baumgartner, F. R. (2005). *The politics of attention: How government prioritizes problems*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Kingdon, J. W. (1984). *Agendas, alternatives, and public policies*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.
- Policy Studies Journal* "New Theories of the Policy Process" special issue:  
<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/psj.2013.41.issue-3/issuetoc>
- Policy Studies Journal* virtual issues: [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/\(ISSN\)1541-0072/homepage/VirtualIssuesPage.html](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1541-0072/homepage/VirtualIssuesPage.html)
- Sabatier, P. A., & Jenkins-Smith, H. (1993). *Policy change and learning: An advocacy coalition approach*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Sabatier, P. A., & Weible, C. M. (2014). *Theories of the policy process* (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.