

## Reflections on Public Policy Practice

UEP 288 / Fall 2011  
Wednesdays 4:30-5:45  
Anderson 210  
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This is a graduate seminar (half-credit) for students enrolled in the MPP program. The major goal of this seminar is to introduce students to key ideas and debates that help explain the adoption, implementation, and evaluation of public policy. MPP I provides a foundation for students to explore specific public policies related to their own professional experiences and interests in MPP II. Further, it is a foundation for students to integrate their learning and policy interests in MPP II. MPP I readings are utilized to provide an understanding of the historical, institutional, and political context of public policy. This part of the year-long seminar focuses on broad and systemic factors that mold public policies in the United States. Students are introduced to various of journals which provide research findings about a range of public policies. MPP I includes 3 hands-on workshops in the areas of conducting library research; using census data; and understanding some basic information about GIS (Geographic Information Systems).

In 2008 UEP adopted “competencies” that students should have familiarity with via courses and other learning activities. This course reflects a number of these competencies, including:

- history, theory and processes of both policymaking and planning...with implementation...;
- role(s) of government, governance...;
- administrative, legal, and political aspects of policy...;
- “...relationship between the market and polis...;
- areas of specific policy or planning content-based knowledge related to professional interests...”

Course requirements include completion of all readings and participation in class discussions. Students are required to complete a writing assignment (10 – 12 pages) which can take the form of a paper, book review, or policy memo about a specific public policy. All required readings are available for purchase in a packet format from Gnomon Copy; articles indicated with an asterisk (\*) will be emailed to students.

**Session 1 (9/7): Introduction**  
(seminar objectives; review of topics; discussion of student interests)

Part One: Public Policy and the Big Picture (s)

**Session 2 (9/14) Public Policy: Identifying Issues and Problems**  
(how are problems identified for public policy; how is public policy framed; what is the role of research in molding how problems are identified for public policy)

Readings C.W. Mills, "The Promise", *The Sociological Imagination* (Oxford University Press, 1959), pp3-24

E.E. Schattschneider, "The Displacement of Conflict", "The Semi-Sovereign People", *The Semi-Sovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America* [1960]

F. Pajares, *Synopsis: The Structure of Scientific Revolutions by Thomas S. Kuhn* [1962]; at [www.emory.edu/mfp/kuhnsyn.html](http://www.emory.edu/mfp/kuhnsyn.html)

**Session 3 (9/21x): Stages in Public Policy-making**

Readings R.W. Cobb and C.D. Elder, "What is an Issue, What Makes An Issue?" in S.T. Theodoulou and M.A. Cahn, *Public Policy: The Essential Readings* (Prentice Hall, 1995)

K. Jacobs, "Discourse Analysis and its Utility for Urban Policy Research" *Urban Policy and Research*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (March 2006) \*

**Session 4 (9/28): Overview of Key Social Policies: New Deal to Obama Administration**  
(review of major social policies and strategies on the part of national administrations since the New Deal;

Readings I.L. Horowitz, "From the new Deal to the New Federalism: ...1932 to 1982," *American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, vol. 42, no. 2 (1983)

U.S. General Accountability Office, *21<sup>st</sup> Century Challenges: Reexamining the Base of the Federal Government* (February 2005) \*

**Session 5 (10/5): Public Policy and Demography: Immigration**  
(what are major demographic developments molding public policy; what is the impact of immigration)

Readings K.M. Kilty, "Race, Immigration, and Public Policy: Case of Asian Americans," *Journal of Poverty*, vol 6 (4), 2002

R. Borges-Mendez, et al., *Immigrant Workers in the Massachusetts Health Care Industry*, Immigrant Learning Center (May 2008); **or**, J. Jennings, et al., *Impact of Immigrant Entrepreneurs and Workers in Leisure and Hospitality Industries Immigrant*, Immigrant Learning Center (May 2010)

### Part Two: Research Resources for Public Policy

**Session 6 (10/2): Research Limitations in Social Policy Analysis: Case of Race and Gender**  
(how can research about social problems be biased; what are limitations to 'objectivity')

Readings M.E. Hawkesworth, "Science, Scientism, and Democracy...", *Theoretical Issues in Policy Analysis* (SUNY, 1988)

J. Jennings, "Missing Links in the Study of Puerto Rican Poverty," *A New Introduction to Poverty: The Role of Race, Power, and Politics*, ed. L. Kushnick and J. Jennings (New York University Press, 2000)

R.G. Robinson, "Community Development Model for Public Health Applications: Overview of a Model to Eliminate Population Disparities" *Health Promotion Practices*, vol. 6, no.3 (2005)

**Session 7 (10/19): Workshop: Library Resources for Public Policy Investigations**

**Session 8 (10/26): Workshop: Understanding Census Data**

Readings N. Persily, "The Law of the Census..." *Cardozo Law Review*, vol. 32, no. 3 (2010) \*

See, also, [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov) before the workshop

**Session 9 (11/2): No Class; Special Assignment**

**Session 10 (11/9): Introduction to GIS Workshop**

Readings J. Jennings, “Measuring Neighborhood Distress: Tool for Place-based Urban Revitalization Strategies” Paper \*

See also: “What is GIS”; “Why Use GIS”; “What Can You Do with GIS”; and, “Answering Questions with GIS” at [www.gis.com](http://www.gis.com)

**Session 11 (11/16):** This will be a joint session with the Cities class; details and assigned readings will be provided in class

Part Three: Free Market and Government Activism as Public Policy

**Session 12 (11/30): Public Policy’s Classic Debate: The Free Market or Government?**  
(is the free market more efficient or effective than government and state bureaucracy; what are advantages/disadvantages of each sector)

Readings Milton Friedman, “The Relationship Between Economic Freedom and Political Freedom”, “The Role of Government in a Free Society”, *Capitalism and Freedom* (The University of Chicago Press, 1962)

D. Stansel, “Why Some Cities Are Growing and Others Shrinking” *CATO Journal*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (Spring/Summer 2011) \*

**Session 13 (12/7): Social Movement and Public Policy: Case of the Civil Rights Movement**  
(what is the relationship between the earlier Civil Rights Movement and public policy today? How does this history and current developments informant about the free market as public policy?)

Readings United for Fair Economy, *State of the Dream 2011: Austerity for Whom?* (January 2011) \*

*Encyclopedia of Civil Rights in America* (Sharpe, 1998), pp 202-212