UEP 250 Foundations of Public Policy and Planning

Department of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning
Tufts University
Fall 2008
Monday and Wednesday 10:30 – 11:45 a.m.

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Course Description and Objectives
This course provides a critical overview of the basic elements of planning and public policy formation and application, involving a range of environmental and social policy issues. Materials are aimed to give students an introductory understanding of key spatial and non-spatial issues and challenges in planning and public policy. Select issues are utilized in each area to emphasize major ideas and debates regarding planning and public policy. Additionally, the materials and presentations are aimed to help students understand how planning and public policy are both distinct, and overlapping. The course is organized into three sections: Concepts, Contexts, and Key Issues; Interplay Between Planning, Environment, and Social Welfare; and Influencing and Implementing Public Policy: Select Issues.

Required Texts

The required supplementary reader is available for purchase at Gnomon Copy, located behind campus at 348 Boston Ave. Gnomon Copy is open Monday – Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Gnomon Copy can be reached at (781) 391-6666.
Class Organization and Activities

The course uses required readings, lectures, guest presentations, and small group discussion in order to provide students with a range of ‘windows’ by which to examine, analyze, and understand essential planning and policy dynamics and elements.

As early as possible, we want to help you to articulate your own policy/planning area of interest as this will feature strongly in your assignments. You should declare your policy/planning area of interest to the TAs by September 12th. While we have selected topics germane to the course objectives, students will have opportunities to suggest other topics for further, in-depth small group discussions throughout the semester.

Please check Blackboard weekly for announcements. Tufts’ Blackboard can be found at http://crs.ase.tufts.edu. Please note as well that many of the readings are posted on Blackboard. This reduces the paper used and the purchase price of the reader.

Course Requirements and Assessment

Your grade will be based on classroom participation and an indication that required readings assignments have been completed; an interview essay with a ‘practitioner’ on a topic or issue related to the course; a ‘journalistic’ account of a community or government meeting involving public discussion of a topic related to the course, a policy memo describing a planning or policy issue in the environmental or social welfare fields, and a portfolio and poster.

Pre-Assignment: Declare your policy/planning area of interest by September 12th

Small Group Discussion Groups:

Each student will be required to participate in at least one informal small group discussion session, led by the class TAs during their regularly scheduled office hours. The topics and formats for each discussion group will be announced by the TAs weekly. Students will have an opportunity to sign up for the session(s) that interest them on a first-come, first serve basis.

Assignment #1 (10%): Interview report – Due Sept. 26th; 3-4 double-spaced pages

The major goal of this assignment is to give you some experience articulating questions related to planning and public policy. It is an opportunity to talk with someone who has experience in your policy/planning area of interest. To do this, you will need to find a cooperative second-year UEP student (TAs will assist) and ask for about 15 minutes of her/his time. Your job is to learn as much as you can about her/his experiences with their policy/planning interest last year and to seek their help.
Your written assignment should include a brief description of your preliminary topic your policy/planning area of interest, how your ideas about it changed (or didn't change) as a result of the interview, and what major insights or lessons the second-year student gave you about this interest area. Also, please include the name of the second-year UEP student and the questions you asked. A final paragraph should provide a summary statement. The paper can be structured in a question-and-answer format, if desired.

**Assignment #2 (20%): Journalistic account of public meeting – Due by Oct. 17th; 4-5 double-spaced pages**

This assignment will require that you attend a community or government meeting focusing on an issue or concern. This assignment should be completed in October. The meetings can include Board of Selectmen/Aldermen/City Council meetings; Planning Board or Zoning meetings; Historic Preservation Commission meetings, or community meetings organized by neighborhood groups. However, we strongly recommend that you attend a meeting in your area of interest/policy concern. The TAs will put a list of local meetings, together with dates, on Blackboard. The journalistic account should include information about what happened during the meeting; analysis of one key issue that was discussed, and whether the issue deals with spatial or non-spatial concerns; and the account must reference at least two of the required course readings. Some of the papers will be selected for presentation to the class.

**Assignment #3 (20%): Policy/Planning memo Due November 7. 4-5 double-spaced pages.**

The purpose of the policy/planning memo is to communicate persuasively on a particular issue, with solid analysis of the issue and concrete recommendations for change. You should select an issue on which you feel strongly, but this must NOT be an issue directly related to your portfolio topic. Your analysis should include a definition of the "problem/situation", an overview of the range of policy/planning responses proposed and the intellectual or theoretical basis of such; a discussion of any key policy/planning or research questions that remain unanswered; and your own assessment of the policy/planning issue or problem. The policy memo should integrate readings completed in class and also incorporate information from at least two further readings about the issue.

Remember that your goal is to persuade someone in a position of power to not only embrace your point of view, but also translate it into some sort of concrete action. Accordingly, your memo should take into consideration:

- the frame of reference of the person you are seeking to persuade, taking into account
  - the person’s position in government, and
  - the person’s political leanings (if you know them);
• the stakeholders to whom this person is accountable;
• the underlying policy goals that you wish to achieve;
• the specific measures you would like to see adopted; and
• any information that would be particularly important in making a decision on these measures, such as
  ▪ the success or failure of past programs, and
  ▪ the impact of action – or inaction – on individuals and communities.

Assignment #4 (40%): The portfolio and poster (Poster due in class December 8; analysis paper due December 10)
The major assignment of the semester involves your development of a Policy/Planning Portfolio. This represents a semester long tracking of your choice of a policy or planning topic. It is an opportunity for you to become informed and keep current, over a prolonged period, about an important policy/planning area. Your material will be affected by your choice of topic and scale. For instance, if your topic is global climate change, we expect you to use a considerable amount of international material. If it is welfare policy in Massachusetts, we expect you to use local, state and national materials.

The Portfolio should include: newspaper, book and journal article excerpts or quotations; documents (or excerpts) produced by government or non-government organizations and think-tanks; and data from databases. At the end of the semester, you are to hand in your completed portfolio of information, including a 15 page, double spaced, analysis of your planning/policy topic. This analysis should include a definition of the “problem/situation” your area addresses, a literature review, a discussion of what’s being/been/might be done to deal with the problem/situation, the overlaps with other policy/planning domains, your insights on policy/planning approaches that could be a solution, your assessment of the quality of the materials you were able to gather, and your evolving understanding of your domain over time and how your perspective may have changed with your data. We expect you to use several class readings to develop your analysis. The analysis should be carefully documented and your citations should use the Chicago Manual of Style (you may use either the author date system or you may use end notes). Your reference and bibliography pages will not count toward the 15 page upper limit for this assignment.

Your sessions with Regina Raboin, Librarian, and Melanie St. James, Senior Interactive Media Designer, will be of great assistance to you. On December 8th you will have the opportunity to present your work in a poster format so that the rest of the class and well as the UEP community can learn about your topic. This is not a prepared presentation, but a poster that allows others to learn about your topic and an opportunity for them to ask you questions. The completed portfolio and poster are due on December 10th.

Classroom Participation (10%)
Course Schedule and Readings

SECTION 1: CONCEPTS, CONTEXTS, AND KEY ISSUES

Class 1 Wed. Sept. 3: Student and faculty introductions; course organization, goals, and requirements (Rubin and Rappaport)

Readings:


Class 2 Mon. Sept. 8: Public Policy and Policy Analysis (Rappaport)

Readings:


DECLARE POLICY/PLANNING AREA OF INTEREST BY SEPT 12
Class 3 Mon. Sept. 10: Justification for Public Policy and Planning: Key Issues (Rubin)

Readings:


Class 4 Wed. Sept. 15: What is Planning Today? (Guest Lecture: Inés Palmarin, BRA Senior Planner II)

Readings:


Class 5 Wed. Sept. 17: Framing a Public Problem and Causal Stories (Rappaport)

Readings:

Policy Paradox, Chapter 8, “Causes,” pp. 188-209.


SECTION 2: STRUCTURES AND STAKEHOLDERS

Class 6 Mon. Sept 22 Governmental Structures and Policymaking (Rubin) (readings tentative)


“Overview of the Massachusetts legislature and how to affect it.” In Lobbying on a Shoestring. pp. 21-39.

Class 7: Wed. Sept. 24 Setting the Policy Agenda (Rubin)

Readings:


INTERVIEW REPORT DUE BY SEPT 26

Class 8: Mon. Sept. 29  Public Policy and the For Profit Sector (Rappaport)

Readings:


Class 9: Wed. Oct. 1  Public Policy and the Not for Profit Sector (Prof. Susan Ostrander)

Readings:


Prior to class, please browse statistics regarding non-profit activity, available on-line at http://nccsdataweb.urban.org/statistics/index.cfm

Class 10: Mon. Oct. 6  Citizen Participation and Planning (Rappaport)

Readings:


R. J. Burby (2003). “Making Plans that Matter: Citizen Involvement and

Class 11: Wed. Oct. 8 Interest Groups (Guest Lecture)

READINGS TBA

NO CLASS MON. OCTOBER 13 – COLUMBUS DAY HOLIDAY

SECTION 3: RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

Class 12: Wed. Oct. 15 Research, Bias, and Policy Analysis (Prof. Shelly Krimsky)

Readings:


NOTE: REGULAR CLASS ON 10/15 TO BE FOLLOWED BY 45-MINUTE ADDITIONAL SESSION ON “DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS” LED BY MELANIE ST. JAMES

JOURNALISTIC ACCOUNT OF PUBLIC MEETING DUE BY OCT. 17

Class 13: Mon., Oct. 20 Research in Planning and Policy Analysis I (Regina Raboin, Librarian) and Hands-On Session – Using Technology in Designing Public Presentations (Melanie St. James, Senior Interactive Media Designer)

Library for group #1; design for group #2

Class 14: Wed. Oct. 22 Research in Planning and Policy Analysis II (Regina Raboin, Librarian) and Hands-On Session – Using Technology in Designing Public Presentations (Melanie St. James, Senior Interactive Media Designer)

Library for group #2; design for group #1
Class 15: Mon. Oct. 27 Evaluation and Public Policy (Rappaport)

Readings:


**SECTION 4: INTERPLAY BETWEEN PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT, AND SOCIAL WELFARE**

Class 16: Wed. Oct. 29 Public Policy and Social Welfare (Rubin)

Readings:


Class 17: Mon. Nov. 3 The Sustainability Challenge (Rappaport)

Readings:


Class 18: Wed. Nov. 5 Foundations and Field Projects (Rusty Russell and Rachel Bratt)

Readings TBA

**MEMO ASSIGNMENT DUE NOV. 7**

Class 19: Mon. Nov. 10 Land Use I: Ownership, Regulatory, and Legal Issues (Rubin)

Readings:


Class 20: Wed. Nov. 12 Race, Class & Community (Prof. James Jennings)

Readings:


Class 21: Mon. Nov. 17  Land Use II: Case Study – New Orleans (Rubin)

Readings:


Readings:


Class 23: Mon. Nov. 24 Poverty, Homelessness and Public Policy (Rubin)

Readings:


NO CLASS WEDNESDAY NOV. 26 – THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

SECTION 5: INFLUENCING AND IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICY: SELECT ISSUES

Class 24 Mon. Dec. 1: Communication and the Role of the Media (Rappaport)
Readings:


Class 25: Wed. Dec. 3: Policy Implementation (Guest speaker TBA)
Readings TBA

Class 26: Mon. Dec. 8 Poster session for Portfolio Projects

**PORTFOLIO ASSIGNMENT DUE BY 5:00 P.M. DEC 10**