

GOVT 320/530: Domestic Policy

New Mexico State University
Department of Government

Summer 2011 Syllabus

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Time: Online Course
Office Hours: M W 11:00 am - 12:00 pm;
Skype (username: dr_scheller):
M W 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm;
and by appointment

Course Description

This course is an introduction to public policy in the American democratic system. The course is both theoretical and applied in its approach to the study of public policy in the U.S. We will study the various theories of how public policy ideas are formed and the process by which ideas become actual policies in the U.S. These theories will then be applied to historical and current issues in public policy including policies in the arenas of the environment, civil rights, health care, education, etc. The design of the course is not meant to make students experts in any single policy area. The goal of this course is to introduce students to the theories of the policymaking process and to have them apply that knowledge to substantive policy problems and issues.

This course is cross-listed for both undergraduate and graduate students; therefore, the material reflects the unique design of this set-up. The material is more theoretical than in traditional undergraduate courses, but more applied than in traditional graduate public policy courses. Graduate students will have additional readings that are more theoretical and are specifically noted on the syllabus. The breadth of the material will foster a better understanding of domestic policy and encourage critical thinking about current policy processes and issues.

Required Text

Dye, Thomas R. 2011. *Understanding Public Policy*. 13th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

All readings, exams, and assignments will be based upon the indicated editions of these texts. There is no guarantee that older editions will contain the same information.

All readings not in the Dye textbook are located on Blackboard.

Course Set-Up

Online Lectures: On several occasions, I will videotape lectures that provide an overview of the assigned readings. I encourage you to read the material beforehand so you can follow the lecture and formulate any questions that may arise. There will be powerpoints made available on the days of the lecture and the video recordings will be posted on Blackboard. During the lectures, I will discuss some of the more difficult material and bring in outside information not in the readings.

“Questions” Discussion Board: In addition to the discussion boards through which you will be graded, there will be a Questions Discussion Board where you can post questions about the course readings, lectures, etc. If you have a non-personal question, I would rather you post that question to the Questions Discussion Board so that all students are able to see the question and answer. Please ask non-personal, course-related questions through this medium instead of through email. If you have grade-related or confidential questions, you should email them directly to me.

Skype Office Hours: In addition to regular, in-person office hours, I have made available a Skype username at the beginning of the syllabus. When you request to be added, please identify yourself with your name and the course number you are enrolled in. Skype office hours are indicated on the first page of the syllabus. You may also schedule Skype appointments outside of regular Skype office hours.

Course Requirements - Undergraduate Students

1. Exams (300 pts.): There will be three 100-point, multiple-choice exams during the semester. Exams are not cumulative and will be conducted online through Blackboard. Dates of the exam are located on the syllabus. Exams will be available from 12:00 AM until 11:59 PM on the date of the exam. Exams will contain 25-50 questions, and you will have a specific amount of time to complete them (approximately 1 minute per question) upon beginning the exam. You will not be able to answer a few questions and then return later to finish the exam. You may use books and notes on the exam, but you are prohibited from taking the exam with other students or getting help from other students. Exams with similar responses will be investigated for academic dishonesty.

2. Discussion Board (100 pts.): Throughout the semester, you will need to post comments/threads and replies to threads in the Undergraduate Discussion Board. There will be 5 instances throughout the semester when I will ask you to respond to a prompt. You are to write a well-thought, critical response to the prompt in at least a paragraph. You will also need to critique another student's response in a similar format (at least a paragraph). Your response to the prompt will be worth 10 pts., and your critique of another student's response will be worth 10 pts.

3. Policy Memo (200 pts.): You will write one, 3 page policy memo covering a specific public policy of your choice. You will provide a brief analysis of the current policy situation and offer a solution to the policy problem/issue and your reasoning behind the solution. Handouts and lecture material will be made available during the second week of the course that will explain the requirements in greater detail.

Grade Components - Undergraduate Students

Exams	300
Discussion Board	100
Policy Memos	200
Total	600

Grading Scale

A+	= 97% - 100%	(582-600)
A	= 93% - 96.99%	(558-581)
A-	= 90% - 92.99%	(540-557)
B+	= 87% - 89.99%	(522-539)
B	= 83% - 86.99%	(498-521)
B-	= 80% - 82.99%	(480-497)
C+	= 77% - 79.99%	(462-479)
C	= 73% - 76.99%	(438-461)
C-	= 70% - 72.99%	(420-437)
D+	= 67% - 69.99%	(402-419)
D	= 63% - 66.99%	(378-401)
D-	= 60% - 62.99%	(360-377)
F	= <60%	(<360)

Course Requirements - Graduate Students

1. Midterm & Final (200 pts.): There will be a midterm and final each worth 100 points. Both exams will be essay-format. The final is not cumulative. I will give you 2 prompts to answer approximately 2 or 3 days prior to their due date. You may use any books and notes on the midterm and final. However, you are not allowed to consult with other students or professors to answer the questions.

2. Discussion Board (100 pts.): Throughout the semester, you will need to post comments/threads and replies to threads in the Graduate Discussion Board. There will be 5 instances throughout the semester when I will ask you to respond to a prompt. You are to write a well-thought, critical response to the prompt in at least a paragraph. You will also need to critique another student's response in a similar format (at least a paragraph). Your response to the prompt will be worth 10 pts., and your critique of another student's response will be worth 10 pts.

3. Policy Report (200 pts.): You will write a 10-12-page policy report covering a specific public policy of your choice. You will provide an in-depth analysis of the current policy situation and offer a solution to the policy problem/issue and your reasoning behind the solution. Handouts and lecture materials will be made available during the second week of the course that will explain the requirements in greater detail.

4. Reading Summaries (100 pts.): You will be required to pick 2 articles from a list of readings on the syllabus and provide a summary of the articles. You should summarize the main theories, ideas, hypotheses, methods, findings, and conclusions of the author(s)' article. You should also provide a brief critique of the article. The purpose of these exercises is to have you organize your readings for comprehensive exams, and to also build your classmates' library of reading summaries for comprehensive exams. You will need to post these summaries by 11:59 PM on the due dates listed on the sign-up sheet on the first day of class. Please post your summaries in the Reading Summaries Discussion Board.

Grade Components - Graduate Students

Exams	200
Discussion Board	100
Policy Report	200
Reading Summaries	100
Total	600

Grading Scale

A+	= 97% - 100%	(582-600)
A	= 93% - 96.99%	(558-581)
A-	= 90% - 92.99%	(540-557)
B+	= 87% - 89.99%	(522-539)
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D+	= 67% - 69.99%	(402-419)
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D-	= 60% - 62.99%	(360-377)
F	= <60%	(<360)

Course Expectations & Policies

Courtesy

Comments and language in the discussion board should be civil and of an academic nature.

Late Work Policy & Make-Up Exams and Assignments

Given that the course is a 5-week online course, no late work will be accepted. There will also be no make-up examinations.

Additional Information

Instructional Availability and Assistance

Office hours are indicated on the first page of this syllabus. If you cannot come to office hours, you should set up an appointment to meet outside of office hours in-person, on the telephone, or through Skype.

Academic Misconduct

These excerpts are taken from the NMSU Student Handbook:

Any student found guilty of academic misconduct shall be subject to disciplinary action. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following actions:

1. Cheating or knowingly assisting another student in committing an act of cheating or other forms of academic dishonesty.

2. Plagiarism is using another person's work without acknowledgment, making it appear to be one's own. Any ideas, words, pictures, or other source must be acknowledged in a citation that gives credit to the source. This is true no matter where the material comes from, including the internet, other student's work, unpublished materials, or oral sources. Intentional and unintentional instances of plagiarism are considered instances of academic misconduct. It is the responsibility of the student submitting the work in question to know, understand, and comply with this policy. If no citation is given, then borrowing any of the following would be an example of plagiarism: a) An idea or opinion, even when put into one's own words (paraphrase); b) A few well-said words, if these are a unique insight; c) Many words, even if one changes most of them; d) Materials assembled by others, for instance quotes or a bibliography; e) An argument; f) A pattern of idea; g) Graphs, pictures, or other illustrations; h) Facts; i) All or part of an existing paper or other resource.

This list is not meant to include all possible examples of plagiarism. See the University Library's web page on plagiarism for further examples.

Student Disability Services

If you have, or believe you have a disability, you may contact the Student Accessibility Services (SAS) Office located in Corbett Center, Room 244, 575-646-6840, or email sas@nmsu.edu. Appropriate accommodations may then be provided for you. All medical information will be treated confidentially. If you have a condition which may affect your ability to exit safely from the premises in an emergency during class, you are encouraged to discuss this in confidence with the instructor and/or the Director of University Disability Services/ADA Coordinator, Diana Quintana, at the SAS Office. Questions regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and/or the American with Disabilities Amendment Act should be directed to the SAS Office.

Questions regarding NMSU's Non-discrimination Policy and discrimination complaints should be referred to Gerard Nevarez, Office of Institutional Equity, 575-646-3635

Syllabus Change Policy

The contents of this course syllabus are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.

Course Schedule

Week 1: July 1 - 8:

Important Dates:

July 8 - Online Lecture

July 8 - All: Discussion Board Answers Due by 11:59pm

What is Public Policy?

-All: Dye, Ch. 1, pp. 1-9.

-All: Anderson, James E. 2003. "What is Public Policy?" Chapter from *Public Policy-Making*. 5th ed.

Policy Typologies

-All: Ripley and Franklin. *Congress, the Bureaucracy and Public Policy*. 4th ed.: 19-28.

-All: Lowi, Theodore J. 1964. "American Business, Public Policy, Case Studies, and Political Theory." *World Politics*. 16: 677-715.

-Grad: Greenberg, George D., Jeffrey A. Miller, Lawrence B. Mohr, and Bruce C. Vladeck. 1977. "Developing Public Policy Theory: Perspectives from Empirical Research." *American Political Science Review*. 71.4: 1532-1543.

-Grad: Steinberger, Peter J. 1980. "Typologies of Public Policy: Meaning Construction and Their Policy Process." *Social Science Quarterly*. 61: 185-197.

Immigration Policy

-All: Dye, Ch. 9, pp. 109-209.

Week 2: July 11 - 15

Important Dates:

July 12 - Online Lecture

July 13 - All: Discussion Board Answers due by 11:59 pm

July 14 - Undergraduates: Exam 1 due by 11:59 PM

Institutional Models - Budgeting

-All: Dye, Ch. 2, pp. 11-14

-All: Rubin, Irene. 2006. Selections from *The Politics of Public Budgeting*.

Institutional Models - Incrementalism in Budgeting

-All: Dye, Ch. 2, pp. 17-19.

-All: Lindblom, Charles E. 1959. "The Science of Muddling Through." *Public Administration Review*. 29: 79-88.

-Grad: Jones, Bryan D., Frank R. Baumgartner, and James L. True. 1998. "Policy Punctuations: U.S. Budget Authority, 1947-1995." *Journal of Politics*. 60.1: 1-33.

Group & Elite Theory

-All: Dye, Ch. 2, pp. 19-22.

-Grad: Dahl, Robert A. 1961. Selections from *Who Governs?*

-Grad: Walker, Jack L. 1966. "A Critique of the Elitist Theory of Democracy." *American Political Science Review*. 60: 285-295.

July 14 - Undergraduates: Exam 1 due by 11:59 PM

Group & Elite Theory - Interest Groups

-Grad: Truman, David B. 1951. "Interest Groups and the Nature of the State." Chapter from *The Governmental Process: Political Interests and Public Opinion*.

Group & Elite Theory - Tax Policy

-All: Dye, Ch. 8, pp. 169-188.

Week 3: July 18 - 22

Important Dates:

July 19 - Online Lecture

July 20 - Grad: Midterm answers due by 11:59 PM

July 22 - All: Discussion Board Answers due by 11:59 PM

Group & Elite Theory - Civil Rights

-All: Dye, Ch. 11, pp. 232-262.

-All: Abrajano, Marisa. 2010. "Are Blacks and Latinos Responsible for the Passage of Proposition 8? Analyzing Voter Attitudes on California's Proposal to Ban Same-Sex Marriage in 2008." *Political Research Quarterly*. 63.4: 922-932.

-Grad: Lupia, Arthur, Yanna Krupnikov, Adam Seth Levine, Spencer Piston, and Alexander Von Hagen-Jamar. 2010. "Why State Constitutions Differ in Their Treatment of Same-Sex Marriage." *Journal of Politics*. 72: 1222-1235.

July 20: Graduate student midterm answers due by 11:59 PM

Group & Elite Theory - Health Care Policy

-All: Dye, Ch 5, pp. 105-113.

-Grad: Pauly, Mark V. 2011. "Patient Protection and Affordable Care: Act Cost-Containment Choices: The Case for Incentive-Based Approaches." *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*. 36.3: 591-596.

Rationalism and Market Models

-All: Dye, Ch. 2, pp. 15-17; 22-24.

-All: Wheelan, Charles. 2010. Selections from *Introduction to Public Policy*.

Week 4: July 25 - 29

Important Dates:

July 25 - Undergraduates: Exam 2 due by 11:59 PM

July 28 - All: Discussion Board Answers due by 11:59 PM

July 29 - Online Lecture

Market Failures - Common Pool Resources

-Grad: Hardin, Garrett J. 1968. "The Tragedy of the Commons." *Science*. 162: 1243-1248.

-Grad: Ostrom, Elinor. 1990. Selections from *Governing the Commons*.

Environmental & Energy Policy

- All: Dye, Ch. 10.
- All: Campbell, Karen. 2008. "How Rising Gas Prices Hurt American Households." *The Heritage Foundation*.
- All: Bailey, Ronald. 2008. "Oil Price Bubble?" *Reason Online*.
- All: Sheer, Robert. 2008. "Praying for War at the Gas Pump." *The Nation*.

Welfare Policy

- All: Dye, Ch. 5, pp. 88-105.
- All: Lynch, Michael. 2000. "The Hassle Factor." *Reason Online*.
- All: Tiebout, Charles M. 1956. "A Pure Theory of Local Expenditures." *The Journal of Political Economy*. 64.5: 416-424.

Federalism

- Grad: Peterson, Paul E. 1995. Selections from *The Price of Federalism*.
- Grad: Bailey, Michael. 2004. "Welfare and the Multifaceted Decision to Move." *American Political Science Review*.
- All: Dye, Ch. 12.

Week 5: Aug. 1 - 5

Important Dates:

- Aug. 2 - Online Lecture**
- Aug. 3 - All: Discussion Board Answers due by 11:59 PM**
- Aug. 4 - Undergraduates: Exam 3 due by 11:59 PM**
- Aug. 4 - Graduates: Final exam answers due by 11:59 PM**
- Aug. 5 - Undergraduates: Policy Memos due by 11:59 PM**
- Aug. 5 - Graduates: Policy Reports due by 11:59 PM**

Role of Government - Education

- All: Dye, Ch. 6.
- Grad: Fuller et. al. 2007. "Gauging Growth: How to Judge No Child Left Behind." *Educational Researcher*. 36.5: 268-278.

Policy-Making Process

- All: Dye, Ch. 3

Crime Policy

- All: Dye, Ch. 4.
- Grad: Ostrom, Elinor, and Gordon Whitaker. 1973. "Does Local Community Control of Police Make a Difference? Some Preliminary Findings." *American Journal of Political Science*. 17.1: 48-76.
- Aug. 4 - Undergraduates: Exam 3 due by 11:59 PM**
- Aug. 4 - Graduates: Final exam answers due by 11:59 PM**