

**Georgia State University
Andrew Young School of Policy Studies**

Summer 2014

PMAP 4061: Public Policy Analysis

Course Syllabus

Administrative Information

Instructor: Ric Kolenda
Time: Tuesday & Thursday 4:45 a.m.–7:15 p.m.
Location: Langdale Hall 315
Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 3:30–4:30 a.m. or by appointment
Office: AYSPS 333 G
Email: rkolenda1@gsu.edu
Phone: (404) 556-6545

Prerequisites: ECON 2105 and ECON 2106

NOTE: The course syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary. If a change does occur, sufficient notice will be given through Desire2Learn and class announcements.

Course Description

This is an introductory course covering basic concepts and principles of policy analysis. This course is designed to provide students with basic knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in future courses in policy analysis. The course will introduce policy analysis as a profession with a discussion of its professional ethics. The course will also discuss the concept of the eightfold path in policy analysis, which consists of a set of steps for standard policy analysis. Finally, this course covers the fundamental economic tools of policy analysis, including both the efficiency of competitive markets and rationales for public intervention in the markets. Econ 2105 and Econ 2106 are prerequisites for this course.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, students should have a basic understanding of the following concepts and skills:

- The major components of policy analysis
- Classical assumptions of microeconomics and how they apply to public policy
- Why market failures occur and when government should be involved
- What tools are at the government's disposal to solve public problems
- The political aspects of policy analysis
- How to apply formal steps to a current policy analysis
- What a policy analyst does

Course Materials

Required Text:

Weimer, David L. and Aidan R. Vining. 2011. *Policy Analysis*, 5th edition. New York, NY: Longman. Digital edition available here:

http://www.coursesmart.com/IR/4695979/9780205781263?_hdv=6.8

Bardach, Eugene. 2012. *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis*, 4th edition. Los Angeles, CA: CQ Press. Digital edition available here:

http://www.coursesmart.com/IR/4695979/9781608718429?_hdv=6.8

Supplemental Text:

Schuck, Peter H. 2014. *Why Government Fails So Often: And How It Can Do Better*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Other readings will be available online and/or posted on **Desire2Learn**.

Course Requirements and Evaluation

Class sessions will be a mixture of lectures and class discussions. Additional readings and course materials will be provided on Desire2Learn. Course grades will be determined as follows:

1. Quizzes	20%
2. Individual Policy Memo	20%
3. Midterm Examination	25%
4. Group Policy Project	25%
5. Class Attendance & Participation	10%

Grades are calculated on a 100-point scale:

A+	> 98	C+	77-79.99
A	93-97.99	C	73-76.99
A-	90-92.99	C-	70-72.99
B+	87-89.99	D	60-69.99
B	83-86.99	F	< 60
B-	80-82.99		

Graded Assignments

Quizzes: At various points in each class session there will be a **quiz** on the material to be covered that day. There will be ten (10) such quizzes, and the lowest two (2) scores will be dropped from your final grade. There will be no make-up quizzes, barring extraordinary circumstances (e.g., an extended medical issue requiring missing more than 2 class sessions). The quizzes will add up to 20% of your final grade.

The **Individual Policy Memo** on a policy issue of the student’s choosing will be submitted twice: first as a draft, and again in the final form. Both will be graded, but only the grade on the last memo received will count toward your final grade. If you fail to submit the final version, you will receive a ten-point penalty off the grade of the draft version. Details will be forthcoming in class and on D2L. It is worth 20% of the total grade.

The **Midterm Examination** will consist of a combination of multiple choice, true-false, short answer and essay questions. It will draw on the class lectures and readings, and require students to assimilate materials learned throughout the first portion of the course. It is worth 25% of the

total grade. Make-up exams or alternatives for excused absences will be solely at the discretion of the instructor. It is worth 25% of the total grade.

For the **Group Policy Project**, you will work in teams to assess a policy issue and develop a plan to address the problem. The results will be presented in class during the last class session. You will be evaluated on your individual contributions, the group product, the individual and group presentations, and your peer evaluations. Details and group assignments will be forthcoming in class and on D2L. It is worth 25% of the total grade.

Class participation is an important part of this course, and as such, attendance and participation are worth 10% of your total grade. Participation means that you actively engage in classroom discussions and in-class assignments.

Student attendance is mandatory, and more than three (3) absences can be grounds for failure. Please consult with the instructor if you are in danger of getting a fourth absence. It is recognized that students may be unable to attend class as a result of observance of recognized religious holidays of the student's faith, serious illness, or family emergencies. In such cases, students are responsible for informing the instructor (in advance if possible), getting any missed material, and obtaining class notes and announcements from other students.

Make-up exams will only be given for extraordinary conditions, and only at the discretion of the instructor.

Assignments are due by the beginning of class or by the specified time via Desire2Learn. If you have materials that are hard-copy only, they must be turned in on time as well. Late assignments will be graded down substantially, and a passing grade will not be assigned unless all assignments are completed.

Reports and exams are due by the beginning of class or by the specified time via Desire2Learn. If you have materials that are hard copy only, they must be turned in on time as well. Late assignments will be graded down substantially, and a passing grade will not be assigned unless all assignments are completed.

Extra Credit: From time to time, the instructor may offer the students opportunities to earn extra credit points on existing or for additional assignments. In addition, you are also encouraged to bring in newspaper and magazine articles related to current public policy issues up to three (3) times a semester. These articles can be on issues from anywhere in the world, but it is important that during the course of the semester everyone gets a sense of how public policy analysis works in the real world. Please indicate at the beginning of class your intention to present an article. No more than three (3) articles will be presented in each class, and will be chosen on a first-come first-served basis. Only one (1) article per person per class session. Extra credit points will be granted as following:

- 1 Article = 4 percentage points toward your final grade
- 2 Articles = 7 percentage points toward your final grade
- 3 Articles = 9 percentage points toward your final grade

For example, if your other assignments add up to 88% of 100% of the final grade, and you present 2 articles during the semester, your final grade will be based on 95% of 100%. Extra credit is not guaranteed, however, and will be offered only at the discretion of the instructor.

Course Policies

- (1) Students who wish to request accommodation for a disability may do so by registering with the Office of Disability Services. Students may only be accommodated upon issuance by the Office of Disability Services of assigned Accommodation Plan and are responsible for providing a copy of that plan to instructors of all classes in which an accommodation is sought. Please advise the instructor if you have a documented disability that needs to be accommodated and provide documentation from [GSU Disability Services](#).
- (2) All students are responsible for knowing and adhering to [GSU's Policy on Academic Honesty](#).
- (3) The University has very specific policies on [Dropping Classes and Voluntary Withdrawal](#) from courses, with possible penalties for withdrawals after the first two weeks of courses. For the only exception to this policy, see the [Emergency Withdrawal](#) information on the Dean of Students web site.
- (4) This course syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary. Guest lectures and field trips might be scheduled along the way and students will be notified in advance.
- (5) Turn off cell phones and keep them off the desk during lectures. Text messaging during class is strictly prohibited and grounds for dismissal.
- (6) Laptops and tablets are allowed for instructional use only; any prohibited uses will be grounds for dismissal.
- (7) Final grades will not be posted or given out over the phone or via email.
- (8) Your constructive assessment of this course plays an indispensable role in shaping education at Georgia State. Upon completing the course, please take time to fill out the online course evaluation.

Course Schedule*

Class #	Date	Topic(s)	Readings*	Assignment Due	
1	6/10	Course Overview & Intro to Policy Analysis			
	6/12	Unit I: The Policy Process & Profession The Policy Process & the "Eightfold Path"	B: Intro & Part I; W & V: Ch. 1-2		
2	6/17	Values & Ethics in Policy Analysis	W & V: Ch. 3	Group Assignments	Quiz 1
3	6/19	Unit II: Theoretical Foundations of Policy Analysis Efficiency in the Competitive Model	W & V: Ch. 4		Quiz 2
4	6/24	Market Failures & Public Goods: Limitations of the Competitive Framework; Midterm Review	W & V: Ch. 5-6	Group Project Plan	Quiz 3
5	6/26	Midterm Exam Distributional and Other Goals	W & V: Ch. 7		
6	7/1	Limits to Public Intervention (Government Failures)	W & V: Ch. 8		Quiz 4
7	7/3	Correcting Market and Government Failures	W & V: Ch. 10	Ind. Policy Memo (Draft) Due	Quiz 5
	7/7	<i>Last Day for Voluntary Withdrawal</i>			
8	7/8	Policy Adoption and Implementation	W & V: Ch.11-12		Quiz 6
9	7/10	Unit III: Doing Policy Analysis Gathering Data & Organizing Your Analysis	W & V: Ch. 14-15; B: Part II		Quiz 7
10	7/15	Best Practices in Policy Analysis	B: Part III		Quiz 8
11	7/17	Cost-Benefit Analysis to Assess Efficiency	W & V: Ch. 16		Quiz 9
12	7/22	Using Statistics to Assess Causality	W & V: Ch. 17-18	Final Policy Memo Due	Quiz 10
13	7/24	Group Project Presentations		Group Project Paper Due	
14	7/31	Finals Period, 10:45am-1:15pm		<i>Possibly for presentations</i>	

*The schedule is subject to change at the instructor's discretion.

** Additional readings and case studies will be added as necessary. Details will be announced in class and on Desire2Learn.