

Introduction to Public Policy

PUAD 5120, BUSI 5120, POLI 4240/5240 (Section 01)

Fall 2014-2015

Wednesday 17h35 – 20h25, Room 1011, Kenneth C. Rowe Management Building

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Course Description

Over 40 years ago, Thomas Dye defined ‘public policy’ as “anything a government chooses to do or not to do.”¹ Although Dye over simplified the term, his definition did capture the extensive scope of the subject matter. “Policy-making is the fundamental activity of governments. It is through the public policy-making process that governments establish the framework within which all citizens (human and corporate) must function; and it is the process via which governments decide both which societal goals to pursue and how to (best) pursue them.”²

Policymaking is the art of developing responses to public problems.³ As public problems appear to be increasing in quantity and complexity (e.g. the security shocks since September 11, 2001, the ongoing global financial crises, climate change), there is renewed interest in public policy, as evidenced by the Occupy Wall Street, Arab Spring and Idle No More movements.

David Easton⁴ noted that the actions of government are the authoritative allocation of values for a society.⁵ This observation suggests another rationale for the study of public policy, being that civil society must, when parsing government actions, consider underlying ideologies as well as policy determinants, contexts, structures and processes to truly appreciate the policy framework. These understandings bring coherence to government actions, permitting civil society to hold government accountable for its duty to advance public values.

¹ Dye, Thomas R. (1972). *Understanding Public Policy*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall at 2.

² Young, Shaun P. ed. (2013). *Evidence-Based Policy-Making in Canada*. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press at 1.

³ Pal, Leslie A. (2013). *Beyond Policy Analysis – Public Issue Management in Turbulent Times (5th Ed.)*. Toronto: Nelson Education, at 414.

⁴ Easton, David (1953). *The Political System: An Inquiry into the State of Political Science*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

⁵ Miller, Eugene F. (1971). David Easton’s Political Theory. *Political Science Reviewer, Fall*. 184 at 190.

Learning Objectives

There are three primary objectives for the course:

1. The main objective is for students to learn the public policy development process and to increase their capacity to undertake its key functions,⁶ which include:
 - a) theoretical research;
 - b) statistics, applied research and modeling;
 - c) environmental scanning, trend analysis, and forecasting;
 - d) policy analysis and advice;
 - e) consultation and managing relations;
 - f) communications; and
 - g) program design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Students will develop and practice the necessary behavioural competencies required of professional policymakers including adaptability, analytical thinking, creativity and innovation, critical judgment, initiative, problem solving, relationship building and teamwork. Course readings, lectures, examinations and experiential learning assignments will expose students to these competencies as well as proffer opportunities to exercise technical policymaking competencies, such as information gathering and project management.

2. A second objective of the course is for students to increase their knowledge of public policy theories, ideologies and contexts, positioning public policy as an important sub-field of social science.
3. A third objective is for students to better understand current government policy in several different fields. Students will develop the necessary analytical skills to contribute to the future investigation, extension and study of policy fields.

Course Content:

Introduction to Public Policy is a general overview of three different aspects of public policy:

1. **Public policy studies** – This aspect of the course will examine the basic concepts of public policy, including underlying normative and positive theories, political ideologies, policy determinants, and contextual influences. The intention is to better understand **why** governments do what they do. This exploration provides not only a more complete knowledge of public policy as a social science, but also equips students to participate in policy management processes.
2. **Public policy analysis** – This aspect of the course will focus on the main policy fields that preoccupy Canadian policy makers at all levels of government. The intention is to better understand **what** governments do. It will provide an introduction and overview

⁶ Canada Deputy Minister Task Force. (December 1996). *Strengthening our Policy Capacity*, at 4.

of the classical imperatives and approaches to policy making in key areas, such as macroeconomic, social, health, aboriginal, environmental and foreign policy.

3. **Public policy development process** – This aspect of the course will increase students' capacity to develop public policy. The intention is to teach **how** governments do what they do:⁷
- a) Problem identification and definition
 - b) Policy Formulation – research, information gathering, analysis, policy instruments, networks, options, policy design and recommendations.
 - c) Agenda Setting – goal setting, policy planning
 - d) Decision-making
 - e) Policy implementation
 - f) Evaluation

Class Format:

Introduction to Public Policy is a lecture-discussion class. Typically, each class will begin with an open discussion on topical policy issues and the weekly readings. That discussion will be followed by a lecture on the assigned subject-matter for the week, interspersed with seminar style dialogue and case studies. The class will liberally employ conversations with guest policy practitioners in the federal, provincial and municipal governments. These guests will elucidate and amplify the content of the assigned readings, and will respond to questions from students on their practical experiences in the policy world.

Learning Materials:

There are two required texts for the course available for purchase at the University Bookstore:

1. Leslie A. Pal, *Beyond Policy Analysis – Public Issue Management in Turbulent Times* (5th Ed.). Nelson Education, 2013.
2. Lydia Miljan, *Public Policy in Canada. An Introduction* (6th Ed.), Oxford University Press, 2012.

Additional readings and course materials will be uploaded throughout the term to a BbL site accessible to all registered students.

⁷ Howlett, Michael, Ramesh, M., Perl, Anthony. (2009). *Studying Public Policy – Policy Cycles & Policy Subsystems*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, at 12-13.

Method of Evaluation:

The grading procedure for this course is designed to encourage everyone to gain an understanding of both the theoretical and practical dimensions of public policy as reflected in the readings for each week. The allocation of grades will be as follows:

	GRADUATE	POLI 4240
Policy Brief – October 1, 2014	10%	15%
Policy Paper - October 29, 2014	30%	40%
Group Report – November 19, 2014	20%	Not assigned
Group Presentation – November 26, 2014	10%	Not assigned
Final Examination – December 4 – 14, 2014	30%	45%

Policy Brief – (750 – 800 words):

You will be given a factual scenario and asked to identify, define and analyze the policy issue. Pal, Box 9.5 (p. 377) gives an indication of the desired content. Your assignment is to prepare a written brief for a senior government official responsible for the issue. Directions on format will be provided in class.

The brief must be submitted **before class on October 1, 2014.**

Policy Paper (< 2500 words):

This is a graduate-level paper on a topic chosen by the student. Papers of this length need to follow the general conventions of scholarship for a formal written paper at the graduate level, including having a minimum of ten referenced sources, properly footnoted citations,⁸ and a bibliography of reviewed works.

A guide for the preparation of papers will be presented in class, highlighting the major items on which your papers will be evaluated, i.e. format, theme, content and organization. You should also consult the student handbook for additional guidance.

You have two options to approach the paper. More details will be provided in class:

1. Research Paper

This option focuses on an academic approach to public policy studies. The topic can build on any of the major elements/themes/issues emanating from the readings or lectures in the session. For example, the paper can focus on specific public policy

⁸ My preference is to use the APA style of citation.

http://libraries.dal.ca/content/dam/dalhousie/pdf/library/Style_Guides/apa_style6.pdf

theories, contexts, cases or policy fields. Note that the readings for the class are only a starting point for the paper. This is expected to be a research paper and in-depth research and exposition are necessary for a quality paper covering the chosen field.

2. Policy Issue Paper

Your assignment is to draft a paper to advance the discussion on a policy issue of your choosing. In the Westminster tradition, 'white papers' are issued by the government to provide policy information to "help to create an awareness of policy issues among parliamentarians and the public and to encourage an exchange of information and analysis."⁹

The usage of white papers has diminished substantially in Canada over the past fifteen years and those that are published are less of a policy document than a government communications piece. A listing of federal government white papers follows:

<http://www.parl.gc.ca/parlinfo/Compilations/FederalGovernment/PaperList.aspx?Menu=Fed-Doc-White&Paper=c6a4db8e-e464-430b-bbfe-ca77532e9ccb>

Recent provincial examples would be:

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/natr/land/clt/pdf/Community-Lands-Trust-White-Paper.pdf>

<http://pettapiece.ca/whitepapers/>

<http://engage.gov.bc.ca/disabilitywhitepaper/accessibility-2024/>

<http://www.ag.gov.bc.ca/public/WhitePaperOne.pdf>

You are not expected to develop policy (as in a traditional white paper), but to define a public problem, state underlying principles and objectives, analyze context, outline and evaluate existing policies and programs and propose new policy directions or reinforce existing ones. Pal, Box 9.1 (p. 354) gives an indication of the desired content.

Your paper must be submitted **before class on October 29, 2014.**

Group Report (Graduate students only):

This experiential learning assignment will require you to work in teams of four or five. A government policy analyst will be assigned to work with each team. Teams may either self-select or will be assigned by the instructor. Further instructions on this will be given in class.

The assignment simulates the early stages in the policy cycle. Each team will be given a brief set of facts, statistics, observations or other pieces of information e.g. a discussion of unemployment in Yarmouth County, or statistics on clinical obesity. Your team will conduct background research, analyze various contexts, discuss considerations and develop recommendations for further policy development. The exact nature of the work to be performed will be different in each case, and will be determined in consultation with your policy coach.

⁹ Doerr, Audrey D. (1981). *The Machinery of Government*. Toronto: Methuen, at 153.

Each team will prepare a written policy memorandum on the assigned issue. Generally, the memo will synthesize the issue to its most succinct core, outline key considerations for government to consider and suggest next steps for further investigation.

Maximum length will be 10 pages double-spaced, plus appendices, which could include a bibliography or a literature review. Your memo will follow the format recommended by your coach, but should include the following major components: issue, background, contexts, considerations and recommendations.

The memorandum must be submitted to the instructor electronically and in hard copy **before class on November 19, 2014.**

Group Presentation (Graduate students only):

Each team will be present their report in class in PechaKucha style **on November 26, 2014.** The presentation will be 10% of the grade. Each teammate will receive the same mark.

Final Examination:

A two hour final examination will be scheduled during the fall examination period between December 4 and 14, 2014. It will cover all aspects of the course addressed during lectures, assigned readings, assignments and other materials distributed during class. Further information on the final examination will be provided during the term.

General Rules

Students are expected to submit class work on the assigned deadlines. Students who miss a deadline because of illness must provide a medical certificate as outlined in the *2014-2015 Dalhousie University Calendars*.

Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

Date	Topic
September 10	<p>Course overview and introduction</p> <p>Readings: Fyfe, T. (2013, September 13). The Critical Role of Policy Advice. Canadian Government Executive, 9(7). http://www.canadiangovernmentexecutive.ca/category/item/1339-the-critical-role-of-policy-advice.html</p> <p>Video: Munk Debate on Economic Inequality:</p> <p>Taxing the Rich “Be it resolved, tax the rich (more)...”</p>
September 17	<p>Public Policy Studies – Basic Concepts</p> <p>Readings: Pal, chapter 1; Miljan, chapter 1; Torjman, <i>What is Policy?</i> (on BbL)</p> <p>Public Policy Cycle – Problem Definition and Agenda Setting</p> <p>Readings: Pal, chapter 3</p>
September 24	<p>Writing and Briefing Policy</p> <p>Readings: Pal, pp. 369 – 383.</p> <p>Public Policy Cycle – Problem Definition and Agenda Setting</p> <p>Readings: Howlett, pp. 100 – 108 (on BbL); Snowden and Boone, <i>A Leader’s Framework</i> (on BbL).</p> <p>Macroeconomic Policy</p> <p>Readings: Miljan, chapter 6.</p>

Date	Topic
October 1	<p>Public Policy Studies – Theories and Ideologies of Public Policy Readings: Miljan, chapter 2. Johnson, chapter 2 (on BbL)</p> <p>Macroeconomic Policy (cont.)</p>
October 8	<p>Public Policy Studies – The Context of Public Policy-Making Readings: Pal, pp. 43 – 68; Miljan, chapter 3; Johnson, pp. 36 – 56 (BbL)</p> <p>Social Policy Readings: Miljan, chapter 7.</p>
October 15	<p>Public Policy Studies– The Context of Public Policy-Making (cont.)</p> <p>Social Policy Guest Lecturer: Brenda Murray, Director (Policy, Planning & Research), NS Department of Community Services</p>
October 22	<p>Public Policy Cycle – The Formulation and Architecture of Policy Design; External Relationships and Policy Networks Readings: Pal, chapter 6; Kania & Kramer, Collective Impact (on BbL).</p> <p>Health Policy Readings: Pal, pp. 403 – 405; Miljan, chapter 8</p>

Date	Topic
October 29	<p>Public Policy Cycle – Policy Instruments and Communication</p> <p>Readings: Pal, chapters 4 and pp. 347 – 369; Howlett, pp. 111-138 (BbL).</p> <p>Guest Lecturer: Lori Harrop, Director-General (Strategic Communications), Agriculture Canada</p> <p>Health Policy (cont.)</p> <p>Readings: Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology, Time for Transformative Change (March 2012) (BbL)</p>
November 5	<p>Public Policy Cycle – Implementation</p> <p>Readings: Pal, pp. 185 – 195; Miljan, chapter 4</p> <p>Environmental Policy</p> <p>Readings: Pal, pp. 399 – 402; Miljan, chapter 11.</p>
November 12	<p>Public Policy Cycle – Decision Making</p> <p>Guest Lecturer – Graham Steele, former NS MLA and Minister of Finance</p> <p>Readings: Excerpts from “<i>What I Learned About Politics</i>” (BbL)</p> <p>Environmental Policy (cont.)</p>
November 19	<p>Public Policy Cycle – Evaluation</p> <p>Readings: Pal, chapter 7 and pp. 408 – 414; Miljan, chapter 5.</p> <p>Aboriginal Policy</p> <p>Readings: Miljan, chapter 10.</p>

Date	Topic
November 26	Group Presentations – PechaKucha
December 3	<p data-bbox="561 432 948 464">Student Ratings & Evaluation</p> <p data-bbox="561 537 1094 569">Policy Innovation, Trends and Directions</p> <p data-bbox="602 590 1373 621">Readings: Wouters, <i>Policy Making in the 21st Century</i> (BbL)</p> <p data-bbox="561 695 850 726">Judicial Policy Making</p> <p data-bbox="602 747 932 779">Readings: posted on BbL.</p>

Accommodation:

Students may request accommodation as a result of barriers related to disability, religious obligation, or any characteristic under the human rights legislation.

Students who require academic accommodation for either classroom participation or the writing of tests and exams should make their request to the Advising and Access Services Center (AASC) prior to or at the outset of the regular academic year. Please visit www.dal.ca/access for more information and to obtain the Request for Accommodation form.

A note taker may be required as part of a student's accommodation. There is an honorarium of \$75/course/term (with some exceptions). If you are interested, please contact AASC at 494-2836 for more information or send an email to notetaking@dal.ca

Please note that your classroom may contain specialized accessible furniture and equipment. It is important that these items remain in the classroom, untouched, so that students who require their usage will be able to fully participate in the class.

Student Support:

Writing Centre:

The writing centre works to develop writing skills that meet university expectations in one-on-one sessions, in small groups, and in classes. The centre's website (www.writingcentre.dal.ca) offers information on seminars.

Studying for Success:

University life can often be challenging. However, with help from the Studying for Success program, you too can become a more effective learner. Attend our workshops or drop in for individual study skills sessions, where we can help you with Time Management, Critical Reading, Note taking, Preparing for Exams, and much more. We at SFS would like to make your university experience a more rewarding one. Don't wait until it's too late! Let Studying for Success help you find smarter ways to study.

For more information or to make appointments, please:

- visit our website: www.dal.ca/sfs
- visit our main office in the Killam Library, Room G28 (main floor)
- call 494-3077 or
- email the Coordinator at: sfs@dal.ca

Intellectual Honesty:

A university must be a model of intellectual honesty. As such, Dalhousie University shares in the academic values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness and responsibility. Violations of intellectual honesty are offensive to the entire academic community, not just to the individual faculty member and students in whose class an offence occurs. Failure to meet the University's standards with respect to these values can result in an academic offence.

Plagiarism

Members of academic communities are privileged to share in knowledge generated through the efforts of many. In return, each member of the community has the responsibility to acknowledge the source of the information used and to contribute knowledge that can in turn, be trusted and used by others. Consequently, the University attaches great importance to the contribution of original thought to learning and scholarship. It attaches equal importance to the appropriate acknowledgement of sources from which facts and opinions have been obtained.

Dalhousie University defines plagiarism as the submission or presentation of the work of another as if it were one's own. Plagiarism is considered a serious academic offence that may lead to the assignment of a failing grade, suspension or expulsion from the University. If a penalty results in a student no longer meeting the requirements of a degree that has been awarded, the University may rescind that degree.

Some examples of plagiarism are:

- failure to attribute authorship when using a broad spectrum of sources such as written or oral work, computer codes/programs, artistic or architectural works, scientific projects, performances, web page designs, graphical representations, diagrams, videos, and images;

- downloading all or part of the work of another from the Internet and submitting as one's own; and
- the use of a paper prepared by any person other than the individual claiming to be the author.

Failure to cite sources as required in the preparation of essays, term papers and dissertations or theses may be considered to be plagiarism. Students who are in any doubt about how to acknowledge sources should discuss the matter in advance with the faculty members for whom they are preparing assignments. Students may also take advantage of resources available through the Writing Centre at writingcentre.dal.ca or Dalhousie Libraries at <http://infolit.library.dal.ca/tutorials/QuoteNoteA/>.

Policy on Student Submission of Assignments¹⁰

Professors and TAs are highly skilled at recognizing discrepancies between writing styles, inappropriate citations, and obvious word-for-word copying. All students will be evaluated on their own original work. Assignments must be submitted in both written and electronic (computer-readable) form. The professor reserves the right to use third-party originality checking software on all assignments. This does not preclude use of alternate means to identify lapses in originality and attribution. Plagiarism is likely to be detected. The results of such assessments may be used as evidence in any disciplinary action taken by the University Senate.

Students are free, without penalty of grade, to choose an alternative method of attesting to the authenticity of their work. Students shall inform the instructor no later than the last day to add/drop classes of their intent to choose an alternate method. Students who so elect will be provided with at least two possible alternatives that are not unduly onerous and that are appropriate for the type of written work. Alternatives shall be chosen from the following:

- a) Submitting copies of multiple drafts demonstrating development of the work;
- b) Submitting an annotated bibliography;
- c) Submitting copies of sources; and
- d) One alternative devised by the instructor, provided it is not unduly onerous on the student.

What happens if I am accused of plagiarism?

Instructors are required to forward any suspected cases of plagiarism to the Academic Integrity Officer (AIO) for the Faculty. You will be informed of the allegation by the AIO and a meeting will be convened. You may contact the Dalhousie Student Advocacy Service who may be able to assist you. Until the case is resolved, your final grade will be an "INC". If you are judged to have committed an offence, penalties may include a loss of credit, F in a course, suspension or expulsion from the University, or even the revocation of a degree.

¹⁰ Dalhousie University *Policy on Student Submission of Assignments and Use of Originality Checking Software*, as amended by Senate, November 26, 2012

How can I avoid plagiarism?

- Give appropriate credit to the sources used in your assignment
- Use RefWorks to keep track of your research and edit and format bibliographies in the citation style required by the instructor - <http://www.library.dal.ca/How/RefWorks>
- If you are ever unsure about ANYTHING, contact your instructor or TA
- Prepare your paper completely independently
- Make sure you understand Dalhousie's policies on academic integrity

Where can I turn for help?

- Academic Integrity website - <http://academicintegrity.dal.ca>
- Links to policies, definitions, online tutorials, tips on citing and paraphrasing, proofreading, writing styles, citations are at Dalhousie Libraries - <http://www.library.dal.ca>

Grading Policies:

As this is a cross-listed class, the requirements for graduate students are somewhat different from those for undergraduates:

1. Undergraduates will not be assigned the group project and class presentation, and the weighting of other assignments will be increased accordingly.
2. In all assignments, graduate students are expected to evince a deeper analytical ability when evaluating readings; to show familiarity with a wider variety of sources; and to articulate a greater complexity of thought, in both verbal and written forms.
3. The writing style for graduate students should illustrate greater sophistication, both in the construction of the argument and in the clarity and lucidity of the writing.
4. Graduate students are expected to be prepared for each lecture; and to read beyond the minimal expectations set out for undergraduates. Attendance is crucial. Graduate students should be willing to participate actively in the discussions, rather than waiting to be called upon to speak.
5. At the graduate level, students should show an understanding of the nuances of criticism (i.e., how to accomplish an intellectually incisive criticism in a respectful and constructive manner).
6. Research papers for graduate students should show evidence of good research skills; of the capacity for revision; and of the analytical capability noted in (2) above.

Faculty of Graduate Studies Grade Policy:

Graduate students must achieve a minimum, or passing, grade of B- in all classes required as part of their degree program. Any lower grade will be recorded as a failure, with the exception of those classes with an approved pass/fail grading scheme.

A+	90-100	Represents very high achievement. Signifies original work of distinction, well organized and presented.
A	85-89	Superior performance indicating high level of command of the subject matter and an ability for critical analysis.
A-	80-84	Very good. Has firm command of course principles and techniques.
B+	77-79	Average performance.
B	73-76	Satisfactory. Acceptable performance for a Master's program.
B-	70-72	Marginal performance.
F	< 70	Failure. Unacceptable for credit towards a Master's degree.

Dalhousie University Undergraduate Grade Policy:

Grades	Numeric Range	GPA	Norm – Referenced	Criterion Referenced
A+	90-100	4.30	Excellent	Considerable evidence of original thinking; demonstrated outstanding capacity to analyze and synthesize; outstanding grasp of subject matter; evidence of extensive knowledge base.
A	85-89	4.00		
A -	80-84	3.70		
B +	77-79	3.30	Good	Evidence of grasp of subject matter; some evidence of critical capacity and analytical ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with the literature.
B	73-76	3.00		
B -	70-72	2.70		
C+	65-69	2.30	Satisfactory	Evidence of some understanding of the subject matter; ability to develop solutions to simple problems; benefiting from his/her university experience.
C	60-64	2.00		
C -	55-59	1.70		
D	50-54	1.00	Marginal Pass	Evidence of minimally acceptable (except in programs where a minimum grade of “C” is required) familiarity with subject matter, critical and analytical skills.
F	<50	0.00	Inadequate	Insufficient evidence of understanding of the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytical skills, limited or irrelevant use of literature. In cases where a student does not complete the work and no other grade is appropriate, F should be reported.
INC		0.00	Incomplete	
W			Neutral and no credit obtained	Withdrew after deadline
ILL			Neutral and no credit obtained	Compassionate reasons, illness
P			Neutral	Pass
T			Neutral on admission	Transfer credits