



Foundations of Public Policy

Course Reference Number (4): 20141

Winter Quarter: Wednesdays, 6–10p

4 Credit Hours

SEM 2 E2105



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This syllabus is subject to revision.

Course Description: Public policy analysis is often presented as objective, data-driven, and empirical. When analysts work hard to put forth the best ideas based on the best data, it can come as a surprise to see that these ideas are not implemented, but in the real world, public policy is just one part of a continuous struggle between many varied interests that is based in the process of politics. To be effective, applied public policy analysis must be both objective and engaged with the political world.

This course is intended to give students the tools to understand, analyze, and be able to advocate for policy in the political environment. Learning about stakeholders and participants in the policy process, including elected officials, lobbyists, advocates, appointees, and others is a critical first step, but understanding their motivations and interests, as well as external institutional, social, economic, and cultural factors is important as well.

This course will be grounded in the issues and topics of the Washington Legislature during the 2019 legislative session. This class is relatively light on reading, but very intensive on writing. You will have individual assignments due every week, all of which are the building blocks to your final assignment, an in-class presentation about your bill. This course is explicitly designed around skill-building, and skills such as bill tracking, memo writing, testimony preparation, op-ed writing, and interviewing, while challenging, are identified by employers as desirable and useful in the world of public administration and public policy. By the end of the class, you should be an expert in your bill of choice and able to clearly explain it to your classmates.

NOTES ON READINGS:

All journal articles or web links will be posted to Canvas

There are two books to purchase: Kingdon (2011) and Clayton, Donovan and Lovrich (2018).

All books are also available on Open Reserve through the Evergreen Library.

Readings

- Behn, Bob. 2012. *The Craft of Memo Writing*. Technical report John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University.
- Clayton, Cornell W., Todd Donovan and Nicholas P. Lovrich, eds. 2018. *Governing the Evergreen State: Political Life in Washington*. Washington State University Press.
- Kingdon, John W. 2011. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*. 2nd ed. New York: Pearson.
- Legislative Information Center. 2017. *How to Testify in Committee*. Technical report Washington State Legislature Olympia, WA: .
- Legislative Information Center. 2018a. *Citizen's Guide to Lawmaking*. Technical report Washington State Legislature Olympia, WA: .
- Legislative Information Center. 2018b. *How to Search for Bills on the Legislative Web Page*. Technical report Washington State Legislature Olympia, WA: .
- Legislative Information Center. 2018c. *Selected Bill Tracking*. Technical report Washington State Legislature Olympia, WA: .
- Legislative Information Center. 2018d. *Tutorial: GovDelivery: How to Receive E-mail Notification for Committee Schedules and Agendas*. Technical report Washington State Legislature Olympia, WA: .
- Office of Program Research. 2018. *Summary of Legislation – 2018 Regular Session*. Technical report Washington State Legislature Olympia, WA: .
- Seeberger, Edward D. 1997. *Sine Die: A Guide to the Washington State Legislative Process*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press.
- Senate Committee Services. 2018. *2018 Bills Passed the Regular Legislative Session*. Technical report Washington State Legislature Olympia, WA: .

Course Policies:

• Evaluations

- Students will be evaluated based on regular attendance and reading, timely submission of thoughtful writing projects, and active engagement with their classmates.
- Students are required to submit a self-evaluation and a faculty evaluation. You can submit these evaluations via the College's online evaluation system at my.evergreen.edu. Students are not required to submit self-evaluations to their transcripts. An evaluation conference is optional.

• Assignments

- No late assignments will be accepted except under extraordinary circumstances. Please contact me as soon as possible if this occurs.

- **Attendance and Absences**

- Regular attendance is expected. You are allowed to miss 1 class during the semester without penalty.
- Students are responsible for all missed work, regardless of the reason for absence. It is also the absentee's responsibility to get all missing notes or materials.

Academic Honesty Policy Summary:

From the TESC Statement on Academic Honesty: "Academic honesty is essential in a learning community. It makes coherent discourse possible and is a necessary condition for all sharing, dialogue and evaluation. All forms of academic dishonesty, including cheating, fabricating, facilitating academic dishonesty and plagiarism, are violations of the Social Contract. Cheating is defined as using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids in any academic exercise. Fabrication is defined as faking data, footnotes or other evidence. Plagiarism is defined as representing the works or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise. It includes, but is not limited to, copying materials directly, failure to cite sources of arguments and data, and failure to explicitly acknowledge joint work or authorship of assignments."

TESC Statement on Academic Honesty

<http://www.evergreen.edu/advising/academic-honesty>

TESC The social contract – College philosophy

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=174-121-010>

TESC Student Conduct Code

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=174-123>

Authorship

The student must clearly establish authorship of a work. Referenced work must be clearly documented, cited, and attributed, regardless of media or distribution. Even in the case of work licensed as public domain or Copyleft, (See: <http://creativecommons.org/>) the student must provide attribution of that work in order to uphold the standards of intent and authorship.

Laptop and Electronic Device Policy

Laptops and Electronic Devices are *not permitted* during class. Research indicates that the use of laptops during class interferes with the learning process for students, leading to lower levels of understanding and engagement with the learning community. Further, research indicates that the presence of laptops is distracting to other students, harming their ability to learn as well. For more information on the rationale for this policy, please read: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/22/business/laptops-not-during-lecture-or-meeting.html>

The following are the only exceptions to this policy:

- Students with an Accommodation Letter from Access Services.
- Specific in-class exercises which require use of a laptop, only as noted by the instructor.

Written Assignments (See Course Schedule for Due Dates)

All writing assignments should strictly follow the page limit guidelines, and be submitted in 1.5 spaced, 12 point font. No matter what the format, students should consistently work to become better writers. Readers both academic and professional will always appreciate clear, straightforward writing with *short* paragraphs that avoids the use of jargon. I recommend having on hand *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk Jr. and E. B. White, which is small, inexpensive, and available in many editions.

Assignment 1: Issue Identification and Legislative Committees

2 pages

Throughout the course, you will focus your work on a particular state bill that *you* select, based on an issue that interests you. Most of your assignments will form the building blocks of your final individual project, which is a presentation about the status of your bill on the last day of class.

Part 1: Issue Identification (1.5 pages)

Your first task is to select a policy issue that you want to work on, that is likely to be discussed in the 2019 Washington State Legislative Session. You can research topics of interest that may become bills by going to the websites for associations, for example:

- Washington State Association of Counties
- Washington Library Association
- Washington Education Association
- ... and many more.

Almost all policy issues have an association that in some way advocates for a point of view, and you can find information by searching for the 2019 legislative agenda of any association that you are interested in. Focus on the concept of *Agenda Setting* (Kingdon, 2011, Chapter 1) to select an issue that is likely to have forward movement in this Legislative Session.

This part of the paper should address the following questions *based on what you know at this point*: Why is this issue interesting to you *personally*? Why is this issue important to the citizens of Washington? Who do you think would benefit from a potential change to the law in this area? Who might be harmed?

Part 2: Legislative Committees (.5 page)

The 2019 Washington State Legislative Session is scheduled to begin on January 14, 2019. On the first day of class, the legislature is not yet in session, so you will start by researching the committees that cover the topics you are interested in. Read *A Citizen's Guide to Lawmaking* (Legislative Information Center, 2018a) carefully to understand the roles of committees in the Washington State Legislature. Next, read the section of *Summary of Legislation – 2018 Regular Session* (Office of Program Research, 2018) or *2018 Bills Passed the Regular Legislative Session* (Senate Committee Services, 2018) that applies to the House or Senate committee that most closely fits with your topic of interest. **IMPORTANT:** *Some committees will have changed areas of coverage since the 2018 session.*

Based on this, the second part of the paper should identify the committee that you think will handle your issue. Why did you select this committee? Who is the committee chair and where are they from? Are there any bills that are already in this committee, and if so, what are they?

Part 3: Tracking Your Issue in the News

You should be closely tracking the public discussion of your issue or bill in the news. The simplest way to do this is through a Google News Alert, which will send regular notifications to your email about your topic or bill. Try different Google searches until you get the kinds of results you are looking for, then use those search terms to set up the alert. Submit a screenshot to indicate that the notification is set up.

Assignment 2: Bill Selection and Tracking

2 pages total

Part 1: Bill Selection and Justification (2 pages)

Select a bill that will be heard in the 2019 session of the Washington Legislature. Your bill can start in either the House or Senate. Refer to *How to Search for Bills on the Legislative Web Page* (Legislative Information Center, 2018b) on Canvas to search for bills. Make sure to include the following information:

- A description of the legislation – summarize what the legislation will do, what is the law now, and what are the proposed changes.
- What is the problem or problems the legislation is trying to address, how long has this problem been present (history of the problem), has this problem been addressed before through legislation? If yes, what was the outcome?
- Identify agencies, networks, coalitions or other groups (*the policy community of specialists*) that might be interested in advocating for this bill and those who would advocate against this bill. What is their motivation to support for or against?
- Why now? What is the *political stream*, as identified by Kingdon (2011, Chapter 4), that this bill appears to be part of?

Important: Not all bills will make it out of committee and proceed to a vote. If, over the course of the quarter, your bill is stalling with no scheduled hearings, you should be flexible to select another bill on a similar issue for your assignments. You will notice that some bills have already been pre-filed.

Part 2: Tracking Bills and Committee Hearings Once you have selected your bill, use the Washington Legislature website to keep track of your bills and the activity of the committee(s) you are following.

1. Set up bill tracking for the bill(s) you are following. Read *Selected Bill Tracking* (Legislative Information Center, 2018c) on Canvas.
2. Use GovDelivery to set up e-mail notification of committee actions. Read *Tutorial: GovDelivery: How to Receive E-mail Notification for Committee Schedules and Agendas* (Legislative Information Center, 2018d) on Canvas.

Submit screenshots of both to indicate that the notifications are set up.

Assignment 3: In-Class Exercise

This week will be devoted in full to an in-class exercise entitled “Legislative Strategy: State Government Reorganization.” It is *critical* that you read the posted case in full in order to effectively participate in the class session.

Part 1: Short Answers

After you finish reading the case, “Legislative Strategy: State Government Reorganization (A),” take the online quiz in Canvas entitled “Legislative Strategy Case Questions.”

Part 2: Preparation Memo for In-Class Exercise

In addition to reading the case that is posted to Canvas, you will be assigned to a group for the role-playing exercise. *You will be provided with additional information that is private and specific to your group.* Each group has a different task, which could be preparing a strategy, developing testimony, writing a fact sheet, or preparing talking points for a meeting. Based on the case posted to Canvas and the additional reading material provided to you, write your assigned task in a brief paper formulating your own individual response – you will compare notes with your group members in class for the exercise.

Assignment 4: Policy Memo to State Agency

2 pages

Almost all bills will require the action or attention of a state agency. For this assignment, you will focus on the role of *bureaucrats* (appointed or career civil service) specifically. These are agency directors, deputy directors, assistant directors, and staff who will eventually be required to modify their activities or adopt new policies in order to put eventual legislation into action.

First, identify the state agency that is most likely to be affected by the bill that you are following. This may be in the text of the bill itself. You can find information on all state agencies through *Access Washington: State Agencies, Boards and Commissions*, available through Canvas.

Next, identify the individual to whom you will address your memo. State department directors are appointed by the Governor, while others such as deputy directors and assistant directors (who may more directly oversee a specific issue area) are generally career civil service bureaucrats. Kingdon (2011, Chapter 2) makes important distinctions about the role of each in influencing policy agendas and alternatives.

With this in mind, write a policy memo to the individual you have selected. Include all relevant background on the bill, including information about the bill’s sponsor(s), committees, and activity to date. Be sure to include what specific part of the agency or its mission will be affected by the potential change. Include some of the information from *Assignment 2* about external stakeholders. *Depending on the individual you have selected (appointee or career)*, make recommendations about next steps to take to shape the agenda on the bill *or* advance preferred alternatives.

For guidance on writing a policy memo, refer to Behn (2012), which is available on Canvas.

Assignment 5: Legislative Testimony

2 pages

Preparing testimony for a legislative body allows citizens to directly participate in the political process through official and public channels. Submitting written testimony or testifying orally

provides the opportunity to develop arguments, expand support for your cause, and learn about opposing points of view, while influencing decisions in the public interest. By way of justification, your testimony should appropriately make reference to one of the concepts identified in Kingdon (2011, Chapter 5), such as problems, indicators, focusing events, crises, symbols, or feedback. For this assignment, you will prepare written testimony for the Washington State Legislature on the bill you are following. Your testimony should be addressed to a specific committee or legislator. For guidance on developing legislative testimony, read *How to Testify in Committee* (Legislative Information Center, 2017).

Once submitted, *your testimony will be shared with another student* in preparation for *Assignment 6*. You will also select another student's testimony for your own *Assignment 5*. You should also prepare to professionally deliver your testimony and prepare for questions in Week 6.

Assignment 6: Committee Grilling

2 pages

For *Assignment 5*, you selected the written testimony of another student. For this assignment, you will be required to critique that testimony and question the student in a realistic committee setting. Based on the testimony you selected, conduct research on the legislator and/or committee that the testimony is addressed to, as you will be role-playing this individual in the testimony simulation.

Your paper should answer the following questions:

- Who is the legislator in question? Where are they from?
- What, if any public statements have they made about the bill in question? (*Hint: Do a Google News search and look at their legislative website.*)
- What are their policy priorities? (*Hint: Look at their legislative website and/or campaign websites.*)
- What bills are they sponsoring?

In addition, your paper must include a list of 5–10 questions for the student giving testimony. *Be critical!* Even if the legislator you select seems like they might be on the same side as the individual giving testimony, they might have more detailed questions and/or might not want to look “soft” in a public hearing. Developing useful questions requires *your own* research on their bill, using the same lens that you applied to your own bill in prior assignments.

Assignment 7: Op-Ed

250 words or 650 words

This is your chance to look for an opportune *policy window* (Kingdon, 2011, Chapter 8) in order to make your argument. Write an op-ed piece for submission to *The Olympian* (250 words) or *The Seattle Times* (650 words). The topic should be closely related to the bill(s) you are following. This piece *must be submitted* to the paper of your choosing, and the confirmation of receipt included with your assignment. Be sure to follow the guidelines for how to write an effective op-ed, for example: UMass-Amherst: How to Write an Op-Ed Article

Seattle Times submission form
The Olympian submission form

Assignment 8: Advocate Interview

2 pages

Assignment 1 and *Assignment 2* gave you a sense of some of the advocacy groups that are working on your issue and possibly your bill of interest. For this assignment, you should conduct a *semi-structured interview* of one person who is involved in advocacy for your issue, on either side. They could be lobbyists, association members, concerned citizens, etc. but *cannot* be any state employee. If possible, one place to find potential interview subjects is individuals who have already testified before the committee for the bill you are following. Your alerts from GovDelivery (*Assignment 2*) should indicate if there have been hearings and, if so, who testified.

Your interview strategy should aim to understand the stakeholder's interests, their definition of the problem, and the stakeholder's understanding of possible solutions to the problem. Develop main questions, follow-up questions, and prompts to ensure that you gain a solid understanding of this information. Your interview should be about a half hour in length, and recording is not required if you can take excellent notes.

What you turn in should be a paper that first summarizes the interview from the point of view of the interviewee: What is *their* view of the problem, *their* interests, and *their* solutions. What type of interest group does this individual represent, according to Kingdon (2011, Chapter 3)? What are their resources and activities? Next, you should assess the advocate's position from the standpoint of everything else you know about your bill so far. Does the advocate's position make sense to you? Why or why not? How does the advocate see the interests and positions of others with an interest in the bill?

Assignment 9: Best Practices Memo to Bill Sponsor

2 pages

U.S. Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis once called states "Laboratories of democracy." Legislators and policymakers often either base their initiatives on the best practices of other states or look to the experiences of other states for new ideas.

For this assignment, you should research how the policy or policies of the bill you are following have been implemented in other states. Write a policy memo for the bill sponsor(s) that discusses the best practices of at least one other state on this issue. To research best practices in other states, one option is to try going to the national associations that correspond to the associations you used for your original research in *Assignment 1*. Identify the best practice(s), why it is successful in another state(s), and how it might or might not translate into the legal and regulatory framework of Washington. Be sure to note how closely the bill you are tracking, in its current form, would or would not address the issue in the same way as the best practice(s) you have identified – what changes would need to be made?

Assignment 10: In-Class Presentation

PowerPoint or other Presentation of at least 10 slides and additional materials as needed

Congratulations! After 10 weeks of work, you are now an expert in your bill.

Your final assignment is a class presentation based on your research and learning about the bill over the entire Winter Quarter. Develop an *engaging* presentation (slides, handouts, brochures, or whatever you see fit) that teaches your classmates about bill – how and why did you select this

bill? What happened to the bill once you started tracking it? What did you learn about the role of state agencies, politicians, advocates, and best practices from other states? How has the media covered this bill? What do you think the ultimate fate of this bill will be and why?

Tentative Course Outline:

The weekly coverage might change as it depends on the progress of the class. However, you must keep up with the reading assignments.

Session	Content
January 9	<p>Introductions, Course overview: The Policy Process</p> <p><i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kingdon (2011, Chapter 1), Clayton, Donovan and Lovrich (2018, Chapter 1), Seeberger (1997, p. 37–50), <i>A Citizen’s Guide to Law-making, Summary of Legislation – 2018 Regular Session or 2018 Bills Passed the Regular Legislative Session</i> (selection for your committee) <p><i>Assignments Due:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assignment 1
January 16	<p>Module 2: Theories of Public Policymaking</p> <p><i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kingdon (2011, Chapter 4), Clayton, Donovan and Lovrich (2018, Chapter 8), Seeberger (1997, p. 16–36), <i>How to Search for Bills on the Legislative Web Page, Selected Bill Tracking, Tutorial: GovDelivery: How to Receive E-mail Notification for Committee Schedules and Agendas</i> <p><i>Assignments Due:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assignment 2
January 23	<p>Module 3: In-Class Exercise: Legislative Strategy: State Government Reorganization</p> <p><i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Legislative Strategy: State Government Reorganization (A)</i> (Canvas), Additional Readings specific to your group assignment <p><i>Assignments Due:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assignment 3

January 30	<p>Module 4: Institutional and Cultural Contexts <i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kingdon (2011, Chapter 2), Clayton, Donovan and Lovrich (2018, Chapter 9) <p><i>Assignments Due:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignment 4
February 6	<p>Module 5: Policy Problems and Opportunities <i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kingdon (2011, Chapters 5 & 6), <i>How to Testify in Committee</i>, <p><i>Assignments Due:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignment 5
February 13	<p>Module 6: The Political Stream <i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kingdon (2011, Chapter 7), Clayton, Donovan and Lovrich (2018, Chapter 4) <p><i>Assignments Due:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignment 6
February 20	<p>Module 7: Public Opinion <i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kingdon (2011, Chapter 8), Clayton, Donovan and Lovrich (2018, Chapter 6) <p><i>Assignments Due:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignment 7
February 27	<p>Module 8: The Politics from Outside Government <i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kingdon (2011, Chapter 3), Clayton, Donovan and Lovrich (2018, Chapter 4) <p><i>Assignments Due:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignment 8

<p>March 6</p>	<p>Module 9: Bureaucratic and Regulatory Politics <i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kingdon (2011, Chapter 9), Clayton, Donovan and Lovrich (2018, Chapter 11) <p><i>Assignments Due:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignment 9
<p>March 13</p>	<p>Module 10: Conclusion and Presentations <i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>None.</i> <p><i>Assignments Due:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignment 10