

Public Policy 2000

Institutions and Policymaking

Professor Darrell M. West
9-11:20 a.m. Tuesday

Office: Room 202, Taubman Center, 67 George Street
Office Hours: 2-3 p.m. Tuesday and by appointment
Phone: 863-1163
Email: Darrell_West@brown.edu

Course Rationale: This seminar will discuss how political, social, and economic institutions structure policymaking. It will cover issues, such as economic and budgetary policy, education, health care, race, gender, and social policy, technology policy, and welfare and Social Security. We will pay particular attention to policy controversies, how decisions get made, the assessment of policy choices, and possible policy solutions.

This seminar is designed to serve several purposes. First, it is designed to help you learn to write and articulate critical analysis: to determine purposes of a study and the meaning of results for our understanding of public policy. Second, it is intended to guide you in asking new questions - - to consider what important areas have been overlooked, to examine new ways of answering old questions, and to propose ways to advance our knowledge about policymaking. Third, this seminar is designed to help you think about solutions to pressing policy problems, and ways to overcome barriers to the enactment of new policies.

Required Readings: The articles we will be reading can be downloaded for free from www.JSTOR.org, a non-profit site for archived academic articles. You need to be logged on to a campus computer to access this website.

Course Format: Students are expected to attend class regularly and to have completed the reading assignments before class time. It is essential that students participate in each session's discussion and hand in assignments at the scheduled time.

Missed Classes: If you miss class for any reason, you are required to write me a two-page paper critiquing the readings for that week. Critique means evaluating, not summarizing the readings.

Course Assignments: There will be four assignments in this class: an oral presentation, an op-ed column, a policy advocacy memo, and a policy assessment paper.

Oral Presentation: Each student will make a five-minute presentation in class. There will be a sign-up sheet where students will choose which day they would like to make their presentation. It should be based on a book or article from outside of class that is relevant to the week's topic. Students should explain how this book or article gave them a better understanding of policymaking as well as a critique of the author's argument.

Op-Ed Column: Write an op-ed column on a current public policy issue. The column should be no longer than 750 words, which is the length of a typical newspaper column.

Policy Advocacy Memo: You are the chief of staff to a member of Congress. Write this legislator a memo on a current policy controversy outlining steps you think need to be taken to

address this policy challenge. Explain why these actions are desirable and what criteria justify these actions. The paper should be no more than five pages long.

Policy Assessment Paper: Each student will be required to write a policy assessment paper. This paper will apply the tools of policy analysis to a public policy controversy. Choose a policy area and analyze a policy controversy in that area. The paper should be no more than 10 pages in length.

Grading: Course grades will be based on the op-ed column (25%), policy advocacy memo (25%), policy assessment paper (25%), and class presentation and class participation (25%).

Reading Assignments:

September 11 The Study of Public Policy

Course goals, syllabus, and requirements

September 18 Agenda-Setting, Problem Definition, and Framing

Dan Wood and Alesha Doan, "The Politics of Problem Definition: Applying and Testing Threshold Models to Sexual Harassment", American Journal of Political Science, October, 2003 (*available at jstor.org*)

Brian Schaffner, "Priming Gender: Campaigning on Women's Issues in U.S. Senate Elections," American Journal of Political Science, Vol. 49, no. 4 (Oct, 2005), pp. 803-817 (*available at jstor.org*)

Dalton Conley, "Getting into the Black: Race, Wealth, and Public Policy", Political Science Quarterly, (Winter, 1999-2000) (*available at jstor.org*)

Dani Rodrik, "Trading in Illusions," Foreign Policy, No. 123 (March-April, 2001), pp. 54-62 (*available at jstor.org*)

September 25 Making Decisions and Explaining Policy Choices

Anthony King, "Ideas, Institutions and the Policies of Governments: A Comparative Analysis, Part III," British Journal of Political Science (October, 1973) (*available at jstor.org*)

Robert Lieberman, "Ideas, Institutions, and Political Order," American Political Science Review, Vol. 96, no. 4 (Dec, 2002), pp. 697-712 (*available at jstor.org*)

Stanley Feldman and Marco Steenbergen, "The Humanitarian Foundation of Public Support for Social Welfare," American Journal of Political Science, July, 2001 (*available at jstor.org*)

Robert Lieberman, "Race, Institutions, and the Administration of Social Policy," Social Science History, Vol. 19, no. 4 (Winter, 1995), pp. 511-542 (*available at jstor.org*)

October 2 Political Communications and Building Policy Support (op-ed due)

Michael Lipsky, "Protest as a Political Resource", American Political Science Review, (December, 1968) (*available at jstor.org*)

James Kuklinski, Paul Quirk, Jennifer Jerit, David Schwider, and Robert Rich, "Misinformation and the Currency of Democratic Citizenship," Journal of Politics, Vol. 62, no. 3 (August, 2000), pp. 790-816 (*available at jstor.org*)

Thomas Holbrook and Scott McClurg, "The Mobilization of Core Supporters: Campaigns, Turnout, and Electoral Composition in U.S. Presidential Elections", American Journal of Political Science, Vol. 49, no. 4 (Oct, 2005), pp. 689-703 (*available at jstor.org*)

Paul Freedman, Michael Franz, and Kenneth Goldstein, "Campaign Advertising and Democratic Citizenship," American Journal of Political Science, Vol. 48, no. 4 (Oct, 2004), pp. 723-741 (*available at jstor.org*)

October 9 Economic and Budgetary Policy

John Mark Hansen, "Individuals, Institutions, and Public Preferences over Public Finance," American Political Science Review, September, 1998 (*available at jstor.org*)

Duane Swank and Sven Steinmo, "The New Political Economy of Taxation in Advanced Capitalist Democracies," American Journal of Political Science, July, 2002 (*available at jstor.org*)

Franco Modigliani, "Reagan's Economic Policies: A Critique," Oxford Economic Papers, (Sept, 1988) (*available at jstor.org*)

Robert Berne and Leanna Stiefel, "Cutback Budgeting: The Long-Term Consequences," Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, Vol. 12, no. 4 (Autumn, 1993), pp. 664-684 (*available at jstor.org*)

October 16 Education Policy

Cecilia Rouse and Lisa Barrow, "U.S. Elementary and Secondary Schools: Equalizing Opportunity or Replicating the Status Quo," The Future of Children, Vol. 16, no. 2 (Autumn, 2006), pp. 99-123 (*available at jstor.org*)

Robert Haveman and Timothy Smeeding, "The Role of Higher Education in Social Mobility", The Future of Children, Vol. 16, no. 2 (Autumn, 2006), pp. 125-150 (*available at jstor.org*)

Kathryn McDermott, "Barriers to Large-Scale Success of Models for Urban School Reform," Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, Vol. 22, no. 1 (Spring, 2000), pp. 83-89 (*available at jstor.org*)

Charles Clotfelter, "Are Whites Still Fleeing? Racial Patterns and Enrollment Shifts in Urban Public Schools, 1987-1996", Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, Vol. 20, no. 2 (Spring, 2001), pp. 199-221 (*available at jstor.org*)

October 23 Health Care Policy

Jacob Hacker, "The Historical Logic of National Health Insurance: Structure and Sequence in the Development of British, Canadian, and U.S. Medical Policy," Studies in American Political Development (Spring, 1998) (*available at <http://journals.cambridge.org>*) (*look for Studies in American Political Development page and click on All Issues under Table of Contents*)

John Portz, Matthew Reidy, and David Rochefort, "How Managed Care Is Reinventing Medicaid and Other Public Health-Care Bureaucracies," Public Administration Review (Sept-Oct, 1999) (*available at jstor.org*)

Douglas Jaenicke and Alex Waddan, "President Bush and Social Policy: The Strange Case of the Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit," Political Science Quarterly, Vol. 121, no. 2 (2006), pp. 217-240 (*distributed in class*)

October 30 Race, Gender, and Social Policy (policy advocacy memo due)

Suzanne Dovi, "Preferable Descriptive Representatives: Will Just Any Woman, Black, or Latino Do?" American Political Science Review, Vol. 96, no. 4 (Dec, 2002), pp. 729-743 (*available at jstor.org*)

Donald Kinder and Nicholas Winter, "Exploring the Racial Divide: Blacks, Whites, and Opinion on National Policy," American Journal of Political Science, April, 2001 (*available at jstor.org*)

Jon Hurwitz and Shannon Smithey, "Gender Differences on Crime and Punishment", Political Research Quarterly, March, 1998 (*available at jstor.org*)

Linda Lopez and Adrian Pantoja, "Beyond Black and White: General Support for Race-Conscious Policies Among African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans and Whites," Political Research Quarterly, Vol. 57, no. 4 (December, 2004), pp. 633-642 (*available at jstor.org*)

November 6 Technology Policy

Mark Balnaves, Lucas Walsh, and Brian Shoesmith, "Participatory Technologies: The Use of the Internet in Civic Participation and Democratic Processes," paper prepared for the Australian Electronic Governance Conference, April, 2004 (*available at http://www.public-policy.unimelb.edu.au/egovernance/papers/03_Balnaves.pdf*)

Daniel Drezner and Henry Farrell, "The Power and Politics of Blogs," paper presented at the American Political Science Association, August, 2004 (*available at www.DanielDrezner.com/research/blogpaperfinal.pdf*)

Darrell M. West, "State and Federal E-Government, 2007," (*available at www.INSIDEPolitics.org*)

November 13 Welfare and Social Security

Karen Anderson, "The Politics of Retrenchment in a Social Democratic Welfare State: Reform of Swedish Pensions and Unemployment Insurance," Comparative Political Studies (November, 2001) (*available online at <http://cps.sagepub.com>*)

Martin Gilens, "'Race Coding' and White Opposition to Welfare," American Political Science Review, September, 1996 (*available at jstor.org*)

Martin Feldstein, "The Missing Piece in Policy Analysis: Social Security Reform", American Economics Review, (May, 1996) (*available at jstor.org*)

Signe-Mary McKernan and Caroline Ratcliffe, "The Effect of Specific Welfare Policies on Poverty," Urban Institute paper, April, 2006 (*available at www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411334_welfare_policies.pdf*)

November 20 Thanksgiving Holiday—No Class

November 27 Assessing Policy Results: Cost-Benefit Analysis and Risk Assessment

Kirk Harlow and Duane Windsor, “Integration of Cost-Benefit and Financial Analysis in Project Evaluation,” Public Administration Review, Sept-Oct, 1988 (*available at jstor.org*)

Milton Russell and Michael Gruber, “Risk Assessment in Environmental Policy-Making,” Science, (April 17, 1987) (*available at jstor.org*)

Deborah Rhode, “Adolescent Pregnancy and Public Policy,” Political Science Quarterly, Winter, 1993-94 (*available at jstor.org*)

December 4 Policy Assessment Paper Due