

School of Public Policy Courses – Fall 2020

ECON 600 Policy Consequences of Economic Analysis

Jane Lincove
Mondays, 4:30-7:00pm

This course will provide an analytic framework for policy analysis and public management with a focus on understanding economic markets, mitigating market failures, and avoiding government failures through effective public policies. Through problem sets, cases, and projects, students will: apply economic models to policy problems; use economic definitions of efficiency and equity as criteria for policy evaluation; identify sources of market failure, economic justifications for policy intervention, and appropriate remedies; and identify government failures and appropriate remedies.

PUBL 600 Research Methodology

Zoe McLaren
Tuesdays, 4:30-7:00pm

Research provides the foundation for informed public policy making. This class is designed to provide you with an introduction to research methodology, from the basics of research design to advanced methods for causal inference. This course provides a foundation for further study of research methodology. It prepares students for future courses including PUBL 604, 607, 608, and 611. By design, many topics will be covered at a foundational level; however, by the end of the course you will be prepared to evaluate the quality of existing research and propose studies of your own to address questions of interest. This course is designed to allow you to both understand and perform important research techniques. For instance, we will not only study sampling and understand the value of different types of sampling, but we will also learn how to implement sampling techniques through statistical software.

PUBL 601 Political and Social Context of the Policy Process

Roy Meyers
Thursdays, 4:30-7:00pm

The graduate catalog describes this MPP/PhD course as: “designed to introduce students to the processes by which policy is made in the United States. It introduces students to the policy-making system, including the institutional, structural and political contexts, as well as the policy-making environment. The various stages of the policy-making process from problem definition and agenda-setting to implementation are examined and discussed, and important theories and models of policy-making are presented. Significant concepts relating to the political analysis of public policy are discussed, such as the social construction of problems, group demands, political influence and resources, motivations and incentives for political behavior, and political feasibility”

To make this task manageable, we will focus on American domestic policy and national government and politics, though a few readings address state and local government and politics. The reading load is necessarily heavy in terms of page length, but most readings are very accessible. The Blackboard site for the class identifies many optional readings should you want to continue your exploration of the topics

for any week. PhD students who are considering writing a dissertation related to topics covered in this course should ask me for advice about additional relevant academic readings.

PUBL 603 Theory and Practice of Policymaking

Nancy Miller

Wednesdays, 4:30-7:00 pm

This course focuses on the basic principles and techniques of policy analysis. Most of the course attends to activities involved in policy analysis. In addition, the relationship between policy analysis and policy making, along with emerging professional and ethical issues, will be addressed.

PUBL 604 Statistical Analysis

Wednesdays, 7:10-9:40pm

An introduction to the concepts and methods of descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Bivariate and multivariate statistical techniques are discussed.

PUBL 606 - The Politics and Administration of Program Evaluation

Lauren Hamilton Edwards

Tuesdays, 7:10-9:40pm

An examination of the political and organizational processes affecting the conduct of program evaluation and the impact of evaluation on decision-making. Means of increasing the use of evaluation in decision-making are analyzed.

PUBL 610-01 Race and Education in Urban America

Pamela Bennett

Thursdays, 4:30-7:00pm

This course sits at the intersection of education policy and urban policy. It uses multiple disciplinary frameworks to explore issues of race and ethnicity in American education, particularly in urban settings. The course begins with interrogations of the concepts of race and ethnicity, and analyzes how those concepts are used to create and justify different opportunity structures. In doing so, the course examines how the turn to neoliberal urban policy shapes our thinking about how contemporary racial and ethnic disparities in education should be addressed.

PUBL 610-004 Health Metrics and Measures

Zoe McLaren

Mondays. 7:10-9:40 pm

Despite significant improvements in health status worldwide, large disparities in morbidity and mortality remain between vulnerable sub-populations and the population as a whole. This course will examine conceptual, technical and methodological issues related to detecting and measuring disparities in health status, health care access and health care quality. Lectures will focus on identifying key disparity measures that are used to inform public policy and mastering the analytical methods required to calculate them. Students will learn how to assess the appropriateness of various measures of disparity in

life expectancy, maternal mortality, uninsured rate, health-related quality of life, environmental toxin exposure and quality of care among others. Class discussions will examine the challenges faced in measuring health disparities, the strengths and limitations of different health disparity measures, and the effectiveness of strategies to communicate findings relevant for public policy. Student competency will be assessed through a combination of class discussion, presentations, problem sets and short papers.

PUBL 610-05 Special Topics: Demographic Issues and Public Policies

Wednesdays, 4:30-7:00 pm

John Rennie Short

This course looks at how demographic trend influence and shape public debates and policies. It examines policies across the demographic transition, from rapidly growing to maturing and ageing societies. Specific issues covered include youth unemployment, harvesting the demographic dividend and coping with a greying society. This cross cultural course, looking at countries as diverse as Japan, USA, Vietnam and Russia will appeal to students with a variety of interests.

PUBL 610-06 Special Topics: Race, Segregation and Inequality

Pamela Bennett

Mondays, 7:10-9:40pm

This course provides an in-depth study of racial and ethnic residential segregation and its relationship to social inequality. Through various theoretical perspectives, students will explore the historical and contemporary patterns of residential segregation in the United States and Baltimore. In doing so, students will become familiar with the entities and social forces that contribute to neighborhood segregation (such as federal and state policy, homeowner associations, public housing, financial institutions, group inequalities, group preferences, and racial and ethnic discrimination). The course includes an analysis of the social, economic, and demographic consequences of segregation.

PUBL 610-007 Special Topics: Mixed Methods

Fernando Tormos-Aponte

Mondays, 4:30-7:00p

This course seeks to prepare students to develop and critique research designs that combine multiple research methods. Students will learn how to develop research designs that researchers employ to identify and assess causal mechanisms, forward causal arguments, and develop interpretations of social and political phenomena, including case studies, process-tracing, ethnographies, and interpretive work. The course covers the strengths and weaknesses of these methods, their epistemological foundations, and the ways in which social scientists combine them. The course prepares students and provides opportunities to use multiple data collection and analysis techniques, including grounded theory, inductive and deductive coding, and participant-observation. Further, students will become familiarized with research ethics norms and issues.

PUBL 610-008 Special Topics: Workforce Development and Management

Lauren Hamilton Edwards

Thursdays, 7:10-9:40pm

The main emphasis for this course is for you to grapple with the current problems and issues with workforce development and management in the public and nonprofit sectors. Topics include such things as generational issues in the workplace, planning for a diverse workforce, and analyzing workforce needs for the future. You will apply problem-solving skills to these issues through research, analysis, and evaluation. In addition, you will gain an understanding of the historical context of human resources, the impact of that history on the traditional forms of management, and how workforce development and management are progressing.

PUBL 611 Causal Inference in Program Evaluation

Jane Lincove

Tuesdays, 4:30-7:00 pm

Surveys methods for identifying causal relationships in evaluation and policy research. The course considers the use of randomized experiments as well as a number of quasi-experimental research designs. Topics include matching techniques, panel data estimation, instrumental variables, discontinuity designs, and selection correction. Consent of instructor. Prerequisites PUBL 600 and PUBL 604.

PUBL 613 Managing Public Organizations

Thursdays, 7:10-9:40 pm

This course examines current management theories and techniques with a specific focus on organizations in the public and nonprofit sectors. The course prepares students to evaluate current management approaches in the public and nonprofit sectors, as well as preparing the student for the application of those approaches in the field. Topics will include New Public Management, New Public Service, the political context of public management, contracting out, networking, strategic management and planning, performance management, and public participation.

PUBL 648 Cities and Environmental Issues

John Rennie Short

Wednesdays, 7:10-9:40 pm

Instructor: Dr. John Rennie Short, Public Policy, jrs@umbc.edu; Wednesdays, 7:10-9:40 p.m.

This course is built around the assertion that the city is part of the environment, subject to environmental constraints and opportunities. The city has been treated in most social science writings as a purely social phenomenon, and at the same time, many environmental scientists have tended to ignore the urban. This course aims to reconnect natural science and social science through the examination of the urban environment.

PUBL 652 Politics of Health

Nancy Miller

Tuesdays 7:10-9:40 pm

This course is designed to help students understand how and why health policies reflect the political system in which they are enacted and implemented. After exploring the role of federal political institutions, we will apply these institutions and their roles to specific health policies.

PUBL 700 Doctoral Research Seminar: Advancing Dissertation Writing

Susan Sterett

Tuesdays 7:10-9:40p

Want to make more progress on your dissertation, and you're not always sure how? Do you read through your paragraphs and don't understand why an advisor can't see the connections you see? In this course we will work together to move toward completing. Students will bring drafts of chapters (very rough, incomplete drafts welcome). Students from all specializations welcome. Each week, we will work on refining theoretical arguments, clearly stating data and methods, and improving how paragraphs and sentences track. We'll rely on proven practices to clarify your arguments, improve the structure of your writing, and ensure that sentences go where we mean them to. We will primarily work with two books: Wendy Belcher, *How to Write your Journal Article in 12 Weeks*, and Joseph Williams and Joseph Bizup, *Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace*.