

PUBLIC POLICY DESCRIPTIONS

Fall 2022

Unless otherwise indicated, all courses include in-person instruction and require campus access.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

PUBLIC POLICY CORE COURSES

PUBL 600: Research Methodology

Loren Henderson

Tuesday 7:10

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: The Political and Social Context of the Policy Process

Roy Meyers

Thursday 4:30

This course is 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.

PUBL 602: Microeconomics for Public Policy (formerly ECON 600)

Zoë McLaren

Wednesday 7:10

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 603: Theory and Practice of Policy Analysis

Eric Stokan

Monday 7:10

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

Yusuke Kuwayama

Wednesday 4:30

This course provides an introduction to statistical analysis in the social sciences, ranging from simple descriptive statistics to multiple regression analysis, with a focus on use in applied policy research. Students will learn to frame quantitative research questions, organize and analyze data, apply statistical analysis to policy questions, and coherently report and display results.

PUBL 610-01: Race, Segregation, and Social Inequality

Pamela R. Bennett

Monday 7:10

This course provides an in-depth study of racial and ethnic residential segregation and its role in the production and perpetuation of social inequality. Through various theoretical perspectives, students will explore the history of segregation in the United States, as well as its patterns, causes and consequences. In doing so, students will gain insight into racial and ethnic inequality across several social, economic, and demographic domains, and come to understand why segregation is described as the “structural linchpin of racial stratification.”

PUBL 613: Managing Public Organizations

Mir Usman Ali

Monday 4:30

Managers in public organizations face a unique set of constraints and incentives relative to managers in the private sector. Furthermore, as public managers shape public policymaking as well as policy implementation, how they go about their jobs affects us as individuals as well as a society. This course introduces the discipline and profession of public management, and provides students with an understanding of its institutional, political, organizational, and ethical context. It is designed to help you become a more effective public manager by analyzing ways of reconciling administrative and democratic values.

Students are expected to develop perspectives about public management strategies and to acquire

skills suitable for facilitating such strategies. Students will have opportunities to apply theories and techniques discussed in the class to problems and cases. All the issues we discuss will expose you to essential knowledge for managing in the 21st century and improve your ability to manage public organizations.

ADVANCED METHODS COURSES

PUBL 610: Cost-Benefit Analysis for Health, Education, and Environmental Policy

Yusuke Kuwayama

Wednesday 7:10

The purpose of cost-benefit analysis (CBA) is to determine the net benefits of potential projects by cataloging the impacts of the projects, quantifying those impacts, and converting them into monetary terms. This course will focus on the use and application of CBA in health, education, and environmental policy. We will cover topics including the economic rationale for CBA, basic principles for assessing the economic effects of projects, techniques for valuing health, educational, and environmental impacts, intergenerational and philosophical concerns as they relate to CBA, social discounting, risk, and uncertainty. We will also compare CBA with alternative approaches to conducting public policy assessment such as cost effectiveness or multi-criteria analyses.

PUBL 611: Causal Inference for Program Evaluation

Jane Arnold Lincove

Tuesday 4:30

A central goal of evaluation and policy research is estimating the causal effect of an intervention, program, or policy change on behaviors and outcomes. This course provides instruction and practice in research designs and analytic strategies that are commonly employed to address causal questions in evaluation and policy research such as propensity score matching, instrumental variable, regression discontinuity, difference-in-differences, and others. We consider the underlying logic of each method, how and when to apply them to a policy research question, model assumptions and how they can be tested, and data requirements and limitations. Students will learn from illustrative examples and hands-on experience using data and Stata statistical software. Completion of PUBL 600 (Research Methods) and PUBL 604 (Statistical Analysis) or similar coursework is required.

FIELD COURSES AND ELECTIVES

PUBL 606: The Politics and Administration of Program Evaluation

Lauren Hamilton Edwards

Thursday 7:10

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: Demographic Issues and Public Policy

John Rennie Short

Monday 4:30

This course looks at how demographic trends 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 is a cross-cultural course that looks at countries across the globe.

PUBL 610: Metrics and Methods for Measuring Health Disparities

Zoë McLaren

Tuesday 7:10

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. 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.

PUBL 610: Race and Education in Urban America

Pamela Bennett

Thursday 4:30

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, then 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 625: Theories of Public Administration

Mir Usman Ali

Wednesday 4:30

An examination of classic and contemporary literature on public administration. We will be taking an historical view of public administration theory in the United States. This history begins in the late 1800s with the publication of an article by Woodrow Wilson, well before he was President Wilson. We will examine events that influenced our field's thinkers and how public

administration has changed over time. Due to the enormity of this task, we will discuss some perspectives from other countries but only to the extent of how they impact thought in this country.

PUBL 646: The Global City
John Rennie Short
Tuesday 4:30

This course examines the global urban system with particular attention on the global urban hierarchy, the diffusion of discourses and policies and the connections between urbanization and globalization, as revealed in detailed case studies of individual cities. Specific topics include the longer term rise of the new middle class, and the very recent trend of the increase in urban poverty in the wake of COVID-19, in the global urban South. The main emphasis is on cities outside of the USA.

PUBL 652: Politics of Health
Nancy A. Miller
Thursday 4:30

The U.S. spent \$3.8 trillion on health care in 2019, 17.7% of the U.S. gross domestic product. Health care as a policy issue touches everyone and is a top-ranked concern in national polls. It has continuing visibility given court decisions related to the constitutionality of the 2010 Affordable Care Act (ACA). Efforts to strengthen the ACA is a focus of President Biden, following efforts in the Trump administration to repeal the ACA. This course is designed to help students understand how and why health policies like the ACA reflect the political system in which they are enacted and implemented.

Students will learn the following: 1) Important concepts, theories and literature concerning the impact of politics on health policy; 2) How to apply political dimensions to specific health policy legislation related to issues such as access to insurance and health services, quality of care, and cost containment; 3) The values underlying alternative health policies and how to assess the comparative advantages and disadvantages of policy alternatives based on these values; and 4) how the perceived roles of public and private actors, as well as the market and government in general, affect health policies.

PUBL 700: Doctoral Dissertation Work
Susan M. Sterett
Thursday 7:10

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 who are working on a

proposal or who have defended a proposal and are working on their dissertation are all welcome. 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 work on exercises to understand how journal articles in journals of interest are structured, to allow students to develop structure in their own work. 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*. Other readings available on Blackboard.