College of Charleston

Spring 2014

POLI 211.01: Introduction to Public Policy

CRN: 23504

3 credit hours

Maybank Hall, Room 111

Monday, Wednesday and Friday: 11 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.

Professor: LaTasha Chaffin

Office Hours: (114 Wentworth, Room 104) Mondays and Wednesdays 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Email: chaffinly@cofc.edu (preferred method of contact outside of classroom time/office hours)

Office Phone/Voicemail: 843-953-1036

Course Introduction & Learning Outcomes: This course provides an introduction to the process of public policymaking in the United States and to selected substantive policy areas. A significant portion of the course is devoted to undergraduate research. The goals of the course are to enable students to 1) analyze the policymaking process, 2) develop substantive policy expertise in an issue area, 3) participate effectively in the policy process, 4) conduct secondary and primary research and 5) write a social science research paper using theoretical models to guide research and frame case description. Students are expected to be active and interactive participants in class and pro-active researchers. Students will read, discuss, research, write, present and teach. Several exams and interim assignments will build toward a final product: a research paper in which students demonstrate an understanding of the policy process and the substance of policy in a domestic policy issue area of their choice.

General Education Student Learning Outcomes:

- Students apply a social science concept, model or theory to explain human behavior, social interactions or social institutions. These outcomes will be assessed in the Policy Paper.

Required Texts & Additional Resources:


**Additional required readings will occasionally be made electronically available through the OAKS system, accessible in MyCharleston.
Course Procedures:

Communication — The primary method of communication from the instructor to the class outside of classroom time and office hours will be to your College of Charleston email. There will also be announcements, readings, lecture slides and assignments posted in OAKS. It is your responsibility to ensure that your accounts are active, and that you are checking them regularly in order to access and receive course updates, assignments and materials.

Behavior — Please be respectful and courteous of all students and the professor. This means being on time to class, using sound judgment by not engaging in conversations with other students during the lecture, and not exhibiting distracting behaviors such as eating, sleeping, surfing the internet and/or reading materials that are not related to the course or the class discussion.

Cell Phones & other Electronic Devices — You are expected to have your cell phones/electronic devices turned off or on silent during class discussions. It is a distraction to the instructor and your classmates if your cell phone and/or electronic device sounds during a lecture. Texting or playing games on your cell phone/electronic device are prohibited during class.

Laptops — Laptops & other electronic devices used to take notes are allowed. However, surfing the internet, including social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter, sending emails, text messages or playing computer games are distracting to the class and unacceptable. If inappropriate uses of your laptop and/or other electronic devices are detected during lecture, your privileges to utilize a laptop/electronic devices in class will be revoked.

Academic Honesty - You are responsible for making yourself aware of and understanding the College of Charleston Student Handbook policies including the Honor Code pertaining to Academic Honesty found at: http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/documents-pdfs/handbook.pdf

These policies include the prohibition of cheating, plagiarism and fabrication. They also note the consequences of academic dishonesty at the College of Charleston. Any violation of these guidelines and/or other rules contained within the Honor Code will result in an F for the assignment or exam and/or other appropriate disciplinary action, at the instructor's discretion. You should consult with the instructor if you are uncertain about an issue regarding academic honesty prior to the submission of an assignment or an exam.

Disability Services – The College of Charleston will make reasonable accommodations for a student with a documented disability. If you are in need of accommodations for this course due to a disability, please contact the Center for Disability Services at SNAP@cofc.edu or (843) 953-1431. Then, come and talk to me ideally within the first two weeks of class so we can put your accommodations in place within the classroom. This professor is very willing to make any adjustments necessary to address all student needs.

Writing Lab

The Writing Lab, located in the Center for Student Learning on the first floor of Addlestone Library provides free assistance with writing term papers, essays, letters, memos or book reviews from developing ideas and organizing materials to editing final drafts. The walk-in lab opens on January 21st. You may also make an appointment for private tutoring at 843-953-5635.

Counseling

Confidential counseling and substance abuse services are available at the Robert Scott Small Building (located off the Cougar Mall), Suite 300. You may call 843-953-5640 for an appointment.

Course Withdrawal — Please note that dropping a class involves more than just not attending. Please contact the registrar’s office to verify course withdrawal procedures. The contact number for the Office of the Registrar is 843-953-5668 or registrar@cofc.edu Please consult the registrar’s office before dropping a course.
Course Requirements:

Attendance & Participation – It is your responsibility to attend lectures and obtain the information and materials disseminated during lecture periods. You are also expected to read all of the assigned readings prior to class and be prepared to discuss these readings during the class period.

An attendance sheet will be distributed during each class period. It is your responsibility to ensure that you sign the attendance sheet each class period. Under no circumstances can another student sign the attendance sheet for you. Please be aware that poor attendance is a primary reason for students’ receiving poor grades and that you cannot participate in class unless you attend class. Participation is assessed at 10% of your final course grade.

Some participation in class discussion is expected. You do not have to say something every time we meet, but please speak up with a considered opinion or good question occasionally. Attendance is required. You need to be in class because what is in the book is only part of the material that we will cover and because interaction is a crucial way that we learn about the public policy process.

Two points will be deducted from the “attendance and participation” component of the grade for each unexcused absence from a regular class meeting. Four points will be deducted for each unexcused absence from a roundtable class.

Examinations – There will be three exams, with the average of the three exams being worth 30%. The three brief exams will cover reading and material reviewed in class are intended to motivate students to keep up with the course schedule and to integrate ideas and information as we proceed. The format will consist of a combination of multiple choice, true/false, short answer, case scenarios and/or essay questions. It is advisable that you attend class, take notes and keep up with your weekly readings so that you are prepared for the examinations.

Please notify me in advance if there are extenuating circumstances that prevent you from taking an exam during the scheduled exam period (“extenuating” circumstances are examined on a case by case basis, and may or may not be approved). Examinations cannot be taken early unless it is pre-approved by me. Make up exams cannot be taken unless there is an emergency. Written documentation may be required for both scenarios. Failure to notify me prior to the exam hour about an unexpected absence (or as soon as prudently possible if there is an emergency) could result in a zero for that grade. Any exams that I may approve for you to take early or make up after the examination period may not be the same as the exam given during the scheduled exam period; the exam may be an all-essay question exam.

Policy paper - A solid understanding of the policy process and of substance in a policy area of your choice, demonstrated in a 10-12 page paper, is the achievement toward which the course builds. The paper is detailed in a separate handout.

Students must use APA style citations. Please refer to http://www.calstatela.edu/library/styleman.htm for assistance with the APA citation style.

Interim assignments - These assignments are building blocks toward the course paper, detailed in a separate handout.
Grades will be based on analytical rigor, empirical evidence, and writing skill and will be assessed using the following general guidelines:

A Excellent; Clear, thorough, and well-supported
A− Very good, with few shortcomings; or Clear, but incomplete
B+ Generally clear, but some gaps; or Good, though somewhat unclear
B Gaps in logic and evidence; or Disordered; or Undeveloped
B− Multiple gaps and unclear parts; or Containing contradictions
C+ Unclear throughout; or Wrong question
C Vague and unsupported
C− Very unclear and confusing; or No argument
D+ Unclear and misunderstood; or Incorrect/missing citations throughout
D Very poor
D− Extremely poor
F Insufficient effort; or Dishonesty

Late Assignments – Any assignments submitted late (without prior approval), will receive a 10% penalty, per day, including weekends. Assignments that are later than five (5) days will not be accepted.

Methods of Evaluation:

Assessment Weight
Exams (3) 30% (average of the 3 exams)
Interim Assignments 30%
Library Assignment (2%)
Proposal (2%)
Annotated Bib (10%)
Policy Community Map (10%)
Roundtable Presentation (6%)
Attendance/Participation 10%
Policy Paper 30%
Total: 100%

Grading Scale:

93 – 100 A
89 – 92 A−
85 – 88 B+
81 – 84 B
77 – 80 B−
73 – 76 C+
72 – 75 C
68 – 71 C−
64 – 67 D+
60 – 63 D
56 – 59 D−
55 & Below F
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topics and reading assignment</th>
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| 1: Jan 8, 10 | Introduction to course/ What is public policy? Introduce research paper  
James E. Anderson, *Public Policymaking*, 2013, Ch 1, pp 1-19  
Birkland, Ch 1 and pages 25 & 26 in Birkland Ch 2 in *An Introduction to the Policy Process*, 2011 (OAKS) |
| 2: Week of Jan. 13 | Environment of the Policy Process: Structural, Social & Political  
Birkland, Ch. 2 pp 26 – 42 (OAKS)  
Economic Environment: Deficits & Debt & Income Distribution  
Birkland, Ch. 2 pp 42 – 46 (OAKS)  
Economic Environment: Income Distribution  
Birkland, Ch. 2 pp 47 – 48 (OAKS) |
| 3: No class Jan 20 | Historical and Structural Contexts of Public Policymaking  
Anderson, Ch. 2 pp 73 - 78  
Historical and Structural Contexts: Ideology  
Anderson, Ch. 2 pp 47 – 50 (top of page 50); Ch. 4 pp 140 - 150.  
Conservative public philosophies  
Ball and Dagger, “Conservatism,” Ch 4 in *Political Ideologies*, 2011 (OAKS)  
Liberal public philosophies  
| 4: Week of Jan. 27 | **Exam Review** on Jan. 27, **Exam 1** on Jan 29/ **Library session** on Jan 31  
Library assignment due in library on Jan 31 or at next class meeting. We are meeting in Room 227 of the Addlestone Library at 11 a.m. sharp |
| 5: Week of Feb. 3 | Policy communities / Social security  
Anderson, Ch 2, pp. 50 – 72  
Materials on social security (OAKS) |
| 6: Week of Feb. 10 | Social security (cont) / Federalism I: Nation and states  
**Policy area proposal due on Feb 10** |
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<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings and Resources</th>
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Kim Quale Hill and Jan E. Leighley, "Policy Consequences of Class Bias in State Electorates" (OAKS), 1992. |
|      |            | **Part III: Steps in the policy process**                              |                                                                                         |
| 8    | Week of Feb. 24 | Overview of steps, Problem definition / Inequality                    | Anderson, Ch 3, pp. 87-95 (through top paragraph on page 95)  
Levy and Temlin, "Inequality & Institutions in 20th Century America", 2007 (OAKS) |
|      |            | **Friday February 28th – Out of Class Assignment**                    |                                                                                         |
|      | March 1-9 | Spring break                                                         |                                                                                         |
| 9    | Week of Mar. 10 | Agenda setting, formulation of alternatives                          | Anderson, Ch 3, pp. 95-108 (reading ends before case studies)  
& pp. 114 – 122 (The Formulation of Policy Proposals)  
**Annotated bibliography due on Mar. 10** |
| 10   | Week of Mar. 17 | Policy adoption / Budgeting                                          | Anderson, Ch 4, pp. 133-134 and 154-165 & Ch 5 |
| 11   | Week of Mar. 24 | Budgeting (cont) / Implementation                                    | Anderson, Ch. 6  
Excerpt from Kloete, Wissink & de Coning – *Improving Public Policy*, 2006 (OAKS)  
**Policy community map due on Mar 24** |
| 12   | Week of Mar. 31 | Evaluation & Roundtable planning.                                    | Anderson, Ch 7  
**Friday April 5, 2013 – (No class) Meet with roundtable groups for planning outside of class** |
<p>| 13   | Week of Apr. 7  | Evaluation continued, <strong>Exam Review, Exam 3</strong> on April 9 on steps, Roundtable planning |                                                                                         |
|      |            | <strong>Part IV: Substantive policy areas</strong>                                |                                                                                         |</p>
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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>14: Week of Apr. 14</td>
<td>Policy area roundtables</td>
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<td><strong>Final papers due on April 18</strong></td>
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<td>15: Apr. 21 &amp; 23</td>
<td>Policy area roundtables</td>
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<td>Wed. April 23, 2014 – Final Day of Regular Classes</td>
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<td>Final exam</td>
<td><strong>Monday April 28, 2014 from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m.</strong></td>
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<td>Roundtables will be held during the final exam period. Attendance is required.</td>
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**The course schedule is subject to change. Changes will be communicated a minimum of one week prior to any changes**