PUAD 540: Public Policy Process  
Michelle M. Buehlmann, MPA, PhD

Summer 2022  
George Mason University  
Schar School of Policy and Government

Email: mbuehlma@gmu.edu  
Phone: 703-314-6640  
(You may text this number.)  
Office Hours: TBD and by appointment.  
Class Hours: 4:20 to 10PM Wednesdays  
Office Hours location: Zoom (link will be provided in Blackboard)  
Class Room: Horizon Hall 3001  
Modality: face-to-face  
Web: Course Blackboard site.

Required Text:


Smith, Kevin and Christopher Larimer. 2017. The Public Policy Theory Primer.  


Course Description:
This course is designed to provide an understanding of the dynamics of the public policy process. This includes models and concepts of how the process works, the roles of individuals and non-governmental organizations in the system, and the role-played by elected officials and the institutions of government. The process will be studied from the agenda setting phase, through formation, adoption, implementation and evaluation. The materials used will include readings of classical American political thought; texts on the policy process and actors; and case studies from different policy areas. Students will be expected to understand the theories and models of the policy process and then apply those models to actual case studies or events. The particular focus of this course will be on policy issues affecting state and local governments.

Course Requirements:

Reading Summary and Presentation: Each student will select/be assigned one of the numbered readings. The student will prepare a short 1-to-2-page summary of the reading to share with the class. The student will also present their summary at the beginning of class.

Pathway Paper: After completing the Pathways book, students should identify an example of something in their work or in the news (not mentioned in the book) that they believe illustrates
each of the four pathways. Students will bring their four examples to class on June 25th for discussion. Students should prepare a one-paragraph write up for each of the four pathway examples. (Brief paper is due before class on the 25th. One to three pages submitted via Blackboard.)

**Research Project:** Each student will select their own policy to analyze. The student will select the appropriate model from one discussed in class and apply it to the issue/problem. Each student will then prepare a presentation and a written report detailing the findings of their analysis. The paper should also include a discussion of which model the student selected and why.

**Participation:** Each student is expected to come to class with the assigned readings completed and prepared to participate actively in discussions and group work. This means that attendance is a factor, please contact the Professor before missing class, if at all possible.

**Grade Breakdown:**
Participation 20%
Reading Summary Paper and Presentation 20%
Pathways Paper 20%
Research Project and Presentation 40%

**Class Schedule:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>4:30-6</th>
<th>6-6:45</th>
<th>6:45-8:00</th>
<th>Break</th>
<th>8:15-9:30</th>
<th>9:30-10</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 25th</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Dinner</td>
<td>Model 1:</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Model 2: Problem</td>
<td>Wrap up: What do these models and issues mean for American democracy?</td>
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<td>Implementation Discussion</td>
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<td>June 1st</td>
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<td>June 8th</td>
<td>Model 6: Advocacy</td>
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<td>June 15th</td>
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<td>June 22nd</td>
<td>Federalism</td>
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<td>State and Local policy discussion</td>
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<td>June 29th</td>
<td>Group Time</td>
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<td>Groups Present the 4 Pathways Models:</td>
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Summer 2022, PUAD 540, Dr. Buehlmann
Reading Schedule:

May 25: **Policy analysis is not an Ikea bookcase.**

Weimer and Vining. 2006. “Policy Analysis in Representative Democracy.”


**Policy Stages**

Smith and Larimer. 2017 Chapter 1

Cairney. 2021. Chapters 1, 2 and 3 (pp. 1-48)

**Problem Definition and the Issue Attention Cycle**


June 1: **Lowi and Wilson**

Kingdon: Cans and Windows


Punctuated Equilibrium Theory (PET)

5. Smith and Larimer. Chapters 3
6. Smith and Larimer Chapter 4
7. Smith and Larimer Chapter 5
8. Cairney. Chapters 4
9. Cairney Chapter 5

June 8: Advocacy Coalition Framework


Stone: The Policy Paradox


Narrative Policy Framework


General

16. Cairney. Chapter 7,
17. Cairney Chapter 8
18. Cairney Chapter 9
June 15th: Poliheuristic Theory


Graham Allison


Implementation

21. Smith and Larimer. Chapters 6, and 7,

General

24. Cairney Chapters 10 and 11
25. Cairney Chapters 12 and 13

June 22nd: Federalism


June 25th Pathways of Power


Assignment: Students must bring to class one example for each of the four Pathways. It can be something from your work. It can be something from a news story. Students will then be assigned to groups, and each group needs to pick one key example for each of the four Pathways from among all the examples that students brought to class. Then each group will present their 4 key examples to the class.

July 6th Student’s Present their Research Projects.
Students will have 5-10 minutes to present their research project to the class.

July 11th  Research papers due.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Syllabus

This syllabus is a tentative guide for the course. I reserve the right to make announced changes to this document and will distribute these changes in class and on Blackboard. Each student will be responsible for all announcements and materials covered in class.

Class Conduct

Class atmosphere will be relaxed. Just a few guidelines to make sure:

• Arriving a few minutes late is tolerated as long as you make an effort to minimize the disturbance.

• Eating and drinking in class is permitted, but please try not disturbing others. (Avoid foods with strong smells, or that cause serious allergies, if possible)

• Turn off / silence all cell phones.

• If you have to leave a class early, please let me know in advance, and select your seat to minimize the disturbance.

Disabilities and Accommodations

Please let me know within the first week of class if you require assistance or special consideration. I can make accommodations for those who need them but must be informed of the need in advance. Any requests for accommodation based on a disability must be arranged through the Office of Disability Services (ODS). http://ods.gmu.edu/

Academic Integrity

All work completed in your name must be yours and yours alone. Any work you borrow or ideas you gather from other sources must be cited properly. Please see me if you are concerned about proper citation style. Any attempt to present someone else’s work as your own will be met with the harshest consequences. You may receive an F for the assignment and an F for the course. Furthermore, information pertaining to the violation will be forwarded to the appropriate university administrators.
Enrollment Statement

Students are responsible for verifying their enrollment in this class. Schedule adjustments should be made by the deadlines published in the Schedule of Classes.

Other Useful Campus Resources

- Writing Center • A114 Robinson Hall; (703) 993-1200; http://writingcenter.gmu.edu
- Libraries • http://library.gmu.edu
- Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) • 703.993.2380; http://caps.gmu.edu

University Policies

The University Catalog, http://catalog.gmu.edu, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university academic affairs. Other policies are available at http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu.

George Mason University’s Schar School Policy on Plagiarism:

The profession of scholarship and the intellectual life of a university as well as the field of public policy inquiry depend fundamentally on a foundation of trust. Thus, any act of plagiarism strikes at the heart of the meaning of the university and the purpose of the Schar School. It constitutes a serious breach of professional ethics and it is unacceptable. Plagiarism is the use of another’s words or ideas presented as one’s own. It includes, among other things, the use of specific words, ideas, or frameworks that are the product of another’s work. Honesty and thoroughness in citing sources is essential to professional accountability and personal responsibility. Appropriate citation is necessary so that arguments, evidence, and claims can be critically examined. Plagiarism is wrong because of the injustice it does to the person whose ideas are stolen. But it is also wrong because it constitutes lying to one’s professional colleagues. From a prudential perspective, it is shortsighted and self-defeating, and it can ruin a professional career. The faculty of the Schar School takes plagiarism seriously and has adopted a zero tolerance policy. Any plagiarized assignment will receive an automatic grade of “F.” This may lead to failure for the course, resulting in dismissal from the University. This dismissal will be noted on the student’s transcript. For international students who are on a university-sponsored visa (e.g., F-1, J-1 or J-2), dismissal also results in the revocation of their visa. To help enforce the Schar School policy on plagiarism, all written work submitted in partial fulfillment of course or degree requirements must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared with electronic databases, as well as submitted to commercial services to which the School subscribes. Faculty may at any time submit student’s work without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require that written work be submitted in electronic as well as printed
form. School policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace it or substitute for it. [http://schar.gmu.edu/current-students/mastersadvising/academic-policies-forms/](http://schar.gmu.edu/current-students/mastersadvising/academic-policies-forms/)

Academic Accommodation for a Disability. Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to upholding the letter and spirit of the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. Under the administration of University Life, Disability Services implements and coordinates reasonable accommodations and disability-related services that afford equal access to university programs and activities. Students can begin the registration process with Disability Services at any time during their enrollment at George Mason University. If you are seeking accommodations, please visit [http://ds.gmu.edu/](http://ds.gmu.edu/) for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: ods@gmu.edu | Phone: (703) 993-2474.