Introduction to Public Policy and Public Administration

Course Number: POL 230-01

MWF, 10:00am-10:50am
(Compressed Schedule: 11:40am-12:20pm)

Misericordia University
MAC 103
Fall 2018

Instructor
Dr. Robert Lucas Williams
Assistant Professor
Email: rwilliams1@misericordia.edu
Office: MER 375
Phone: (570) 674-3047
Office Hours: W 11:00am-12:00pm, TH 2:00pm-3:00pm, or by appointment

Course Description
This course introduces an understanding of U.S. public policy making and public administration including identifiable steps in the policy process such as political policy openings, policy stream convergence, policy implementation and the administration of policy ideas. Students will learn how to identify a policy problem, map the political opportunity, incorporate evidence-based social science research to address the problem, and assess the positives and negatives associated with a particular policy adoption.

Learning Objectives

1. Students will evaluate policies and administrative actions in the United States at the federal, state, and local levels.
2. Students will be able to critically assess the history, laws, methods, of policies and the policy outputs of local, state, and federal governments.
3. Students will be able to critically evaluate both historical and current events to identify intentions and motivations of action among policy makers and administrators.
4. Students will be able to develop explanations, analyze theories public policy, the policy making process, and public administration as well as critically evaluate strategies of conflict and problem resolution.
5. Students will be able to communicate clearly and persuasively both verbally and in writing about public policy and administration.

Required Text

Supporting Resources and Materials

- **Student Success Center.** We will have visitors from the Writing Center. Regardless of the writing skills you bring to this class, you can improve. I also encourage you to utilize the personalized support and coaching services provided at the Student Success Center.

- **Supplemental Media** There will be required and suggested readings and materials posted to Blackboard throughout the semester. Please monitor these documents, links, and other media as they become available. Required readings are all fair game for quiz and testing material. Suggested resources may assist you in classroom activities, dialogues, and discussions or with your project.

- **Proprietary Material** Material such as slides that are posted on Blackboard may not be used by anyone in any fashion outside of this course. This means you may not share them with anyone outside of this course. These documents are for your study purposes only.

Classroom Expectations

- The items below are expected of you by both me and your classmates.
- **Be respectful.** We will cover contentious topics on a daily basis. Everyone possesses the ability to converse in a cordial manner. We will foster a safe space in which you
can discuss sensitive topics in a productive way. Please keep in mind, REASONABLE PEOPLE OFTEN DISAGREE.

- **No web surfing during class.** You may type notes, but do not play around online. It is distracting to both me and your fellow students if you are not paying attention and not engaging in the material. Keep your phone on silent and out of sight.
- **Be on time.** This should go without saying.
- All of these rules will be a factor in your professionalism grade.

**Course Requirements**

- **Professionalism:** Professionalism includes demonstrable characteristics such as punctuality, genuine commitment, and intellectual participation. Your classmates and I expect you to be on time and meet deadlines. We also expect you to read the assigned material and generally keep up with the news regarding political events. Class discussion is incredibly important to the success of this course. As is the case in healthy democratic politics, the exchange of perspectives and ideas is essential to finding problems, exploring solutions, and locating possible points of compromise. You will gain broader perspectives through your interactions with classmates. However, everyone must be willing to open an empathetic ear where possible and a sympathetic ear otherwise. We will learn on the first day the difference between dialogue and debate. The point of a dialogue is to understand the speaker’s argument, nothing more. The point of a debate is to exchange ideas such that you may persuade someone else to your position or come to some middle ground. As a class we will always be aware of which of these modes we are in. Neither of these modes allows for hostile or incendiary language. You must earn these points by being on time and prepared for class as well as contributing to class discourse. You will find a rubric on Blackboard.

- Read the assigned readings **PRIOR** to the corresponding class meeting in the schedule below. Come prepared to engage and ask questions.
- I will utilize the “Send Email” function in Blackboard to communicate, so you MUST be sure your email address with Blackboard is correct.
- Read the news. Know what is going on in the world around you. You aren’t expected to know in depth details about every current event. However, you should be able to connect class information to the real world. Here are a few places that you might start:
  - Kaiser Family Foundation’s [Kaiser Health News](https://kff.org/health-news/)
  - [Pew Research](https://www.pewresearch.org/) (issues, policy analyses, fact sheets, and Stateline (state politics news))
  - [National Review](https://www.nationalreview.com/) (conservative publication)
  - [The Nation](https://www.thenation.com/) (liberal publication)
  - Podcasts (Wait, Wait Don’t Tell Me (NPR’s weekly news quiz), NPR Politics, No Jargon from Scholar Strategy Network, and many others)
  - Washington Post’s Monkey Cage is a political science blog on current events
• Midterm elections are in November. There are events and news related to the election that you should follow. Here are the Important 2018 Election Dates in PA:
  - Registration Deadline - 10/9/2018
  - General Midterm Elections - 11/6/2018

• Group Project Students will be selected into small groups to conduct a deliberative democracy exercise. Groups’ initial task will be to establish its viewpoints on the issue provided by the professor. Disagreements will exist. Then, groups will research various aspects of the issue over a few weeks, reassemble, and come to a consensus (i.e. what they agree on). Additional information and details can be found on Blackboard.

• Writing Assignments Students will turn in two writing assignments during the second portion of the semester. Each writing assignment will be a preliminary draft of the policy analysis paper worth 5% each.

• Policy Analysis Project At the end of the semester, students will turn in a final draft of their policy analysis project. Having turned in section drafts already, this draft will be graded primarily on the quality of improvements made since the second writing assignment.

• Exams We will have 2 in-class exams in this course. Question material may come from any part of this course including readings, lectures, class discussion, visiting speakers, and current events. You will be required to answer written responses in some capacity. These written responses are designed for you to demonstrate the knowledge you have accumulated and to test your ability to apply that knowledge to practical policy making and administration. The first exam will cover public administration. The second exam will cover public policy. If you have a legitimate excuse that prevents you from taking an exam on the scheduled day, you must contact me ahead of time to schedule a make up. Otherwise, no make up exams will be given.

Grading
There will be no curving in this class.

1. Professionalism: 10%
2. Group Project: 20%
3. Writing Assignments: 10%
4. Policy Analysis: 20%
5. Exams 1-2: 40%
6. Final Grades:
Credit Hour Statement
For each credit hour earned in this course, the amount of work represented in the course learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement is equal to a minimum of one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week during the regular fifteen-week semester. In the case of courses scheduled in shorter time periods than the regular fifteen-week semester, the amount of direct faculty instruction is determined through the university’s “Guidelines for Instructional Time Equivalencies Across Formats.” The expectation of a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work per hour of direct faculty instruction or instructional time equivalency remains the same.

Academic Integrity
Any form of cheating or dishonesty, including plagiarism, is a fundamental violation of the nature and purpose of Misericordia University. Such behavior will not be tolerated and will result in at least lowered grades, possibly failure in a class, program dismissal, and, in the most serious cases, dismissal from the university.

Plagiarism is using someone else’s ideas or words and claiming them as one’s own. Students who use another person’s words must copy them accurately, enclose them in quotations marks, and identify the source clearly. If another person’s ideas are used in a student paper, the source must still be identified and the author of the ideas given credit. Students are responsible to make sure they are using sources properly and documenting them properly.

The responsibility for maintaining personal integrity and honor in academic activities rests with the student. Each faculty member will provide information on academic integrity to students in the course outline at the beginning of the semester, including any necessary explanation of violations, possible infractions of academic integrity and the scope of sanctions, e.g., warning, lowering of the grade on the assignment or course, course failure, or dismissal from the program or university.

Should a violation of academic integrity occur, the faculty member must inform the student of the violation before imposing any sanction. Should the violation be considered serious enough to merit any grade of D or lower on any major assignment, or a more serious penalty, such as course failure or dismissal from the program, the faculty member must notify the vice president of academic affairs (VPAA) and supply any supporting evidence. In the case of multiple violations, the VPAA will discuss this issue with the student and may impose additional sanctions up to and including dismissal from the university. In a case
where dismissal from the university is contemplated, the VPAA will consult with the faculty
member, students advisor, department chair/program director, and college dean.

In cases where the student contests the accusations of academic dishonesty, the student may
file a grievance under either the undergraduate or graduate grievance procedure, whichever
one is applicable.

Emergency Response Policy
To be prepared in the event of an emergency situation, students should keep their cell phone
on vibrate during class to receive any message from the emergency alert system (EAS). How-
ever, checking your phone for non-EAS messages or texting during class will be treated
as a refusal to participate in class and will affect your participation grade. In the event that
you need to receive a call for a personal emergency, please notify me before class to receive
permission to answer your phone outside the classroom.

In the event of an emergency, I will inform students and coordinate the response
recommended by public safety. I expect students to comply with my instructions to ensure
the safety of all.

Tutorial Assistance
Peer Tutoring Program: Misericordia University offers a variety of tutorial options to assist
students in achieving academic goals. Individual and group peer tutoring is provided in
most core curriculum courses and some professional courses dependent on student tutor
availability. The Peer Tutoring Program services are provided by the Student Success Center,
which is located in the lower level of Alumnae Hall. All tutoring services are free of charge.

Smarthinking is an online tutoring service available to all students. Students can drop in
on a live tutoring session, submit papers, or schedule private sessions in many subject areas,
such as statistics, economics, biology, physics, chemistry, and many others. Smarthinking
registration and log in information can be found on the Student Success Center channel
found under Student Services.

Mental Health Support
The Counseling and Psychological Services Center (CAPS) provides free counseling services
to students. If students find their studies are suffering due to mental health concerns, please
contact CAPS directly for support.

Disability Statement
Misericordia University is committed to creating an environment where all are welcome
and does not discriminate in the recruitment, admission, educational process, or treatment
of students. In the spirit of hospitality and justice, we comply with Section 504 of
the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as amended. In order to receive services, students must self-identify their disability and provide documentation from a healthcare professional. Eligibility for accommodations such as academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aides is determined through an individualized, interactive process in the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD).

The OSD is located in the SSC, on the lower level of Alumnae Hall. Individuals seeking accommodations may call 570-674-6408 or email Kristen Ricardo, Assistant Director SSC/Office for Students with Disabilities at kricardo@misericordia.edu.

**Tentative Course Calendar**

- **Monday August 27:** Course Overview
  - Syllabus and intro to public policy and administration
  - Small group project introduction and group formation
- **Wednesday August 29:** Small Group Project
  - Deliberative democracy is hard. In-class workshop
- **Friday August 31:** Accountability-CH 1 Kettl
  - *Discussion question:* How do the 3 approaches to accountability tackle the issue of creating a system that makes bureaucrats powerful enough to do their jobs but not so powerful that elected officials cannot hold them accountable?
- **Monday September 3:** No Class - Labor Day
- **Wednesday September 5:** What Government Does-And How It Does It-CH 2 Kettl
  - *Discussion question:* In terms of efficiency and accountability, how does public administration serve blended functions in a system of federalism?
- **Friday September 7:** What Is a Public Administration?-CH 3 Kettl
  - *Discussion question:* From the water we drink to NASA to student loans, government is everywhere. Does this reassure you or make you nervous? Were you aware of so much government in your midst?
- **Monday September 10:** Organizational Theory-CH 4 Kettl
  - *Discussion question:* What role do hierarchy and authority have in bureaucratic organizations? What are the challenges of each model?
- **Wednesday September 12:** The Executive Branch-CH 5 Kettl
– Discussion question: Recall the debate among scholars over the importance of organization. Is it all about people, all about politics, or someplace in between?

• Friday September 14: Organization Problems-CH 6 Kettl
  – Discussion question: What are neutral competence, executive leadership, and representativeness? Are these competing values?

• Monday September 17: Small Group Project
  – Each group will meet in class to make decisions and report results to the class.

• Wednesday September 19: Administrative Reform-CH 7 Kettl
  – Discussion question: Which of the 3 administrative reform strategies (downsizing, reengineering, or continuous improvement) do you find most compelling?

• Friday September 21: The Civil Service-CH 8 Kettl
  – Discussion question: What do you think of the 4 parts of the Pendleton Act? Which do you think contribute to government efficiency, transparency, and democratic values? What’s the purpose of these policies? Are they effective?
  – SMALL GROUP PEER EVALUATION DUE BY SUNDAY 9/23 AT 11:59PM

• Monday September 24: Human Capital-CH 9 Kettl
  – Discussion question: Do you agree with Light? Is the problem of human capital in government as dire as he says, or do you think he is overstating the case?

• Wednesday September 26: Decisions, Rationality, and Risk-CH10 Kettl
  – Discussion question: How does each approach (rational, public choice, bargaining, participative) handle values and information?

• Friday September 28: Budgeting-CH11 Kettl
  – Discussion question: How is top-down budgeting different from bottom-up budgeting? Which of these methods is more widely accepted? What have been some of the attempts to reform bottom-up budgeting?

• Monday October 1: Implementation and Performance-CH12 Kettl
  – Discussion question: What is implementation and why is it important? What are potential standards for judging results?

• Wednesday October 3: Regulation and the Courts-CH13 Kettl
- *Discussion question*: What is the role of state and local regulation? What are some of the uses of regulation at these levels? Why would Congress choose to preempt state regulatory activity?

- **Friday October 5**: Accountability and Politics-CH14 Kettl
  - *Discussion question*: Some have argued that much of what Congress does is oversight, but oversight isn’t a priority for members of Congress. Why?

- **Monday October 8**: Exam 1

- **Wednesday October 10**: Policy Analysis, Problem Definitions, & Evidence
  - **Read before class**: Bardach and Patashnik-Introduction & Pages 1-18
  - *Discussion question*: What are the goals of a policy analysis? What is your problem definition? What 3 purposes do you need evidence for? What will your evidence look like?

- **Friday October 12**: No Class - Fall Recess

- **Monday October 15**: Professor Matt Hinton In-Class Writing Center Workshop

- **Wednesday October 17**: Alternatives
  - *Discussion Question*: What are your alternatives? How will you evaluate them?

- **Friday October 19**: Outcomes, Trade-Offs, and Story Telling
  - *Discussion Question*: What positive and negative outcomes do you expect? What are the costs and benefits of one policy over the others?

- **Monday October 22**: Assembling Evidence
  - *Discussion Question*: What data will you use?

- **Wednesday October 24**: Handling a Design Problem & Best Practices
  - **Read before class**: Pages 113-140 (Bardach)
  - *Discussion Question*: Who are your stakeholders? How would you explain this to a layman in a way that a policymaker might also be able to translate it into practice?

- **Friday October 26**: Take Home Assignment 1

- **Monday October 29**: Federalism
  - **Listen before class**: Federalism podcast
  - Lecture on federalism, no reading for this class.
• Wednesday October 31: TBA
• Friday November 2: Trade Policy
• Monday November 5: Tax Policy
• Wednesday November 7: Immigration Policy
• Friday November 9: Civil Rights Policy
• Monday November 12: Criminal Justice Policy
• Wednesday November 14: Environmental Policy
  – Charlie Cray is an activist, policy analyst and campaign strategist with 25+ years of experience in commitments to environmental justice and corporate accountability.
  – Cray will talk with us about corporate influence in environmental policy making.
• Friday November 16: Economic Policy
• Monday November 19: Healthcare Policy-Saldin CH 1
  – Discussion Question:
• Wednesday November 21: Healthcare Policy-Saldin CH 2
  – Discussion Question:
• Friday November 23: Healthcare Policy-Saldin CH 3
  – Discussion Question:
• Monday November 26: Healthcare Policy-Saldin CH 4
  – Discussion Question:
• Wednesday November 28: Healthcare Policy-Saldin CHs 5-6
  – Discussion Question:
• Friday November 30: Take-home Assignment 2
• Monday December 3: Healthcare Policy-Saldin CHs 7-8
  – Discussion Question:
• Wednesday December 5: Healthcare Policy - Medicare and Medicaid
  – Medicaid
- Medicare
- Universal Healthcare
- Get Your Federalism Outta My Healthcare

• Friday December 7: Welfare Policy

Caveat

The aforementioned weekly schedule and assignments in this course are subject to change.