PPD 554: Foundations of Policy Analysis
USC Sol Price School of Public Policy

Fall 2022 – 4 units

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Welcome to PPD 554! I am excited to spend this semester together, learning about the power and pitfalls of policy analysis. This course focuses on what policy analysis is and how to conduct it. We will learn how to write an issue diagnosis, work together in teams for labs and projects, and culminate the course by writing a policy report. I look forward to getting to know each of you as you begin your MPP and we explore policy analysis fundamentals!

Covid-19 Acknowledgement: *It's hard to believe but this is now the third academic year that Covid-19 will influence our learning environment. While we hope that the worst has passed, I also recognize that we are still living amid a pandemic. As such, there may be developments that present unforeseen challenges to us all, but I will do my best to work with you through those challenges so that you can succeed and learn effectively throughout this course. It always helps build trust when you come to me ahead of time with these obstacles and we can discuss solutions together. But where challenges are unexpected, I will do my best to remain flexible with you while also being fair to your peers.*

In addition, please keep in mind these health & safety guidelines as we begin the course:

- *We strongly recommend wearing medical-grade masks or respirator masks (including surgical, N95, KN95, KF94) when indoors around others to reduce transmission and risk of infection. Masking is most effective when there is both a good fit (no gaps, covering the nose, mouth, chin) and good filtration.*

- *There will be no eating inside the classroom. Please use the break to step outside if you need to snack.*

- *Please do not attend class in person if you are experiencing possible Covid-19 symptoms. Students will be able to access a recording of class in the case of quarantine (see Participation Guidelines* section *of the syllabus for further instructions on class participation).*

- *Bring your laptops to each class as we will try to minimize the exchange of papers this semester.*

- *I will be conducting weekly office hours over Zoom for the semester. If you would like to meet in person, please contact me via Slack to schedule a time.*

Professor Ryan Alcantara

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course discusses the foundations of public policy analysis. Topics cover issue diagnosis, policy design, analytic reasoning, argumentation, and options analysis. Students discuss the complexities of public policy analysis and the value tradeoffs associated with public problem-solving. Additional themes include audience-centered policy writing, the role of the public policy professional, and ethical issues in policy analysis.

Public policy analysis has been described as the art and craft of "speaking truth to power."[1]
It requires professionals to provide evidence-based, problem-solving advice to managers, policy-makers, or citizens. Policy analysis requires several distinct sets of skills: an understanding of the policy context, an appreciation for the concerns of diverse stakeholders, technical knowledge of analytical tools, and the ability to develop and communicate practical advice. The goal of the course is to help students apply analytic frameworks and methods to produce thoughtful and well-reasoned public policy analysis that is communicated effectively through policy products that are audience-centered, informative, relevant, and polished. The structure of the class is built around Eugene Bardach's "eightfold path" for policy analysis and problem-solving:

(Eugene Bardach, 2015)

The curriculum is structured to orient students to the professional role of the policy analyst, with particular attention to policy design, use of evidence in policy debate, and the value implications of policy choice.

Learning Objectives and Outcomes

Foundations of Policy Analysis acts as the introduction to the MPP program and the Public Policy Certificate at the Price School. By the end of this course, students should be able to demonstrate proficiency and expertise in the following learning outcomes:

- Issue Diagnosis: Students will learn how to analyze issues and frame problems with attention to stakeholder values and interests.
- Policy Design: Students will learn the basics of public policy design, including how to compare the strengths and weaknesses of various policy tools. Students will conduct research to identify best practices and adapt these to fit a policy context.

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[1] Wildavsky, A. (1987). *Speaking truth to power: The art and craft of policy analysis*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

- Critical Reasoning and Ethics: Students will build their analytical capabilities and learn how to apply a multi-dimensional lens that includes a concern for equity.
- Options Analysis: Students will learn how to use multi-attribute analysis to highlight tradeoffs between alternatives and to identify optimum outcomes.
- Tradecraft: Students will develop the skills and judgment required to work as professionals in the policy world: research, analysis, writing, speaking, and data visualization.
- Team Management: Students will learn how to collaborate in teams to conduct research, develop analyses, and prepare joint presentations.

Course Website

While we will be using several other technologies throughout the course, our main landing page for all course-related materials will be the Blackboard website (http://blackboard.usc.edu). Please login using your USC credentials.

Once on Blackboard's main page, select PPD 554. Through this website, you will have access to an online version of the course syllabus, course assignments and materials, resources that may be useful to you, announcements posted from time to time, and easy email capability to communicate with the class. In addition, students will submit all of their written assignments on Blackboard in the Assignments section unless otherwise indicated. See *Submitting Assignments* section below.

Students should check the course site regularly. I will be sending weekly (often more frequent) announcements on the site concerning class, assignments, and any changes or updates. You can check the announcements and other posted materials by logging in and going to the Blackboard announcement section. You can also set your communication settings so that all course announcements are emailed to you (I highly recommend this). Please use your USC email address, even if you have other addresses. The Blackboard system will not accept non-USC addresses so you may miss class email communications if you do not use the USC email address.

For technical support on Blackboard, call the Blackboard Help Line (213)740-5555 or email Blackboard Support at blackboard@usc.edu.

Course Format

The course includes a combination of lecture, discussion, in-class exercises and labs, case analyses, writing, and multimedia presentations. A primary focus is on engagement with the materials and application of the methods and tools covered in the course.

During the course of the semester I will regularly review student progress, and will revise the syllabus to meet class needs when necessary.

Communication

If you have questions about the concepts or course materials, or you are having problems or challenges, please contact me via Slack, email, Zoom, or in person. If you have a purely *administrative* question, spend 5 minutes trying to answer it on your own and then contact our Course Assistant. If she cannot quickly resolve the issue, then please contact me.

For relatively straightforward queries, Slack or email will produce a quicker response than scheduling an appointment for a meeting. More complex communication should be handled in face-to-face conversation. To schedule a meeting, please email me with a few scheduling options. Emails will typically receive a response within 24-36 hours. If you do not receive a response to your email after 48 hours, please send a follow-up email to float your message to the top of my inbox. When sending an email, please put the course number at the beginning of the subject line followed by a brief description of your request (e.g. PPD554: Meeting request).

Preparation and Participation Guidelines

Students are expected to participate weekly and attend class meetings. Again, please do not attend in person class if you are sick or are experiencing any Covid-19 symptoms. Contact me in advance of the class session if you are sick and need to miss class.

Students should prepare for thoughtful and respectful participation in class discussions, in-class exercises, and work in project teams. Observed patterns of behavior that demonstrate a lack of respect for the professor and/or other students in the course will result in a reduction in your participation grade.

To maximize learning for the class, students are expected to read the assigned readings and review all of the key concepts before class. It is strongly recommended that students take notes highlighting key concepts and questions from each reading and discussing readings with others before and after class.

Please be aware that we may discuss current events, successful and failed policies, and other topics that some students may find sensitive. All discussions will be conducted with respect and decorum by the professor *and* the students. Any concerns should be discussed with me.

This class welcomes discussion and debate, but it is expected that you will treat each other with respect and kindness. We will engage sensitive topics by:

1) Listening respectfully to differing viewpoints and not talking or at the same times as others.

2) Prioritizing empirical evidence to back up claims about policy.

3) Where appropriate, reviewing our own political, ideological, or personal attitudes, and noting and/or discussing how those may affect our judgments.

During class, please mute mobile phones and store them out of sight unless they are needed for an activity. Research shows that the mere presence of a smartphone can distract the owner and nearby colleagues (Meyer, 2017). Research by Mueller and Oppenheimer (2014) shows that students who take notes in longhand retain more information and demonstrate greater conceptual understanding. So, although laptops and other technology may be useful during collaborative portions of the class, taking notes by hand during lectures and student presentations is a great method to retain information.

Please avoid using technology for personal reasons during class, including texting, social media, and non-class browsing. Repeated use of technology for non-class purposes will result in a reduction in your participation grade.

Lastly, please review the USC guide to Emergency Preparedness so we can safely respond in case of emergency: https://safety.usc.edu/emergency-preparedness/

Etiquette for Zoom Sessions, should they be necessary (adapted from Dr. Vertenten)

Although this class is will be held in person, it is still helpful to provide some some specific guidelines when participating in an online classroom space. Your attention to these guidelines will make the classroom experience more meaningful and successful for you and your peers.

Background: The area around you and in back of you that is in view of your camera should be considered part of the classroom environment. Therefore, plan to participate in a setting that allows your full participation and is free of auditory or visual distractions or please make use of the virtual background feature on Zoom. See the *Appendix* for more on how to set a virtual background.

Video image: Your thumbnail video image will be all you have to convey yourself to the class and to your instructor when your video is not on. Take time to upload a photo where you are easily visible from the shoulders up (think about the layout of a passport photo).

Interaction: Observe the same standards of courtesy and interpersonal respect that govern face-to-face classroom behavior. This includes using a professional tone and language, speaking audibly, turn-taking (not holding the floor for too long), and supporting the discussion and ideas of others.

Behavior: In order to help create a positive and engaging climate, please avoid behaving in an overtly inattentive manner, such as engaging in excessive private chatting or other private communication during class meetings, interacting with persons who are not part of the class, etc.

REQUIRED READINGS & SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

- Bardach, E. & Patashnik, E. M. (2019). *A practical guide for policy analysis: The eightfold path to more effective problem solving*. Los Angeles, Calif: SAGE. – Available for purchase at USC Bookstore or as an e-reader. (hereafter refer to as **Bardach**)

- Pennock, A. (2018). *The CQ Press writing guide for public policy*. CQ Press. – Available for purchase at USC Bookstore. (hereafter referred to as **Pennock**)

- Course readings and links are available through ARES (the library's electronic reserves system) and/or Blackboard.

DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS & ASSESSMENT

1) *Participation, Class Exercises, and Discussion Boards (12%)*

   Students are expected to be on time to each class, come prepared to contribute to class discussions and activities, and demonstrate respect for the learning process. See *Participation Guidelines* section for more information.

Students will also be asked to complete various exercises in class (whether in person or on Zoom) throughout the semester that will count towards the participation grade. Exercises will be assessed more around contribution, effort, and application rather than whether a response is right or wrong to encourage students to participate and apply concepts and methods in the course.

Students will also participate in two Discussion Boards (**Week 2 & 8**) on Blackboard throughout the semester. Students will submit one post that is approximately 200-300 words. Students should review the instructions for each Discussion Board carefully as they may vary slightly.

2) *Discussion Facilitation (5%)*

Students will sign up for a topic and together as a group will facilitate a class discussion and engagement around a topic or issue from the course materials. Students who are assigned to a topic will be asked to lead a discussion or activity (depending on the session) around an assigned reading. Students who are assigned a discussion board will be asked to moderate posts and facilitate the class conversation's progress around the assigned questions for the discussion board. Each discussion facilitation assignment will vary a bit depending on the issue and medium, but all assignments will be aimed at students demonstrating the ability to summarize key points, provoke insightful engagement, and lead with critical thinking. More specific instructions will be provided with each assignment.

3) *Lab Exercises (15%)*

Students will complete five lab workshops during class over the semester. The lab workshops will cover various methodological topics and provide students with an opportunity to apply and practice the theories and concepts covered in the course. After completing the preparatory work for that week, students will come to the class and work on the lab exercises independently in groups. The teaching team will guide and monitor progress while helping the class to engage with and examine critical points to the activity. These in-class workshops will help reinforce fundamental conceptual and analytical techniques covered in the course.

Students may work in partnership to complete the analysis, but they must write up the assignments and submit them individually. The five lab exercises will combine to count towards 15% of the course grade. For more information on topics and dates, please see the *Grading Breakdown* below.

4) *Policy Memo #1 (15%)*

The first major writing assignment for the course involves researching and analyzing an assigned policy issue and then summarizing your assessment of the problem, relevant factors, stakeholders, and context in an issue diagnosis. After gathering and analyzing evidence and research on the proposed policy issue, students will each write a 900 to 1,100 word single-spaced policy memo to their client. Papers should be written in 12-point Times New Roman type, with 1-inch margins and references in APA format.

The entire class will analyze the same policy issue, and some research will be shared collectively through the course website. You will receive more specific instructions for this memo assignment three weeks (**Week 3**) before the assignment is due **Week 6**.

5) *Group Presentation (5%)*

Project teams will work together to present an issue briefing during **Week 9**. The issue briefing will focus on one issue, selected by the team, in one of the 4 research areas provided by the professor in **Week 6** of the course. Presentations should be a 5-7 minute briefing that introduces the audience to the team's topic and

follows the outline provided by the professor. Guidelines on work distribution and project management will be provided in class.

6) *Policy Memo #2 & Peer Evaluation (8%)*

Project teams will work together to write an issue memo as a team. Similar to the Policy Memo #1, project teams will gather and analyze evidence and research on the selected topic and issue and write a 4-page double-spaced issue memo. The issue memo will not provide a recommendation on course of action. Instead, the goal of the issue memo will be simply to raise awareness and quickly bring the audience up to speed on the issue. Paper should be written in 12-point Times New Roman type, with 1-inch margins and references in APA format.

Guidelines on work distribution and project management will be provided in class in **Week 7** and the assignment will be due before class on **Week 10.** Only one submission per group is necessary for the assignment. Groups will also be assessed on collaboration and participation for the assignment. Each student will also complete a peer evaluation form that assesses each team member's contribution.

7) *Policy Analysis Paper Outline (5%)*

Students will create a 2 or 3-page outline of their policy analysis paper and submit it before class on **Week 13** to receive detailed feedback as they draft their final paper.

Incorporating the material from the Group Presentation and Policy Memo #2, students will individually work to complete a policy analysis paper. The policy paper should aim to make a recommendation for action on the issue on which the project team has focused their work. The recommendation should be made to an identified decision maker to take action on the identified issue and the paper should incorporate the analytic frameworks and methods discussed throughout the course.

8) *Final Group Presentation & Peer Evaluation (8%)*

Project teams will prepare a final briefing presentation of no more than 10-15 minutes that summarizes the research and analysis the team has conducted in their policy analysis papers in class on **Week 15**. The presentation will be followed by a brief time for questions and comments aimed at providing feedback to the project team in preparation for their final policy analysis papers. Each teammate will also complete a peer evaluation form that assesses the collaboration within their team. Guidelines on work distribution and project management will be provided in class.

9) *Final Policy Analysis Paper (28%)*

Incorporating the work and research conducted as a project team, in addition to the comments received on the Policy Analysis Paper Outline, students will each write a Final Policy Analysis Paper of no more than 3,650-3,850 words. The paper should make a recommendation to take action on the identified issue based on thoughtful analysis and evidence using the frameworks and methods discussed in the course to an identified decision maker. The Final Policy Analysis Paper must define the issue, identify specific options to "resolve" it, analyze the strengths and weaknesses of those options with reference to specific and defined analytic criteria and goals, address tradeoffs, and make a recommendation. Paper should be written in 12-point Times New Roman type, with 1-inch margins and references in APA format. The paper will be **due on the day of the course final at 11:59pm** on Turnitin.

Assignment Schedule & Grading Breakdown

Assignment	% of Grade	Due Date
Participation Exercises & Discussion Boards	8	Various, See schedule
Discussion Facilitation	5	Various, See schedule
5 Lab Exercises (3% each) • Lab #1 – Interpreting Evidence • Lab #2 – Political Analysis • Lab #3 – Stakeholder Analysis • Lab #4 – Projecting Outcomes • Lab #5 – CAM Analysis	15	Wk 3, 5, 7, 11, 12
Policy Memo #1 (individual)	18	Wk 6
Group Presentation	5	Wk 9
Policy Memo #2 (group) & Peer Eval (indiv)	8	Wk 10
Policy Analysis Paper Outline	5	Wk 13
Final Group Presentation (group) & Peer Eval (indiv)	8	Wk 15
Final Policy Analysis Paper	28	11:59pm on day of final
TOTAL	**100%**	

Grading Scale

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale:

A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59 and below

Academic Honesty and Avoiding Plagiarism

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. SCampus, the Student Guidebook, contains the University Student Conduct Code (see University Governance, Section 11.00), while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A.

Students are expected to work at high standards of integrity and avoid plagiarism. The Price School defines plagiarism as: "presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words"; "plagiarism is a serious academic offense with serious consequences" which can include an F on the assignment and in the class.

To avoid plagiarism, place any use of *two* or more words of text within quotes and provide a citation using APA style. In addition, if you use ideas, concepts, statistics or other evidence from a source — *even if it's not a verbatim quote* — you must provide appropriate credit and cite a source. USC's library website has useful resources on avoiding plagiarism: http://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/plagiarism

Academic dishonesty, such as fraudulently passing off another person's work as your own, is a more serious offense and can result in an F in the class and additional disciplinary action by USC that can include expulsion. Although cases of academic dishonesty are rare, we use Turnitin and other electronic resources to keep students honest — *do not sacrifice your academic career* for the sake of a grade.

Please also remember that USC policy prohibits the distribution of course materials outside of the learning environment.

Submitting Assignments

The submission, grading, and return of all assignments will be in electronic format. Please follow the procedures below when submitting your assignments electronically:

- *Digital Backup:* It is good practice to *back up* your work to cloud storage so theft or equipment failures do not cause you to miss deadlines.

- *Blackboard/Turnitin & Microsoft Word/PDF*: All electronic assignments should be submitted through Blackboard in the Assignments section. All written assignments unless otherwise specified, must be uploaded as a Microsoft Word or PDF file to the appropriate Turnitin or assignment link on Blackboard. Email or hardcopy are not permitted without prior permission. Please keep a copy of your Turnitin receipt with the date and time of your submission.

- *Draft Originality*: For each written assignment, there will be an "originality check" Turnitin link available on Blackboard. Please upload the document in advance, check for underlined text, and either rewrite in your own words or add quotation marks as appropriate before submitting it to the assignment link.

- *Naming convention.* Please name all documents using the following convention: **yourlastname_assignmentname** (i.e., Alcantara_positionmemo.docx).

- *Policy on late assignments:* Please inform the course assistant and instructor in advance if you must miss a deadline. Late documents may be graded down 10% per day.

Guidelines for Writing

To ensure your assignment is eligible for full credit, it is good to make sure that you finish the assignment with enough time to proofread it a final time, upload the assignment, and check that your assignment submission is successful. All written assignments in the course should follow the guidelines below:

- Provide assignments in Microsoft Word format unless otherwise specified
- Compose assignments as double-spaced text, set in 12-point font (Times New Roman or equivalent) with 1-inch margins
- Include page numbers and labels for all tables and figures (if any)
- Cite all sources using APA style

- Write in an analytical style using clear, concise and cogent text
- Carefully edit your writing so the text is free of typos and usage errors.
- Label all files: lastname_assignmentname.doc (i.e., Alcantara_positionmemo.docx)
- Backup your assignment to cloud storage (Google Drive is provided for use to all USC students)

As this is a writing-intensive class, papers are expected to be clear, concise, and cogently argued using an *analytical* writing style. An analytical style:

- Provides evidence for all factual assertions in a straight-forward manner
- Focuses on identifying "relationships between pieces of information" by comparing, contrasting, assessing, or evaluating ideas; and
- Uses a clear "structure based on the ordering of main ideas in relation to each other" (University of Sydney, 2012).

Additional resources on APA references and citations can be found on:

- The APA website provides a range of learning resources: http://www.apastyle.org/learn/index.aspx
- Purdue's OWL also provides a helpful guide: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html

Additional help with writing can be found in:

- W. Strunk Jr and EB White. The Elements of Style, 4th ed. Longman Pub, 2000.
- Style Manual for Political Science: https://connect.apsanet.org/stylemanual/wp-content/uploads/sites/43/2018/11/Style-Manual-for-Political-Science-2018.pdf
- Purdue Online Writing Lab: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/4/16/
- Grammarly – https://www.grammarly.com

Students who need help with writing are strongly encouraged to consult with the course professor, course assistant, and/or visit the USC Writing Center. Please visit them online for resources and appointments: https://dornsife.usc.edu/writingcenter/.

Equity and Diversity

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity http://equity.usc.edu or to the Department of Public Safety https://safety.usc.edu/. This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person.

Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to CA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located

in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Website for DSP and contact information: (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 740-6948 (TDD only), (213) 740-8216 (FAX) **ability@usc.edu**.
Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity in a Crisis

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies. See the university's site on **Campus Safety and Emergency Preparedness**, https://safety.usc.edu/emergency-preparedness/.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct:

Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, https://ooc.usc.edu/research-compliance/scientific-integrity/.

Support Systems:

Student Counseling Services (SCS) – (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call
Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – is now just three digits: 988
Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. https://988lifeline.org/

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) – (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.
https://sites.google.com/usc.edu/rsvpclientservices/home

Sexual Assault Resource Team Care Resources
For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: https://studenthealth.usc.edu/sart-resources/

Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX) – (213) 740-5086
Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. https://eeotix.usc.edu/

Bias Assessment Response and Support
Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. https://usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report/index.php/pid007668?

The Office of Student Accessibility Services
Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations.
https://osas.usc.edu/

Student Support and Intervention – (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. https://campussupport.usc.edu/trojans-care-4-trojans/

Diversity at USC
Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. https://diversity.usc.edu/

USC Emergency Information
Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. https://safety.usc.edu/emergency-preparedness/

USC Department of Public Safety – UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime.
Provides overall safety to USC community. https://safety.usc.edu/

COURSE OUTLINE

Module		Topic
Overview	1	Introduction to Policy Analysis
Elements of an Issue Diagnosis	2	Defining the Problem & Assembling Evidence
	3	Social Construction in Policy Analysis
	4	Politics, Process, & Change in Issue Diagnosis
	5	Stakeholders & Place in Policy Analysis
Elements of an Solutions Analysis	6	Constructing Alternatives & Identifying Criteria
	7	Identifying Policy Variables & Designing Policy Options
	8	Group Consultations (Fall Break)
	9	Policy Options & Theory of Change
	10	Theories of Change, Estimating Impacts, & Comparing Outcomes
	11	Considering Trade-offs & Decision-making
	12	Using Data Visualizations (Zoom Class)
	13	Putting It Together & Telling Your Story
Wrap-up	14	(Thanksgiving Break)
	15	Final Presentations & Wrap Up

COURSE SCHEDULE

OVERVIEW OF COURSE

Session 1 (8/25) – Introduction to Policy Analysis
- Course overview, schedule, assignments, policies
- What is good policy analysis?
- Role of the policy analyst

Class Preparation:
- Read class syllabus
- Sign up for Discussion Facilitation (posted on Blackboard)
- View instructional media (Intro, Policy studies)
- **Bardach**, Introduction (pp. XV-XX); Part One - Step 1 & 2 (pp. 1-20)

ELEMENTS OF AN ISSUE DIAGNOSIS

Session 2 (9/1) – Defining the Problem & Assembling Evidence
- Gathering research & utilizing sources
- Discussion Facilitation #1
- Lab #1 – Interpreting evidence & paraphrasing

Class Preparation:
- **DUE Discussion Board #1 (Role of Policy Analyst)**
- Complete instructional media & exercises (Gathering research)
- Readings for Lab #1 – see Blackboard
- Jenkins-Smith, H. C. (1982). Professional roles for policy analysts: A critical assessment. Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 2(1), 88-100.
- "Chapter 1: Diagnosing the problem" in Pellini, A. (2014). The RAPID Outcome Mapping Approach and project management for policy change. Retrieved from: http://roma.odi.org/defining_the_problem.html (pp. 11-21).
- Review **Bardach**, Part Two - Assembling Evidence (pp. 97-122)

Recommended:
- Sherman, R. (2002). The subjective experience of race and gender in qualitative research. *American Behavioral Scientist*, *45*(8), 1247-1253.

Session 3 (9/8) – Social Construction in Policy Analysis
- Audience-centered policy writing & communication
- Bias in policy analysis
- Discussion Facilitation #2

Class Preparation:
- **DUE Lab #1 (Interpreting evidence & paraphrasing)**
- Complete instructional media & exercises (Policy writing, Bias)
- Musso, J., Biller, R., & Myrtle, R. (2000). Tradecraft: Professional writing as problem solving. Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 19(4), 635-646.

- **Pennock**, Ch 1 - Audiences & Audience-centered Writing in Public Policy (pp. 1-12) & Ch 8 - The Issue Brief (pp. 137-154)
- Schneider, A., & Ingram, H. (1993). Social construction of target populations: Implications for politics and policy. The American Political Science Review, 87(2), 334-347.
- Glaser, J., Spencer, K., & Charbonneau, A. (2014). Racial Bias and Public Policy. *Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, *1*(1), 88–94. https://doi.org/10.1177/2372732214550403

Recommended:
- Jost, J. T., Rudman, L. A., Blair, I. V., Carney, D. R., Dasgupta, N., Glaser, J., & Hardin, C. D. (2009). The existence of implicit bias is beyond reasonable doubt: A refutation of ideological and methodological objections and executive summary of ten studies that no manager should ignore. Research in organizational behavior, 29, 39-69.
- Hardin, C., & Banaji, M. (2019). The Nature of Implicit Prejudice: Implications for Personal and Public Policy (pp. 13–31). Princeton University Press. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400845347-005

Session 4 (9/15) – Politics, Process, and Change in Public Policy
- Problem analysis
- Managing Clients
- Lab #2 – Political analysis

Class Preparation:
- Complete instructional media & exercises (Policy argument tools)
- Readings for Lab #2 – see Blackboard
- Ch 11: Policy Adoption in Weimer, D. L., & Vining, A. R. (2017). Policy analysis: Concepts and practice. Taylor & Francis, (pp. 259-279).
- Rittel, H. W. J., & Webber, M. M. (1973). Dilemmas in a general theory of planning. Policy Sciences, 4, 155-169.
- **Pennock**, Ch 2 - Generating and Organizing Your Argument, (pp. 15-36)
- Nelson & Oxley (1999). Issue framing effects on belief importance and opinion. The Journal of Politics, 61(4), 1040-1067.
- Stone, D. A. (1989). Causal stories and the formation of policy agendas. Political Science Quarterly, 10(2), 281-300.
- Research for Policy Memo #1 assignment

Recommended:
- Dunn, Ch 3 - Structuring Policy Problems, pp. 68-81
- Schneider, A., & Ingram, H. (1990). Behavioral assumptions of policy tools. The Journal of Politics, 52(2), 510-529.
- Stewart, J., & Ayres, R. (2001). Systems theory and policy practice: An exploration. Policy Sciences, 34(1), 79–94. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1010334804878

Session 5 (9/22) – Stakeholders and Place in Policy Analysis
- Stakeholders and interests
- Policy criteria
- Writing & peer review
- Discussion Facilitation #3

Class Preparation:
- **DUE Lab #2 (Political analysis)**
- Complete instructional media & exercises (Stakeholder analysis)
- Collingwood-Richardson, K. (2018). "Empathy and the Future of Policymaking." *The Fourth Group.*
- Hancock, A. (2007). When Multiplication Doesn't Equal Quick Addition: Examining Intersectionality as a Research Paradigm. *Perspectives on Politics*, *5*(1), 63–79. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592707070065
- Dearden, P., Jones, S., & Sartorius, R. (2002). Ch2: Stakeholder analysis. In Tools for development: A handbook for those engaged in development activity. Londres, Royaume-Uni: Department for International Development (DFID), 2.1-2.11.
- Reading for Policy Memo #1 assignment

Recommended:
- Gimond, M. (2021). "Intro to GIS and Spatial Analysis." https://mgimond.github.io/Spatial/index.html
- Varvarovszky, Z., & Brugha, R. (2000). How to do (or not to do) a stakeholder analysis. Health Policy and Planning, 15(3), 338-345.

ELEMENTS OF A SOLUTIONS ANALYSIS

Session 6 (9/29) – Constructing Alternatives and Criteria
- Overview of solutions analysis
- Policy Memo #2 & Working groups
- Lab #3 – Stakeholder Analysis

Class Preparation:
- **DUE POLICY MEMO #1**
- Readings for Lab #3 – see Blackboard
- Complete instructional media & exercises (Criteria)
- **Bardach**, Part One - Step 3-4, (pp. 21-48)
- REVIEW Dearden, P., Jones, S., & Sartorius, R. (2002). Ch2: Stakeholder analysis. In Tools for development: A handbook for those engaged in development activity. Londres, Royaume-Uni: Department for International Development (DFID), 2.1-2.11.

Recommended:
- Varvarovszky, Z., & Brugha, R. (2000). How to do (or not to do) a stakeholder analysis. Health Policy and Planning, 15(3), 338-345.

Session 7 (10/6) – Identifying Policy Variables & Designing Policy Options
- Equity as criteria
- Policy variables
- Effective presentations & group work sessions
- Discussion Facilitation#4

Class Preparation:
- **DUE Lab #3 (Stakeholder analysis)**
- Short case study reading
- **Bardach**, Part Three - Handling a Design Problem (pp. 123-132)
- Osterle, A. (2002). Evaluating equity in social policy. Evaluation, 8(1). 46-59.

- SKIM MacRae, D., & Whittington, D. (1997). Selecting criteria. In Expert Advice for Policy Choice: Analysis and Discourse. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 66-111. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1q8jjc4.7
- Reading for Group Policy Memo #2 assignment

Recommended:
- Shulock, N. (2000). The paradox of policy analysis: If it is not used, why do we produce so much of it? Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 19(4), 226-244.

Session 8 (10/13) – Presentation Preparation and Group Consultations

NO CLASS MEETING (Fall Recess)

- Data visualization
- Group meetings with instructors on Policy Memo #2 & presentations
- Discussion Facilitation #5

Class Preparation:
- **DUE Discussion Board #2 (Ethics in Policy Analysis)**
- Complete instructional media & exercises (Effective presentations)
- Amy, D. (1984). Why policy analysis and ethics are incompatible. Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 3(4), 573-591.
- Grant, R. (2006). Ethics and incentives: A political approach. American Political Science Review, 100, 29-39.
- Reading for Group Policy Memo #2 assignment

Recommended:
- Bardach, Part Four - Smart Practices (pp. 133-146)

Session 9 (10/20) – Policy Options and Theory of Change
- Feedback on Policy Memo #1
- Group Presentations & Feedback
- HANDOUT: Final Project

Class Preparation:
- **DUE Group Presentations** (Slide deck due before class on Blackboard)
- Complete instructional media & exercises (Policy options)
- "Ch 6: Selecting the Appropriate Intervention Strategy in Kettner", P. M., Moroney, R. M., & Martin, L. L. (2015). *Designing and managing programs: An effectiveness-based approach.* Sage Publications, (pp. 103-120).
Serrat, O. (2017). Theories of change. In Knowledge Solutions (pp. 237-243). Springer, Singapore.
- **Bardach**, Appendix A - Things Governments Do (pp. 147-156)
- **Bardach**, Appendix B - Understanding Public & Nonprofit Institutions (pp. 157-164)

Recommended:
- Weimer, D. L. (1993). The current state of design craft: Borrowing, tinkering, and problem solving. Public Administration Review, 53(2), 110-120.

- Kellogg, W. K. (2006). Logic Model Development Guide. WK Kellogg Foundation Web site, (pp. 1-11, 27-34).

Session 10 (10/27) – Theories of Change, Estimating Impacts, and Comparing Outcomes
- Lab #4 – Projecting Outcomes
- Overview on Final Project & Outline

Class Preparation:
- **DUE POLICY MEMO #2** (Group)
- **DUE PEER EVAL #1** (due end of week)
- Complete instructional media & exercises (Policy instruments, Outlines)
- Readings for Lab #4 – see Blackboard
- **Bardach**, Part One - Step 5-6, (pp. 49-76)
- Weimer & Vining, Policy Analysis: Concepts & Practice, Landing on Your Feed: How to Confront Policy Problems (pp. 340-370)
- Dunn, Ch4 - Forecasting Projected Outcomes, (pp. 118-147)

Recommended:
- May, P. J. (1981). Hints for crafting alternative policies. Policy Analysis, 227-244.

Session 11 (11/3) – Considering Trade-offs and Decision-making
- Strategies for a solutions analysis
- Lab #5 – Criterion-Alternatives Matrix (CAM) Analysis

Class Preparation:
- **DUE Lab #4 (Projecting Outcomes)**
- Complete instructional media & exercises (Extrapolation)
- Musso, J. Confronting tradeoffs. Unpublished manuscript. (6 pgs)
- REVIEW Weimer & Vining, Policy Analysis: Concepts & Practice, Landing on Your Feed: How to Confront Policy Problems (pp. 340-370)
- Reading for Final Policy Analysis Paper assignment

Recommended:
- Macrae, D., & Whittington, D. (1997). Aiding choices with the criteria/alternatives matrix. Expert advice for policy choice: Analysis and discourse, (pp. 193-228). Washington, D. C.: Georgetown University Press.

Session 12 (11/10) – Using Data Visualizations (Zoom session TBC)
- Data visualization workshop
- Final Project instructions
- Discussion Facilitation #6

Class Preparation:
- **DUE Lab #5 (CAM Analysis)**
- Complete instructional media & exercises (Visual stories)
- **Bardach,** Part One - Step 7-8, (pp. 77-96)

- **Pennock**, Ch 5 - Visually Communicating: On Creating and Writing About Tables (pp. 75-92)
- Evergreen, S. D. H. (2020). *Effective data visualization: The right chart for the right data*. (Ch 1: Our Backbone: Why We Visualize; pp. 1-14)
- Reading for Final Policy Analysis Paper assignment

Recommended:
- Cairo, A. (2019). *How Charts Lie : Getting Smarter About Visual Information* (First edition.). W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. *Introduction* "How Charts Lie"
- Akwera, G. (2010). The Wall Street Journal Guide to Information Graphics The Dos and Don'ts of Presenting Data, Facts, and Figures. *Information Design Journal*, *18*(2), 178–179. ([Available Online](#))
- Assam, T., & Evergreen, S. (2013). Design principles for data visualization in evaluation. In Data visualization. Part 2 . Hoboken, New Jersey: [Jossey-Bass] (pp. 5-20).

Session 13 (11/17) – Putting It Together to Tell a Story
- Alternatives to CAM analysis
- Bringing it all together in a cohesive message
- Discussion Facilitation #7

Class Preparation:
- **DUE Final Project Sentence Outline**
- Complete instructional media & exercises (Cohesive presentations)
- Bardach, Part One - Tell Your Story (pp. 84-96)
- Pennock, Ch 7 - Pulling It All Together (pp. 117-134)
- Reading for Final Policy Analysis Paper assignment

Session 14 (11/24) – Constructing a Policy Briefer (Thanksgiving Break)
- Elements of a briefer
- Optional group meetings with instructors on final presentation & memos

Class Preparation:
- Complete instructional media & exercises (Policy briefers)
- Reading for Final Policy Analysis Paper assignment

Session 15 (12/1) – Final Presentations and Wrap Up
- Group presentations & peer feedback
- Concluding comments & course evaluation

Class Preparation:
- **DUE Final Group Presentations** (Slide deck due before class on Blackboard)
- **DUE PEER EVAL #2** (due end of week)
- Complete instructional media & exercises (Final tips)
- Reading for Final Policy Analysis Paper assignment

Final Policy Analysis Paper – Due 11:59pm on day of final on Turnitin

Appendix: Activating and Using Your USC Zoom Account

Question 1: How can I activate my Zoom account? (For New Users - All USC students have Zoom access)

1. Activate your Zoom Account: Visit https://usc.zoom.us
2. Login with your USC email and password
3. Download and install "Zoom Client for Meetings"
4. Launch the Zoom software and choose "Sign In with SSO"
5. Enter your @usc.edu email address and password
6. Click "Launch Zoom"

Question 2: How can I meet with you for virtual office hours?

1. Log into Zoom at https://usc.zoom.us with your USC credentials.
2. Either click on the URL provided in Blackboard or click "Join Meeting" and enter the Meeting ID and password.

Question 3: How do I enable a virtual background?

Virtual backgrounds can help hide distracting environments or add character to your Zoom meeting. To enable a virtual background, read https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/210707503-Virtual-Background

Question 4: How do I share my screen during a Zoom meeting or live session?

During our class live sessions, students will often be asked to share their work by sharing their computer screens on Zoom with the rest of the group or class. To learn how to share your screen, read https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/sections/201740106-Screen-Sharing

Question 5: How can I participate in the Zoom meeting live session?

- Most of you will be muted by default when you enter the room. See the yellow graphic below on how to un-mute and mute yourself (Unmute Icon).
- Most of you will also have your webcam turned off by default when you enter the meeting. Please make your video viewable, if possible. See yellow graphic below (Start Video Icon).
- At times, I may ask the class a general question and ask that students respond in their Chat box. See yellow graphic below on how to access the Chat box (Chat Icon).
- Other times, you may have a question you would like to ask or you may want to verbally respond to my question. To raise your hand in class, you will need to find the "Raise Hand" button in the Participants window. See red graphic below on how to access the Participants window and Raise Hand feature.