

**American Public Policy  
Political Science 310**

Spring 2021  
MWF 10.20a – 11.10a BLENDED  
Axinn 229

Christopher McGrory Klyza  
206 Hillcrest  
ex. 5309  
klyza@middlebury.edu

Office Hours: by appointment

This course will examine how public policy is made in the United States. Public policy can be thought of as the integration of all the components of politics and government and the examination of the entire process as a whole. That is, public policy builds upon and synthesizes our knowledge about political theory, political actors, and political institutions.

Throughout the course of the semester, we will focus on three main themes: (1) How is policy in the United States shaped by how we answer such basic questions as what should government do? What is public? What is private?; (2) How can we best understand the different stages in making policy: how issues get on the agenda, how different alternatives are debated and adopted, how policies are implemented, and how can we analyze the effectiveness of the policies that we have adopted?; and (3) How do we explain the policy making process in total? We will read case studies on agriculture, health care, and education to help illuminate these themes.

The course will be a mix of lecture and discussion.

**READINGS**

It is essential that you do the readings for the class in advance in order to follow lectures and to participate in class discussions.

We will read the following books in their entirety. It is best if you could purchase them. The library has electronic versions for three of the books, indicated below, and I have placed them on reserve. It is unclear if the library will be able to obtain electronic versions for the other books.

- Friedman, 1982, *Capitalism and Freedom*, 2d ed. (ebook)
- Judt, 2010, *Ill Fares the Land*
- Baumgartner and Jones, 2009, *Agendas and Instability in American Politics*, 2d ed.
- Bosso, 2017, *Framing the Farm Bill: Interests, Ideology, and the Agricultural Act of 2014* (ebook)
- Starr, 2013, *Remedy and Reaction: The Peculiar American Struggle over Health Care Reform*, revised ed. (ebook)
- McGuinn, 2006, *No Child Left Behind and the Transformation of Federal Education Policy, 1965-2005*

Readings marked by an \* in the syllabus are available through the course Canvas site. **You are not expected to print out these readings to bring to class.**

## GRADES AND ASSIGNMENTS

The grade in the course will be based on: (1) course participation and attendance (15 percent of course grade); (2) three 5-page papers due on MARCH 17<sup>th</sup>, APRIL 26<sup>th</sup>, and MAY 19<sup>th</sup> (15 percent of course grade per paper); (3) a midterm examination on MARCH 31<sup>st</sup> (20 percent); and (4) a final examination as scheduled (20 percent).

**ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE COMPLETED TO PASS THE COURSE.**

### COURSE OUTLINE

*February*

24 **Introduction REMOTE**

MAKING POLICY: THINKING ABOUT THE BIG PICTURE

26 **Pluralism: A Focus on Groups REMOTE**

1. \*Schneider, Anne L. and Helen Ingram, 1997, *Policy Design for Democracy*, Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, pp. 13-28.
2. \*Lindblom, Charles E., 1982, "The Market as Prison," *Journal of Politics*, 44: 324-336.

*March*

1 **History and Historical Institutionalism**

1. \*Pierson, Paul, 2000, "Not Just What, but When: Timing and Sequence in Political Processes," *Studies in American Political Development*, 14, pp. 74-84.
2. \*Sanders, Elizabeth, 2006, "Historical Institutionalism," in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions*, edited by R.A.W. Rhodes, Sarah A. Binder, and Bert A. Rockman, New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 39-55.

POLICY CONTEXT

3 **Liberalism and the Public Interest: What Should Government Do?**

1. >Madison, James, *The Federalist*, "Number 10." Available at: [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th\\_century/fed10.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/fed10.asp).
2. \*Wood, Gordon S., 1972, *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787*, New York: Norton, pp. 53-65.
3. \*Reich, Robert B., 1991, *The Work of Nations*, New York: Knopf, pp. 268-281.

5 **Capitalism, Democracy, and Government: How Do They Fit Together? How Should They Fit Together?**

1. Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom*, pp. 1-107 (skim pp. 37-84).  
**SCREENING:** Please watch the movie *Roger and Me* (90 minutes) before Friday March 12<sup>th</sup>. We will discuss it that day in class. It is available on many platforms, including free on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XDI6Bt6uO5c>.

8 Capitalism, Democracy, and Government continued

1. Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom*, pp. 108-202 (skim pp. 137-60).

10 Capitalism, Democracy, and Government continued

1. Judt, *Ill Fares the Land*, pp. 1-119.

12 Capitalism, Democracy, and Government continued

1. Judt, *Ill Fares the Land*, pp. 120-237.

- 15 **Different Governments for Different People?**  
1. \*Coates, Ta-Nehisi, 2015, *Between Me and the World*, New York: Spiegel & Grau, pp. 5-39, 108-111.

## EXPLAINING THE POLICY PROCESS

- 17 **Theories of Policy Making**  
1. \*Smith, Kevin B., and Christopher W. Larimer, 2009, *The Public Policy Theory Primer*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, pp. 27-48, 75-99.
- 19 **PAPER 1 DUE**  
**The Punctuated Equilibrium Theory of Public Policy**  
1. Baumgartner and Jones, *Agendas and Instability in American Politics*, pp. 1-82 (skim pp. 39-55).
- 22 The Punctuated Equilibrium Theory of Public Policy continued  
1. Baumgartner and Jones, *Agendas and Instability in American Politics*, pp. 83-192 (skim pp. 126-149).
- 24 The Punctuated Equilibrium Theory of Public Policy continued  
1. Baumgartner and Jones, *Agendas and Instability in American Politics*, pp. 193-289.
- 26 **Entering the Labyrinth**  
1. \*Pierson, Paul, 2007, “The Rise and Reconfiguration of Activist Government,” in *The Transformation of American Politics: Activist Government and the Rise of Conservatism*, edited by Paul Pierson and Theda Skocpol, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp. 19-38.  
2. \*Rauch, Jonathan, 1999, *Government’s End: Why Washington Stopped Working*, New York: Public Affairs, pp. 39-66.  
3. \*Sinclair, Barbara, 2007, *Unorthodox Lawmaking: New Legislative Processes in the U.S. Congress*, 3d ed., Washington: CQ Press, pp. 108-160, 196-214.  
4. >Fukuyama, Francis, 2013, “The Ties That Used to Bind: The Decay of American Political Institutions,” *The American Interest*, December. Available at: <http://www.the-american-interest.com/articles/2013/12/08/the-decay-of-american-political-institutions/>.
- 29 Entering the Labyrinth continued
- 31 **MIDTERM**
- April
- 2 **To be determined**
- 5 **Policy Making that Worked? Coalitions and Compromise in the 2014 Farm Bill**  
1. Bosso, *Framing the Farm Bill*, pp. 1-81.
- 7 Agriculture Policy continued  
1. Bosso, *Framing the Farm Bill*, pp. 82-168.
- 9 **NO CLASS—MID-TERM BREAK**
- 12 Agriculture Policy continued  
1. >Greider, William, 1981, “The Education of David Stockman,” *Atlantic*, December. Available at: <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1981/12/the-education-of-david-stockman/305760/>.
- 14 **Policy Making that Worked II? The Affordable Care Act of 2010**  
1. Starr, *Remedy and Reaction*, pp. 1-78.

- 16 Health Care Policy continued  
 1. Starr, *Remedy and Reaction*, pp. 79-193.  
**SCREENING:** Before April 21<sup>st</sup> watch “Frontline: Obama’s Deal: Inside the Battle for Health Care Reform,” 2010, 56 minutes, at:  
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/obamasdeal/>.
- 19 Health Care Policy continued  
 1. Starr, *Remedy and Reaction*, pp. 194-298.
- 21 Health Care Policy continued
- 23 **To be determined**
- 26 **Implementation: Putting Policies into Effect**  
 1. \*Susan E. Dudley, 2020, “The Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs and the Durability of Regulatory Oversight in the United States,” *Regulation & Governance*, pp. 1-18 (early view).  
 2. \*Kerwin, Cornelius M., and Scott R. Furlong, 2011, *Rulemaking: How Government Agencies Write Law and Make Policy*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., Washington: CQ Press, pp. 1-38.  
**PAPER 2 DUE**
- 28 Implementation continued
- 30 **Making Education Policy and Implementing It: The No Child Left Behind Act**  
 1. McGuinn, *No Child Left Behind*, pp. 1-74.
- May*
- 3 **NO CLASS--BREAK**
- 5 Education Policy continued  
 1. McGuinn, *No Child Left Behind*, pp. 75-145.
- 7 Education Policy continued  
 1. McGuinn, *No Child Left Behind*, pp. 146-210.
- 10 Education Policy continued
- 12 **Policy Evaluation and Analysis: Are the Policies Working? Can We Make Them Better?**  
 1. \*Heineman, Robert A., William T. Bluhm, Steven A. Peterson, and Edward N. Kearny, 2002, *The World of the Policy Analyst*, 3d ed., New York: Chatham House, pp. 30-55.  
 2. \*Waldfoegel, Jane, 2013, “The Safety Net for Families with Children,” in *Legacies of the War on Poverty*, edited by Martha J. Bailey and Sheldon Danziger, New York: Russell Sage Foundation, pp. 153-178.
- 14 Policy and Evaluation continued
- 17 **Environmental Policy as the New Normal**  
 1. \*Klyza, Christopher McGrory, and David J. Sousa, 2013, *American Environmental Policy: Beyond Gridlock*, updated and revised ed., Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, pp. 285-317.
- 19 **What Should Government Do Redux?**  
**PAPER 3 DUE**
- 21 **To be determined**

**FINAL EXAMINATION as scheduled**