The critical issues addressed in public policymaking inevitably involve political and moral choices. Public Policy has long been a signature course of Wagner’s MPA program in part because this is where those choices—and the core values of public service and good governance informing them—are confronted most directly.

Our attention to the values and choices central in policymaking will proceed in four stages. The initial weeks comprise an overview of public policy in a constitutional democracy—primarily as practiced in the contemporary U.S., but with reference to other places and times. The second segment takes up the making of public policy, addressing how complex systems of governance actually function. Third, we’ll explore the practice of policy analysis and evaluation. The course’s final weeks place these themes and processes in broader contexts, including ethical and global; along the way we’ll trace some of the principal tensions in democratic public policymaking.

**Course Requirements:** Attendance at all classes, given our limited time together, is essential: if you must be absent, *let me know in advance*. Grading is as follows: 2 short policy memos (30%); midterm exam (30%) and a final exam (40%). We’ll hold regular class-wide conversations; please arrive in class prepared to discuss readings and (especially) case studies. Optional outside-class discussions will also be available, as will on-line forums for exchanging your ideas and opinions.

**Course Readings:** Two books are required: Deborah Stone’s *Policy Paradox* (Norton, 2002 ed.) and Kraft and Furlong’s *Public Policy: Politics, Analysis and Alternatives* (CQ Press, 2010). A course reader of required articles is at New University Copiers (11 Waverly Place, b/t Mercer & Greene; 212-473-7369).

**Late Assignment Policy:** Extensions will be granted only in case of emergency, out of respect to those who abide by deadlines despite equally hectic schedules. Late submissions without extensions will be penalized ½ letter grade per day (B+ to B, e.g.)

**Students with disabilities:** Any students requiring accommodations should contact me to make proper arrangements. Please be prepared to share your documentation from the NYU disabilities office regarding appropriate accommodations.
Note: *readings are from books you buy; others are posted on course Blackboard site [indicated as BB on syllabus] or included in course reader.

Jan. 25  “Public Policy” Introduced

Readings  (Please complete this 1st assignment before arriving in class on the 25th).
*D. Stone, Policy Paradox (2002), Intro., ch. 1, Conc. (pp. 1-34, 376-83).
*Kraft and Furlong, Chapter 1

I. Ideas/Models

Feb. 1  Democratic Governance & Policymaking: An Overview

Readings:  *D. Stone, Policy Paradox, chs. 2 (“Equity”), 14 (“Rights”).
*Kraft and Furlong, Chapter 2

Feb. 8  Markets, Non-Profits, & Public Policy

Readings:  *D. Stone, Policy Paradox, ch. 3 (“Efficiency”).
J. Kurlantzick, “The Malawi Model” (2009) [BB]

*Assignment 1 (Policy Ideas) due by 6 PM, Monday, February 22.

Feb. 22  Models of Policymaking: How Does Change Occur?

Readings:  *Kraft and Furlong, Chapter 3

II. Making Public Policy

Mar. 1  Problems: Framing/Agenda-Setting

Readings:  *Kraft and Furlong, Chapter 4
D. Stone, Part III intro. (pp. 131-35), chs. 6 (“Symbols”), 8 (“Causes”).

Mar. 8  **Early-term Exam: In-class; essays/IDs.
Mar. 22  
**Responses: Policy Formation & Analysis**

**Readings:**
- *Kraft and Furlong, Chapter 5*

Mar. 29  
**Solutions I: Policy Adoption & Institutions.**

**Readings:**
- *Kraft and Furlong, Chapter 6*

Apr. 5  
**Solutions II: Policy Adoption & Interests.**

**Readings:**

Apr. 12  
**Action: Policy Implementation**

**Readings:**
- *Kraft and Furlong, Chapter 10*

*Assignment 2 (Policy Brief) due by 6 PM, Monday, April 19.

Apr. 19  
**Impact: Policy Evaluation & Feedback**

**Readings:**
- *Kraft and Furlong, Chapter 13*
- S. Mettler, “Policy Feedback Effects of the GI Bill” (2002). [BB]

IV. **Themes in Democratic Policymaking**

Apr. 26  
**Ethics, Accountability, and Policymaking**

**Readings:**
- A. Day, “Donald Rumsfeld-Prisoner Abuse/Abu Ghraib” [Case Study]
- B. Graham, “Rumsfeld in Repose” (2009) [BB]
May 3  Behavior, Emotion and Policymaking

Thaler & Sunstein, “Privatizing Marriage” (from *Nudge*, 2008).
Foer & Scheiber, “Nudge-ocracy” (2009) [BB]

TBD  Final Exam [in-class or take-home final; determined by class]