Howard Chandler Christy, “Scene at the Signing of the Constitution of the United States,” 1940

When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was fall heir. This note was the promise that all men, yes, black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

*Martin Luther King, Jr., I Have a Dream, 1963*

It was we, the people; not we, the white male citizens; nor yet we, the male citizens; but we the whole people, who formed the union.

*Susan B. Anthony, Suffragist*
President Obama faces a number of significant issues as he moves toward the middle of his second term. The country has a mountain of troubles that need attention: troops still in Afghanistan and Iraq, possible air strikes over Syria, a never ending debt-ceiling debate, and a weak economy. Add to this list a recalcitrant Congress led by House Republicans that for all intents and purposes refuse to work with the White House, and it is easy to see how American frustration with government is at an all time high. It is not simply that voters are frustrated with government, it is that citizens want our political institutions to generate policy that will help them secure a job, buy a house, go to college. These are simple things that require complex policy and even more complicated political maneuvers.

Given the backdrop of this political melodrama where does that leave us – Joe Citizen? What is the status of environmental legislation (50 degree temperature readings in Chicago during January and snow in Saudi Arabia certainly suggest climate change is here), immigration legislation, and most importantly an economic policy that will produce jobs? What is the president doing about these problems? Is Congress prepared to approve legislation to support a sagging economy before the 2014 mid-term elections? We know that government is crucial to setting and making policy but how this business is accomplished is another question. Taking all of this into consideration, the goal of this course is to allow you to view how external groups, political institutions, and other players form and make public policy.

**REQUIRED BOOKS & READINGS:**

- Additional course documents are available on Classes

You are responsible for printing the readings out and bringing them to class on the appropriate day. Don’t rely on reading the articles on-line, you’ll get more out of the reading if you can make notes in the margin, and you’ll do better in class.

**ASSESSED VALUATION:**

- Participation: 15% - includes newspaper articles
- Midterm: 25%
- Policy Memo: 15%
- Op-Ed: 15%
- Presentation: 10%
- Final: 20%

**Grading:** Your grade is calculated using the percentages above. Each letter grade is translated into a numerical score (i.e., 4.0 = A, 3.66=A- etc) then multiplied by the percentage that assignment is worth (i.e., mid-term grade 4.0 (A) *.20 (20%) = .8). The tenths of a point for the five parts of your grade then equal a total numerical score which is your final grade (i.e., 3.0 = B).

There is no “right” answer and as a result there is some subjectivity in grading. If you want to know where you stand in class or have questions or concerns please do not hesitate to talk to me during office hours. I will give you feedback on your classroom performance and we can discuss any concerns you may have.
**Late assignments are not accepted.** This is not to penalize any one but to create a fair and equal policy for all students. Any extra time that one student is given over another creates an unfair disadvantage.

**Newspaper Article:** Each class four students will present for three minutes each on a newspaper article pertaining to some aspect of policy making. It must come from the following sources: The *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, or *Los Angeles Times*. Articles from CNN, MSNBC, Yahoo, or the like will not be accepted. These articles represent the best original reporting in the country and are written by journalists. Many of the articles from CNN, Yahoo etc. are wire reports and often not written by journalists.

**Attendance:** I will determine who is in attendance each class session. Since we only meet once a week attendance is essential. Students who choose to rarely attend class will receive a zero for participation which will be determined by the professor at her discretion.

**GENERAL CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR**

Remember being alert and involved in class is part of the basic set of class expectations. Showing up in your pajama’s, staring out the window, and slumping in the back corner doesn’t reflect well on you. Presentation of self is incredibly important.

** If you attend class each session, but rarely, if ever participate in discussions the highest participation grade you will receive is a B.**

**Office Hours:** Office hours are a time when you can stop by to ask questions without an appointment. I’ll be in my office with the door open and you can come in to talk about class.

**Accommodations:** If you need any special academic accommodations please let me know within the first 2 weeks of class, so the proper arrangements can be made. Students are required to register with an on-campus office to verify their eligibility for appropriate accommodations.

**Religion:** If you have any conflicts with class because of religious holidays, please tell me by the second week of class.

**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.

**Academic Honesty:** This course follows NYU’s policy on plagiarism. The academic community regards academic dishonesty as an extremely serious matter with serious consequences. In short, don’t cheat.

**Any student behavior deemed inappropriate by the professor may impact your final grade.**
Part I: Overview of Public Policy

September 4
What is Public Policy?
Readings:
U.S. Constitution (read entire document)

September 11
Models of Policymaking
Readings:
Smith & Larimer (2009) “Public Policy as a Concept & Field of Study” from The Public Policy Theory Primer
Sabatier (1991) “Toward Better Theories of the Public Policy Process” from PS: Political Science and Politics

September 18
Framing/Agenda Setting/Agenda Denial
Readings:
Stone (2012) Ch 7 (“Symbols”) & 8 (“Causes”) from Policy Paradox
Kingdon (2011) “Epilogue” from Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies
Saletan (2003) Ch 1 from Bearing Right: How Conservatives Won the Abortion War

September 25
Agenda Setting Part 2: The Politics of Fat & the Nanny State: NYC & Mayor Mike
**Op-Ed DUE IN CLASS**
Readings:
Shaheen, Guzman, Zhang (2010) “Bike sharing in Europe, Americas, Asia” from Transportation Research Record

October 2
Service Delivery: Firms, Non-Profits, and Public Policy
Readings:
Stone (2012) Ch 3 “Efficiency” from Policy Paradox

October 9
**MIDTERM** in class
Part II: Making Public Policy

October 16  
Policy Formation  
Readings:  
Stone Ch 11 “Decisions” from Policy Paradox  
“Santiago’s Sewage” [Case Study]  

October 23  
Interest Groups  
Readings:  
Stone (2012) Ch 10 “Interests” from Policy Paradox  
Kersh (2003) “Corporate Lobbyists as Political Actors” from Interest Group Politics  
Quadagno (2010) “Interest Group Influence on the PPAC of 2010” from Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law  

October 30  
Congress  
Readings:  
Stone (2012) Ch 13 “Rules” from Policy Paradox  
Packer (2010) “The Empty Chamber” from The New Yorker  
Lizza (2013) “Getting to Maybe” from The New Yorker  

November 6  
The President  
**POLICY MEMO DUE IN CLASS**  
Readings:  
Constitution Article II  
Neustadt (1960) excerpts from Presidential Power  
“Signing Statements” from University of California – Santa Barbara “The American Presidency Project”  

November 13  
The Supreme Court  
Readings:  
Dunn (2008) "The Perils of Judicial Policymaking;"  
Liptak (2013) To Have and Uphold: The Supreme Court and the Battle for Same-Sex Marriage [available only as an e-book, purchase for $1.99 at amazon.com]  

November 20  
Policy Implementation and Evaluation  
Readings:  
Schmidle (2011) “Getting Bin Laden” from The New Yorker  

November 27  
No class – Thanksgiving holiday
Part III New Directions in Public Policy

December 4
Emerging Frontiers of Policy: Behavior & Technology
Readings:
Stone (2012) Ch 12 “Incentives” from Policy Paradox

December 11
The Ethics of U.S. Policymaking: Drone Wars and Torture
Readings:
Cronin (2013) “Why Drones Fail” from Foreign Affairs
Byman (2013) “Why Drones Work” from Foreign Affairs
Mayer (2009) excerpts from The Dark Side: The Inside Story of How the War on Terror Turned Into a War on American Ideals

Final Examination on Wednesday, December 18 at 9:30am
Silver Rm. 500