

**PADM-GP 2411**  
**Policy Formation**  
**NYU Wagner School of Public Policy**  
**Spring 2015**

**Professor Carrie Nordlund**

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Course Meetings: Thursday 6:45-8:25  
Course location: 25 West 4<sup>th</sup> St., Room C-20  
Office Hours: Monday 10-11 and Tuesday 2-3, and by appointment  
Puck Building (Lafayette and Houston), Room 3059  
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The goal of this course is to deepen our understanding of how American public policy is developed. This course is designed with a particular emphasis played by political actors, institutions and context. From interest groups to mayors and the role of the media in foreign affairs we will continually ask: how and why do some issues gain traction with the American public (and decision makers) and others ignored? We will examine how public policy is crafted, negotiated and enacted. It is a complicated story – one worth understanding.

The goal of this course is to provide policy specialists with conceptual tools for analyzing the environment in which policy is made. This course employs analytic frameworks used by political scientists to explain the policy making process. We will integrate a number of topical issues in our discussion and consider the strategic angle by which policy is formed.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

- To learn how to conduct a stakeholder analysis
- To gain practice in memoranda writing for a professional audience
- To learn about the policymaking process in New York City government

**REQUIRED BOOKS & READINGS:** All course readings are available on Classes

### **ASSESSED VALUATION:**

- Participation: 10%
- Midterm: 20%
- Stakeholder Analysis: 30%
- Presentation 10%
- Final: 20%
- Deliverables (2) 10%

**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.

**Accommodations:** 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: Policy Formation

## January 29: Overview, Policy Problems, Agenda Setting

Guiding Question: Who is allowed to make policy?

### Readings:

- Bachrach and Baratz (1962) “The Two Faces of Power” from *The American Political Science Review*
- Cobb and Elder (1971) “The Politics of Agenda Building: An Alternative Perspective for Modern Democratic Theory” from *Journal of Politics*
- “The Party of Nonvoters” from the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press

## February 5: Topic: Problem Definition

Objective: To apply problem definition theory to a case we see every day, homelessness

### Readings:

- Rochefort and Cobb (1994) Chapter 1, “Problem Definition: An Emerging Perspective” from *The Politics of Problem Definition Shaping the Policy Agenda*
- Stone (2012) Chapter 9 “Causes” from *Policy Paradox*
- Metraux and Culhane (1999) “Family Dynamics, Housing, and Recurring Homelessness Among Women in New York City Homeless Shelters” from *Journal of Family Issues*

**\*\*\*Deliverable #1: Policy problem and agenda setting due via email by COB Monday, Feb 9**

## February 12: Framing

Guiding Question: Whom does the innocence frame benefit?

### Readings:

- Schaffner and Sellers (2010) “Introduction” from *Winning with Words*
- Baumgartner, Linn and Boydston (2010) “The Decline of the Death Penalty: How Media Framing Changed Capital Punishment in America” from *Winning with Words*
- Jacoby and Paternoster (1982) “Sentencing Disparity and Jury Packing: Further Challenges to the Death Penalty” from *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*

## February 19: Social Capital & Interest Groups

Guest Speaker: Professor David Elcott

### Readings:

- Putnam (1995) “Bowling Alone: America’s Declining Social Capital” from *Journal of Democracy*
- Skocpol (1997) “The Tocqueville Problem” from *Social Science History*
- Hero (2003) “Social Capital and Racial Inequality in America” from *Perspectives on Politics*
- Norris (1996) “Does Television Erode Social Capital? A Reply to Putnam” from *P.S.: Political Science and Politics*

## Part II: Political Institutions

### February 26 Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholder Analysis workshop

#### Readings:

- Bryson “When do Stakeholders Matter?”
- Varvasovszky and Brugha “How to do (or not to do...) A Stakeholder analysis” from *Health Policy and Planning*
- “Homelessness in Harvard Square: Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration in Action” [case study]

### March 5 The Judiciary and Immigration

Guest Speaker Justice Noel Brennan, U.S. Immigration Judge

#### Readings:

- Brennan (2009) “A View from the Immigration Bench” from *Fordham Law Review*
- Arthur (2014) “Child immigrants strain New York courts” from *BBC News*
- Lim (2013) “For Asian Undocumented Immigrants, a life of Secrecy” from *The Atlantic*

### March 12 Public Education

Guest Speaker: De’Shawn Wright, former Washington, D.C. Deputy Mayor for Education, former NY state Deputy Secretary of Education, Wagner Alum

“Michelle Rhee and the Washington, D.C. Public Schools” [case study]

**\*\*Stakeholder Analysis Draft 1 due in class**

March 19 **SPRING BREAK**

March 26 **\*\*MIDTERM\*\* in class**

### April 2 The Influencers: Activists and Social Movement Organizations

Objective: Understand how activists and social movements can move issues to the mainstream agenda

- Lipsky (1968) “Protest as a Political resource” from the *American Political Science Review*
- “Not Alone: The First Report of the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault” (2014) from *the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault*
- Armstrong, Hamilton and Sweeney (2006) “Sexual Assault on Campus: A Multilevel, Integrative Approach to Party Rape” from *Social Problems*
- Grigoriadis (2014) “Meet the College Women Who Are Starting a Revolution Against Campus Sexual Assault” from *New York Magazine*

**April 9: Media and Social Media**

Guiding Question: Why are some issues covered in the news and not others? Why Michael Brown and not other individuals?

**Readings:**

- Boydston (2013) Chapter 1 “Patterns in the News and Why They Matter” from *Making the News*
- Shirky (2011) “The Political Power of Social Media” from *Foreign Affairs*
- Lundman (2003) “The Newsworthiness and Selection Bias in News about Murder: Comparative and Relative Effects of Novelty and Race and Gender Typifications on Newspaper Coverage of Homicide” from *Sociological Forum*

## **Part III Policy Implementation**

**April 16 Implementation**

Objective: connecting Sabatier and Mazmanian article to what we see unfolding in “Getting bin Laden”

- Sabatier & Mazmanian (1980) “The Implementation of Public Policy: A Framework of Analysis” from *Policy Studies Journal*
- Elmore (1982) “Backward Mapping: Implementation Research and Policy Decisions” from *Studying Implementation: Methodological and Administrative Issues*
- Schmidle (2011) “Getting Bin Laden” from *the New Yorker*

**\*\* Stakeholder Analysis Draft #2 due in class**

**April 23 Implementation**

Guiding Question: What happens when a bill is passed in Congress, how does it become policy?

**Readings:**

- Lipsky (1980) Chapter 1 “The Critical Role of Street Level Bureaucrats” and Chapter 2 “Street Level Bureaucrats as Policy Makers” from *Street Level Bureaucrats*
- Kerwin and Furlong (2011) Chapter 1 “The Substance of Rules and the Reasons for Rulemaking,” pages 75-88, Chapter 6 “Oversight of Rulemaking” from *Rulemaking: How Government Agencies Write Law and Make Policy*

**April 30 Policy Evaluation**

Guiding Question: How can evaluation be used effectively?

**Readings:**

- Wiess (1999) “The Interface between Evaluation and Public Policy” from *Evaluation*
- New York’s Teen ACTION program [case study] + video to watch in class
- Teen ACTION: A Program of the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), Program Review Summary”

**\*\*Deliverable #2: Communication Strategy due in via email by COB Monday, May 4**

**May 7: Presentations**

**Final draft of Stakeholder Analysis due in class**

**Final Examination due Thursday, May 21 at 8:00 p.m.**