

Political Participation and Policy

2018 Spring
PADM-GP 4121, 1.5 units

Class times:
February 2nd, Friday, 10am-4pm
March 2nd, Friday 10am-4pm

Location:
GCASL Room 261

Professor
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Puck Building, Room 3004
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Office hours: By appointment

Course Summary

Why do individuals choose to participate in politics and the policy process? When are they effective? Much of public policy depends, either directly or indirectly, on citizen compliance and support. This course surveys the bottom-up pressures to policy-making that come from various forms of citizen engagement. We will cover voting, public opinion, compliance, protests, and other forms of collective action. The course will draw heavily from theories in political science and apply them to specific examples or cases of political participation from the U.S. and international contexts. This is not a how-to course on mobilization or community organizing. Rather, we will discuss the role of citizens in the policy process and think about what their power (or sometimes lack thereof) means for the quality and fairness of a wide range of policy outcomes in democracies. Discussions will be useful to students interested in various aspects of the policy process, from policy implementation, communications, to activism.

Assignments and Grades

Participation (15%)

In this short and intensive seminar course, showing up *ready* is key. Our classes will be open discussions, so it is essential that you have read the required readings beforehand and actively take part in the discussion and case study debates.

Discussion leader (15%)

In the beginning of the semester (before our first class), you will sign up to be a discussion leader for one of the readings. Your job is to come up with 2-3 questions for the class to discuss with regards to the reading. Questions can illuminate connections to other readings, to current events, or help critique the reading.

Two short response papers (20% each)

You will write two short papers, one **due on the first class** and another due on the last. You can choose any session of readings for each day.

Response papers should use the readings to think through, predict, criticize, or analyze a *real, ongoing case of political participation or policy-making*. For example, you might use the readings to assess whether an ongoing social movement will ultimately be successful (or fail) in generating policy change. Or you might see how the readings “travel” to a different case, clarifying what assumptions in the theory do not hold in different contexts or value systems. Or you might write an op-ed style critique of a strategic move by a protest organization or political leadership, using the readings as “evidence” to back up your position. You can use the designated case study in the syllabus, but your paper will be written and turned in before that class session.

Response papers should be single-spaced and between 1-2 pages in length. Please bring a printed copy and turn it in before the start of class.

Final term paper (30%)

The term paper will be due at the end of the semester. On the last day of class, I will give you a specific prompt. Your response, written in essay form, should draw from as many readings as possible or relevant to make your case.

Term papers should be single-spaced and between 3-5 pages in length.

Schedule and readings

The course consists of two, full day “workshops,” each with a morning and afternoon session that breaks into a case study. We will have a short break for lunch in between.

Day One

February 2nd, Friday, 10am-4pm

Session 1

Why do citizens vote and otherwise participate in politics?

- Verba, Sidney, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Henry E. Brady. 1995. *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. Chapters 2 and 9.

- Blais, Andre. 2000. *To Vote or Not to Vote*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press. Chapter 5.
- Gerber, Alan S., Donald P. Green, and Christopher W. Larimer. "Social Pressure and Voter Turnout: Evidence from a Large-scale Field Experiment." *American Political Science Review* 102.01 (2008): 33-48.
- Miller, Arthur H., Patricia Gurian, Gerald Gurian, and Oksana Malanchuk. 1981. "Group Consciousness and Political Participation." *American Journal of Political Science* 25: 494-511.

"27 Million Potential Hispanic Votes, but What Will They Really Add Up To?"

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/18/magazine/27-million-potential-hispanic-votes-but-what-will-they-really-add-up-to.html>

Session 2

What is "public opinion"? Does it matter for policy?

- Zaller, John. 1992. *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 3
- Taber, Charles and Milton Lodge. 2006. "Motivated Skepticism in the Evaluation of Political Beliefs." *American Journal of Political Science* 50(3): 755-769.
- Bartels, Larry. 2005. "Homer Gets a Tax Cut: Inequality and Public Policy in the American Mind." *Perspectives on Politics* 3(1): 15-31.
- Walsh, Katherine Cramer. 2012. "Putting Inequality in its Place: Rural Consciousness and the Power of Perspective." *American Political Science Review* 106(3): 517-532.
- Gilens, Martin. 2000. *Why Americans Hate Welfare*. University of Chicago Press. Chapter 3.

Case study

The Making of the Trump Presidency

<https://www.economist.com/blogs/graphicdetail/2016/11/daily-chart-5>

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/politics/ct-how-trump-won-election-20161109-story.html>

<https://michaelmoore.com/trumpwillwin/>

What participatory forces helped Trump win the election? Why was it such a "surprise" for many? How do our theories about public opinion and what drives citizens to take political action provide a framework with which to understand the outcome? Our goal here is to analyze the election as a political phenomenon that greatly impacts policy, *not to debate political opinions or ideologies*.

Day Two
March 2nd, Friday

Session 1
Why citizens comply or cooperate

- Tyler, Tom. 2006. *Why People Obey the Law*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapters 1 and 9.
- Putnam, Robert. 1994. *Making Democracy Work*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapter 6.
- Miguel, Edward. 2004. Tribe or Nation? Nation Building and Public Goods in Kenya versus Tanzania, *World Politics*, 56.
- Solt, Frederick. 2011. Diversionary Nationalism: Economic Inequality and the Formation of National Pride. *Journal of Politics* 73(3): 821-830.

Session 2
Why they protest

- Chong, Dennis. 1991. *Collective Action and the Civil Rights Movement*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 5
- McClendon, Gwyneth H. "Social Esteem and Participation in Contentious Politics: A Field Experiment at an LGBT Pride Rally." *American Journal of Political Science* 58.2 (2014): 279-290.
- Beissinger, Mark R. "The Semblance of Democratic Revolution: Coalitions in Ukraine's Orange Revolution." *American Political Science Review* 107.03 (2013): 574-592.

Case study
Anatomy of a successful social movement

Why do some political movements seemingly die overnight, while others persist and successfully shift policy? Using what we know about social movements, how would you predict the future trajectories of ongoing ones? Under what conditions will they be most effective in bringing policy change?

"Will Black Lives Matter be a Movement that Persuades?"

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/09/will-black-lives-matter-be-a-movement-that-persuades/407017/>

"The Failure of Occupy Wall Street"

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/andy-ostroy/the-failure-of-occupy-wal_b_1558787.html

"#MeToo"

https://www.washingtonpost.com/powerpost/with-moores-defeat-metoo-movement-forces-a-reckoning/2017/12/13/0ffa11fa-deb8-11e7-8679-a9728984779c_story.html?utm_term=.125d07a0c391