



NYU

**ROBERT F. WAGNER GRADUATE
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE**

**CORE-GP 1022 – Sec 001
Introduction to Public Policy
SPRING 2022**

COURSE INFORMATION

- Class Meeting Times: Mondays, 4:55 pm – 6:35 pm & asynchronous assignments
- Class Location: 194 Mercer; Room 206

INSTRUCTOR

- Name & Email: Cyril Ghosh; cg96@nyu
- Office Hours: By appointment

COURSE AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course students should be able to:

1. Identify and explain the relationship between interests, ideas, and institutions in a policy process.
2. Clearly articulate and frame a policy issue in a way that calls attention to it and mobilizes action.
3. Develop the competence to identify the key stakeholders on an issue.
4. Develop capacity to evaluate and recommend a policy response to a specific policy problem using criteria of effectiveness, efficiency, and political feasibility.
5. Develop the capacity to orally communicate policy recommendations.

REQUIRED VIDEOS

- https://stream.nyu.edu/media/Intro+to+Public+Policy+-+Course+Objectives/1_3hsyonxv
- https://stream.nyu.edu/media/Intro+to+Public+Policy+-+Course+Components+/1_yimihrxv

REQUIRED TEXTS

None. All readings available on Brightspace unless otherwise indicated. There will be a small fee associated with some of the cases we will discuss in class. You will have to access these online.

LEARNING ASSESSMENT TABLE

Corresponding Course Learning Objective	Corresponding Assignment Title
#1	Briefing memo; strategy memo
#2	Op-ed
#3	Briefing memo
#4	Options Memo
#5	Presentation

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS/GRADED COMPONENTS:

Class Participation (5%)

Students are expected to actively participate in class. You should be prepared to demonstrate a willingness to offer your comments, draw attention to insights from the readings, and ask questions related to the topic of the day. Discussion of current events and media reports that relate to the topics relevant to the course is strongly encouraged. As a matter of professional courtesy, you should inform me if you will miss lecture and you should inform your TA, writing coach, and peer group members, as appropriate, if you will miss recitation. I do not "give permission" for missing lecture. You either have a university-sanctioned reason for being absent (e.g., illness, death in the family, religious observance, or work) or you are choosing to be absent. You are adults and I trust you to evaluate the best use of your time.

Client Presentation (5%)

Students will (1) attend a workshop or training on creating client presentations, (2) submit a PowerPoint slide deck regarding the Student's Options Memo, and (3) present the slide deck in recitation. The workshop/training will occur outside of lecture/recitation. Details will be provided in recitation.

Asynchronous Assignments (15%)

Throughout the semester, you will be required to complete asynchronous assignments. A typical asynchronous assignment involves reading a text, or watching a video, or listening to an audio clip, and then offering your response to whatever prompt is assigned. You may be asked to complete a short quiz or a knowledge check or asked to write a brief reflection, etc.

Op-Ed: (15%)

There will be an entire presentation on the overall op-ed assignment in your recitation section. The due dates and deliverables for the op-eds are in the separate packet.

Stakeholder Analysis (20%), Options Memo (20%), and Strategy Memo (20%)

See separate sheets on this semester-long set of assignments. We will discuss in greater detail in class. Each assignment will also have an accompanying reading response requirement.

RE-GRADING ASSIGNMENTS

If a student would like a re-grade of an assignment, the student should first speak with the TA and if that does not resolve the issue email Professor Ghosh a one-page (maximum) response stating their reasons for a re-grade along with a copy of the original submission and its rubric within two weeks of receiving their grade. Professor Ghosh will re-grade the entire assignment, which may result in a lower or higher grade than the original grade within one week of receiving the student's re-grade letter. If appropriate, I may ask you to make some modifications to your work.

GENERAL VS. INDIVIDUAL STUDENT QUESTIONS

It is very common for students to email the instructor and teaching assistants the same questions about the course. In order for Professor Ghosh and the teaching assistants to maximize time spent on individual questions and minimize time spent on repeating general questions, please post general questions regarding the course lecture, recitation, and assignments on the discussion board under the "Discussions" tab on Brightspace.

For individual questions about the course lectures or university-approved absences, please email Professor Ghosh. For individual questions about the course recitation or assignments, please email your assigned Teaching Assistant. (If you skip this first step, Professor Ghosh will forward your initial email to your assigned Teaching Assistant.) If the Teaching Assistant does not provide a sufficient response, email Professor Ghosh and CC the teaching assistant. Professor Ghosh and the Teaching Assistants are not responsible for brainstorming, editing, or writing your assignments. Professor Ghosh and the Teaching Assistants will make every effort respond to emails within twenty-four hours after an email is received, excluding weekends.

WRITING

Writing is an important part of being a policy analyst and advocate. For some useful thoughts on how to approach policy writing, see Michael O'Hare's memo to his students in the spring 2004 issue of the *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*. In addition, see Catherine F. Smith, *Writing Public Policy: A Practical Guide to Communicating in the Policy Making Process* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005). For an enjoyable and valuable (although not uncontested) critique of PowerPoint presentations as disastrous to effective communication, see Edward Tufte, *The Cognitive Style of PowerPoint*, and an excellent book *Better Presentations* by Jonathan Schwabish. You can also email your assigned workshop consultant, your assigned teaching assistant, or meet with Professor Ghosh during office hours for feedback. If you would like additional feedback or training on policy writing, please visit the [Wagner Writing Center](#) or the [NYU Writing Center](#).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is a vital component of Wagner and NYU. All students enrolled in this class are required to read and abide by [Wagner's Academic Code](#). All Wagner students have already read and signed the [Wagner Academic Oath](#). Plagiarism of any form will not be tolerated and students in this class are expected to report violations to me. If any student in this class is unsure about what is expected of you and how to abide by the academic code, you should consult with me.

HENRY AND LUCY MOSES CENTER FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AT NYU

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please visit the [Moses Center for Students with Disabilities](#) (CSD) website and click on the Reasonable Accommodations and How to Register tab or call or email CSD at (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are strongly advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

NYU'S CALENDAR POLICY ON RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

[NYU's Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays](#) states that members of any religious group may, without penalty, absent themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Please notify me in advance of religious holidays that might coincide with exams or other obligations in order to schedule mutually acceptable alternatives.

TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT

You have 24/7 support via NYU's IT services. Explore the [NYU servicelink knowledgebase](#) for troubleshooting and student guides (Brightspace, Zoom, etc). Contact askIT@nyu.edu or 1-212-998-3333 (24/7) for technology assistance, or contact [Zoom's 24/7 technical support](#) (includes a chat function), or review [Zoom's support resources](#). Your peers are another source of support, so you could ask a friend or classmate for help or tips.

If you do not have the appropriate hardware technology nor financial resources to purchase the technology, consider applying for the NYU [Emergency Relief Grant](#).

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: American Government Foundations - Jan 24

Readings:

- American Government Foundations Module: "Congress."
- Congressional Research Service. 2018. Introduction to the Legislative Process.

Asynchronous assignment:

- Civics 101. Starter Kit: How a Bill (really) Becomes a Law.
<https://www.civics101podcast.org/civics-101-episodes/howabill>

Week 2: The Policymaking Process - Jan 31

Readings:

- Kraft, Michael and Scott Furlong. 2017. In *Public Policy: Politics, Analysis, and Alternatives*. Washington D.C.: Sage/CQ Press. Selections.
- American Government Foundations Module. "Constitutional Foundations."

Asynchronous assignment:

- Civics 101. Starter Kit: Federalism.
<https://www.civics101podcast.org/civics-101-episodes/federalism>

Week 3: Options Memo & Rulemaking - Feb 7

Readings:

- Carey, Maeve P./ Congressional Research Service. 2013. The Federal Rulemaking Process: An Overview.
- Pennock, Andrew. 2018. Generating and Organizing Your Argument & The Decision Memo. In *The CQ Press Writing Guide for Public Policy*. Washington D.C.: CQ Press.
- American Government Foundations Module. "Federal Bureaucracy."

Asynchronous assignment:

- *Law School for Everyone*. "Episode 1: Litigation and the American Legal System."
<https://nyu.kanopy.com/video/litigation-and-american-legal-system>

Week 4: Litigation, Institutions, and Actors - Feb 14

Readings:

- Kagan, Robert. 2001. The Political Construction of Adversarial Legalism. In *Adversarial Legalism: The American Way of Law*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Silverstein, Gordon. 2009. Law is Different: The Power of Precedent. In *Law's Allure: How Law Shapes, Constrains, Saves, and Kills Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- American Government Foundations Module. "Constitutional Foundations."

Asynchronous assignment:

- Oral arguments. *Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission* (2018). <https://www.oyez.org/cases/2017/16-111>

Week 5: Paradoxes, Dilemmas, and Path-Dependence - Feb 28

Readings:

- Stone, Deborah. 2001. Introduction & Chapter 1. In *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*. New York: W.W. Norton.
- Pierson, Paul. 2000. "Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics." *American Political Science Review* 94(2): 251-267.

Asynchronous assignment:

- None.

Week 6: Policy Design - Mar 7

Readings:

- Mullainathan, Sendhil. 2017. "Get Ready for Technological Upheaval by Expecting the Unimagined." *The New York Times*. September 2.
- Sunstein, Cass R. 2013. Plate, Not Pyramid. In *Simpler: The Future of Government*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Mullainathan, Sendhil and Eldar Shafir. 2013. *Scarcity*. New York: Macmillan. Selections.

Asynchronous assignments:

- Eldar Shafir. TEDX Talk. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gV1ESN8NGh8>
- Bill Gates. Ted Talk. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Af6b_wyiwI

Week 7: Policy Implementation - Mar 21

Readings:

- Lipsky, Michael. 2010. *Street-Level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation. Selections.
- Zacka, Bernard. 2017. "Bureaucrats to the Rescue: Are Bureaucracies a Public Good?" *Boston Review*. Sep 21.

Asynchronous assignment:

- None.

Week 8: Policy, Powering, and Puzzling - Mar 28

Readings:

- Brinkerhoff, Derick and Benjamin Crosby. 2001. Stakeholder Analysis. In *Managing Policy Reform: Concepts and Tools for Decision-Makers in Developing and Transitioning Countries*. West Hartford, CT: Kumarian Press.
- Baumgartner, Frank and Bryan Jones. 2015. Chapter 2. In *The Politics of Information: Problem Definition and the Course of Public Policy in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Sabatier, Paul. 1988. "An Advocacy Coalition Framework of Policy Change and the Role of Policy-Oriented Learning Therein." *Policy Sciences* 21(2/3): 129-168.
- Olson, Mancur. 1965. A Theory of Groups and Organizations. In *Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Case Study: Combat and Collaboration in Seattle's Historic Minimum Wage Debate.

Asynchronous assignment:

- Frontline. Obama's Deal.
<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/obamasdeal/>

Week 9: Evidence-Based Policymaking - Apr 4

Readings:

- Callen, Michael, Adnan Khan, Asim I. Khwaja, Asad Liaqat and Emily Myers. 2017. "These 3 Barriers Make it Hard for Policymakers to Use the Evidence that Development Researchers Produce." *Monkeycage (Washington Post)*. August 17.
- Ludwig, Jens, Jeffrey R. Kling, and Sendhil Mullainathan. 2011. "Mechanism Experiments and Policy Evaluations." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 25(3): 17-38.
- Klein, Ezra. 2014. Interview with Dan Kahan: "How Politics Makes Us Stupid." *Vox*. Apr 6.
- Barry-Jester, Anna Maria. 2015. "Why the Rules of the Road Aren't Enough to Prevent People from Dying." *538*. January 15.

Asynchronous assignment:

- None.

Week 10: How Policy Makes Politics - Apr 11

Readings:

- Moynihan, Donald and Joe Soss. 2014. "Policy Feedback and the Politics of Administration." *Public Administration Review*. 74(3): 320-332.
- Mettler, Suzanne. 2010. "Reconstituting the Submerged State: The Challenges of Social Policy Reform in the Obama Era," *Perspectives on Politics* 8(3): 803-824.
- Tierney, John. 2013. "Prison and the Poverty Trap." *The New York Times*. Feb 18.
- Rutenberg, Jim. 2015. "A Dream Undone." *The New York Times Sunday Magazine*. July 29.
- Rutenberg, Jim. 2015. "Nine Years Ago Republicans Favored Voting Rights. What Happened?" *The New York Times Magazine*. August 12.

Asynchronous assignment:

- None.

Week 11: Agenda Setting & Framing - Apr 18

Readings:

- Stone, Deborah. 2001. Causes. In *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*. New York: W.W. Norton.
- Downs, Anthony. 1972. "Up and Down with Ecology: The Issue Attention Cycle." *Public Interest* 28: 38-50.
- Luntz, Frank. 2007. The Ten Rules of Effective Language & Political Case Studies. In *Words That Work: It's Not What You Say, It's What People Hear*. New York: Hachette Books.
- Richtel, Matt. 2016. "It's No Accident: Why Advocates Want to Speak of Car Crashes Instead." *The New York Times*. May 23. See, also, <http://crashnotaccident.com/>.
- Baumgartner, Frank R., Suzanna Linn, and Amber E. Boydstun. 2010. "The Decline of the Death Penalty: How Media Framing Changed Capital Punishment in America." In *Winning with Words: The Origins & Impact of Political Framing*. Eds Brian F. Schaffner and Patrick J. Sellers. New York: Routledge.
- Pilkington, Ed. 2021. "America's Death Penalty Divide: Why Capital Punishment is Getting Better, and Worse." *The Guardian*. Dec 16.

Asynchronous assignment:

- Bob Herbert's Op-Ed TV. Bryan Stevenson on Justice and Capital Punishment. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cBWAHyQWTtM>

Week 12: Case Study: Immigration Policy - Apr 25

Readings:

- Cohen, Elizabeth F. and Cyril Ghosh. *Citizenship (Key Concepts in Political Theory)*. Cambridge, UK: Polity. Selections.
- Law, Anna. 2017. "The Irish Roots of the Diversity Visa Lottery." *Politico*. Nov 1.
- Nowrasteh, Alex and David J. Bier. Eds. 2020. *12 New Immigration Ideas for the 21st Century*. Washington D.C.: Cato Institute.
- Motomura, Hiroshi. 2006. *Americans in Waiting: The Lost Story of Immigration and Citizenship in the United States*. New York: Oxford University Press. Selections.

Asynchronous assignment:

- None.

Week 13: Case Study: LGBT+ Rights Advocacy - May 2

Readings:

- Kowal, John F. 2015. Analysis: The Improbable Victory of Marriage Equality. *Brennan Center for Justice*. Sep 29.
- Perry, Rodney M./ Congressional Research Service. 2015. *Obergefell v. Hodges: Same-Sex Marriage Legalized*.
- *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015) Opinion of the Court [Pages 1-33 of PDF]
- Molly Ball, "The Marriage Plot: Inside This Year's Epic Campaign for Gay Equality," *Atlantic*, Dec 11, 2012.
- Case: "Divided We Stand: Gay Marriage Rulings and Official Disobedience."
Purchase Case from: <https://case.hks.harvard.edu/divided-we-stand-gay-marriage-rulings-and-official-disobedience/>

Asynchronous assignment:

- Documentary: *How to Survive a Plague* [Available via the NYU Library website]

Week 14: Where States Come From - May 9

Readings:

- Tilly, Charles. 1990. *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990-1992*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, Inc. Selections.
- Micklethwait, John and Adrian Woolridge. 2014. "The State of the State: The Global Context for the Future of Government." *Foreign Affairs* July/August.
- Recommended: Scott, James. 1999. *Seeing Like A State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. New Haven, CT: Yale Univ. Press.

Asynchronous assignment:

- None.