

ECL/ESP 212A: Theories of the policy process
Tuesdays 3:10–6:00, Wickson 2124
Spring 2017

THEORIES OF THE POLICY PROCESS

Instructor

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Office Hours

Thursdays, 10:30–12:30,
or by appointment

Overview

This seminar introduces graduate students to theoretical perspectives important in the study of public policy. We will examine a range of theoretical approaches, including new institutionalism, public choice, policy networks, advocacy coalitions, punctuated equilibrium, network governance, and narrative analysis.

Class structure

A typical class will follow this format:

1. Student presentations of the week's policy theory. This component should take roughly one hour, with each of the two student presentations running roughly 15-20 minutes. We will slot 30 minutes for each to allow time for clarifying questions.
2. Instructor lecture, as necessary, and discussion
3. Break
4. Interim group project presentations and discussion
5. If time remains, group project work and/or discussion

Grading

Your seminar grade will be based on 5 components:

1. Class participation (20%): To engage meaningfully, you need to do the readings, think about them, read others' memos about them, and come to class prepared to share your thoughts.
2. Discussion memos (20% total, ~7% each): To facilitate vigorous discussions, you will submit three memos on the readings. Distribution of these assignments over the quarter will be negotiated during the initial class session.
 - a. Each memo should be brief (1–2 DS pages) and should raise an issue or question from the readings that you consider worth discussing in class. Do not summarize the readings except what is needed to set up your question or comment.
 - b. Your memo should comment or draw at least two of the readings. Good memos seek to clarify concepts, improve methods, explore an example or counter-example, and/or connect to ideas from other readings/scholarship.
 - c. Come to class prepared to discuss your memo.

- d. Submission deadline is 10 a.m. Monday before Tuesday's class session. This lead time is necessary to give others time to read and think about the memos before class. You will email your memo to all course participants (and/or post on Canvas; TBD).
3. Discussion co-lead (15%): With another student, you will co-lead discussion during one class meeting. This requires you to:
- Prepare a presentation (~15-20 minutes) summarizing one of the policy theories assigned for the week. There are generally two policy theories per week; the other student will focus on the second.
 - Read the week's memos carefully and develop discussion questions based on them.
 - Guide class discussion.
4. Group project (25%): Students will work in teams of 3-4 to develop a research design that either investigates whether/how a policy theory helps explain an environmental policy dilemma or uses evidence from the policy dilemma to test the theory itself. Additional details about this assignment will be provided by the second week of class.
- Students will develop topics and form groups based on shared interests.
 - In most class sessions, students will spend some time in groups discussing how the week's theory connects to their topic. Roughly halfway through the course, groups will present their topics and preliminary work.
 - The end product will be a 15-20 page group-written paper that poses a research question, explores relevant literature and theory, articulates hypotheses, and describes how the hypotheses will be tested. Students will summarize the project in a presentation at the end of the course.
 - The goal is for students to leave the course with a realistic research design and plan that they could jointly pursue.
5. Group project interim presentations (20%, 10% each): At two points in the quarter, your group will give a presentation applying a policy theory covered in the previous week's class to your environmental policy dilemma. The presentation should explain case dynamics using the theory as well as sketch out how you could use the theory in research on your topic. The presentation should be approximately 20 minutes, with time after for questions.

Required text

Sabatier, P. A., and C. M. Weible. 2014. *Theories of the Policy Process*, 3rd ed. Boulder: Westview Press.

Week 1 (April 4): Introduction and Overview

NOTE: You probably will not be able to read all of these before the first class. Focus on the starred ones. I am providing the full list so that you can go back and read the others later.

Sabatier and Weible Chapters 1 and 11

*Anderson, J. 2006. The study of public policy. In *Public Policymaking: An Introduction*, 6th ed, ed. J. Anderson, 1–32. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

*Torgerson, D. 1986. Between knowledge and politics: Three faces of policy analysis. *Policy Sciences* 19: 33–59.

Weimer, D. L., and A. R. Vining. 2010. What is policy analysis? [and] Toward professional ethics. In *Policy Analysis: Concepts and Practice*, 5th ed., eds. D. L. Weimer and A. R. Vining, 23–54. Boston: Longman.

Week 2 (April 11): How Do We Think about Individuals in the Policy Process?

NOTE: Article grouping corresponds to general theme to be addressed by the student presenter. The first presenter should focus on the first three and the second on the second three.

Allison, G. 1969. Conceptual models and the Cuban missile crisis. *American Political Science Review* 63 (3): 689–718.

Jones, B. D. 2003. Bounded rationality and political science: Lessons from public administration and public policy. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 13 (4): 395–412.

Simon, H. A. 1955. A behavioral model of rational choice. *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 69 (1): 99–118.

Lindblom, C. E. 1959. The science of muddling through. *Public Administration Review* 19 (2): 79–88.

March, J. G., and J. P. Olsen. 2005. The logic of appropriateness. In *The Oxford Handbook of Public Policy*, eds. M. Moran, M. Rein, and R. E. Goodin, 689–708. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Meyer, J. W., and B. Rowan. 1977. Institutionalized organizations: Formal structure as myth and ceremony. *American Journal of Sociology* 83 (2): 340–363.

Week 3 (April 18): How Do We Think about Government in the Policy Process?

NOTE: Article grouping corresponds to general theme to be addressed by the student presenter. The first presenter should focus on the first three and the second on the second three.

Gormley, W. T. Jr. 1986. Regulatory issue networks in a federal system. *Polity* 18 (4): 595–620.

Lowi, T. J. 1964. American business, public policy, case studies, and political theory. *World Politics* 16 (4): 677–715.

Ostrom, E. 2010. Beyond markets and states: Polycentric governance of complex economic systems. *American Economic Review* 100 (3): 641–672.

Hooghe, L., and G. Marks. 2003. Unraveling the central state, but how? Types of multi-level governance. *American Political Science Review* 97 (2): 233–243.

Ostrom, V., C. M. Tiebout, and R. Warren. 1961. The organization of government in metropolitan areas: A theoretical inquiry. *American Political Science Review* 55 (4): 831–842.

Tiebout, C. M. 1956. A pure theory of local expenditures. *Journal of Political Economy* 64 (5): 416–424.

Week 4 (April 25): MSF and PET

IN CLASS: Groups present their project topics and research questions.

Sabatier and Weible, Chapters 2–3

Brunner, S. 2018. Understanding policy change: Multiple streams and emissions trading in Germany. *Global Environmental Change* 18 (3): 501–507.

Henstra, D. 2010. Explaining local policy choices: A multiple streams analysis of municipal emergency management. *Canadian Public Administration* 53 (2): 241–258.

Ingram, H., and L. Fraser. 2006. Path dependency and adroit innovation: The case of California water. In *Punctuated Equilibrium and the Dynamics of U.S. Environmental Policy*, ed. R. C. Repetto. 78–109. New Haven: Yale University Press. (SS)

Wood, R. S. 2006. The dynamics of incrementalism: Subsystems, politics, and public lands. *Policy Studies Journal* 34 (1): 1–16. (SS)

Week 5 (May 2): Democratic Policy Design and Policy Feedback

Sabatier and Weible, Chapters 4–5

Czech, B., P. R. Krausman, and R. Borkhataria. 1998. Social construction, political power, and the allocation of benefits to endangered species. *Conservation Biology* 12 (5): 1103–1112.

Karch, A. 2010. Policy feedback and preschool funding in the American states. *Policy Studies Journal* 38 (2): 217–234.

Reese, E. 2005. Policy threats and social movement coalitions: California's campaign to restore legal immigrants' rights to welfare. In *Routing the opposition: Social movements, public policy, and democracy*, eds. D. S. Meyer, V. Jenness, and H. M. Ingram, 259–287. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Soss, J., and S. F. Schram, 2007. A public transformed: Welfare reform as policy feedback. *American Political Science Review* 101 (1): 111–127.

Week 6 (May 9): ACF and NPF

Sabatier and Weible, Chapters 6–7

Ellison, B. A. 1998. The advocacy coalition framework and implementation of the Endangered Species Act: A case study in western water politics. *Policy Studies Journal* 26 (1): 11–29.

McBeth, M., E. Shanahan, P. Hathaway, L. Tigert, and L. Sampson. 2010. Buffalo tales: Interest group policy stories in Greater Yellowstone. *Policy Sciences* 43: 391–409.

Shanahan, E., M. D. Jones, M. McBeth, and R. R. Lane. 2013. An angel on the wind: How heroic policy narratives shape policy realities. *Policy Studies Journal* 41 (3): 453–483.

Weible, C. M. 2007. An advocacy coalition framework approach to stakeholder analysis:

Understanding the political context of California marine protected areas policy. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 17 (1): 95–117.

Week 7 (May 16): IAD and Innovation/Diffusion

Sabatier and Weible, Chapters 8–9

Imperial, M., and T. Yandle. 2005. Taking institutions seriously: Using the IAD framework to analyze fisheries policy. *Society and Natural Resources* 18 (6): 493–509.

Krause, R. M. 2010. Policy innovation, intergovernmental relations, and the adoption of climate protection initiatives by U.S. cities. *Journal of Urban Affairs* 33 (1): 45–60.

Ostrom, E. 2005. Doing institutional analysis: Digging deeper than markets and hierarchies. In *Handbook of New Institutional Economics*, eds. C. Menard and M. M. Shirley, 819–848. Netherlands: Springer.

Shipan, C. R., and C. Volden. 2008. The mechanisms of policy diffusion. *American Political Science Review* 52 (4): 840–857.

Week 8 (May 23): Other Policy Theories and Frameworks

Emerson, K., T. Nabatchi, and S. Balogh. 2012. An integrative framework for collaborative governance. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 22 (1): 1–29.

Feiock, R. C. 2009. Metropolitan governance and institutional collective action. *Urban Affairs Review* 44 (3): 356–377.

Fligstein, N., and D. McAdam. 2010. Toward a general theory of strategic action fields. *Sociological Theory* 29 (1): 1–26.

Lascoumes, P., and P. Le Gales. 2007. Introduction: Understanding public policy through its instruments: From the nature of instruments to the sociology of public policy instrumentation. *Governance* 20 (1): 1–21.

Lubell, M. 2013. Governing institutional complexity: The ecology of games framework. *Policy Studies Journal* 41 (3): 537–559.

Stone, D. 1989. Causal stories and formation of policy agendas. *Political Science Quarterly* 104 (2): 281–300.

Week 9 (May 30): Governance and Policy Networks

Arnold, G., and L. Shimek. 2017. Nodes and links as actors and actions in public administration networks. In *The Handbook of American Public Administration*, forthcoming.

Berardo, R., and J. T. Scholz. 2010. Self-organizing policy networks: Risk, partner selection, and cooperation in estuaries. *American Journal of Political Science* 54 (3): 632–649.

Berry, F. S., F. S. Brower, S. O. Choi, W. X. Goa, H. Jang, M. Kwan, and J. Ward. 2004. Three traditions in network research: What the public management research agenda can learn from other research communities. *Public Administration Review* 64 (5): 539–552.

O'Toole, L. J., and K. J. Meier. 2004. Desperately seeking Selznick: Cooptation and the dark side of public management networks. *Public Administration Review* 64 (6): 681–693.

Provan, K. G., and H. B. Milward. 1995. A preliminary theory of interorganizational network effectiveness: A comparative study of four community mental health systems. *Administrative Science Quarterly* 40 (1): 1–33.

Scott, T., and C. Thomas. 2015. Do collaborative groups enhance interorganizational networks? *Public Performance and Management Review* 38 (4): 654–683.

Week 10 (June 6): Policy Implementation

IN CLASS: Group project presentations

Fineman, S. 1998. Street-level bureaucrats and the social construction of environmental control. *Organization Studies* 19 (6): 953–974.

Hupe, P. L. 2011. The thesis of incongruent implementation: Revisiting Pressman and Wildavsky. *Public Policy and Administration* 26 (1): 63-80.

Matland, R. E. 1995. Synthesizing the implementation literature: The ambiguity-conflict model of policy implementation. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 5 (2): 145-174.

May, P. J., and S. C. Winter. 2009. Politicians, managers, and street-level bureaucrats: Influences on policy implementation. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 19 (3): 453–476.

Sabatier, P. A. 1986. Top-down and bottom-up approaches in implementation research: A critical analysis and suggested synthesis. *Journal of Public Policy* 6 (1): 21-48.

Weatherley, R., and M. Lipsky. 1977. Street-level bureaucrats and institutional innovation: Implementing special-education reform. *Harvard Educational Review* 17 (2): 171–197.