Western University
Department of Politics Science

The Policy Process in Local Government
Public Administration 9902B
Winter 2018

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 3:30–4:00pm

Time and Location: Wednesdays, 4:30–6:30pm, SSC 4105

COURSE DESCRIPTION
Building on PA9901 Advanced Local Government, this course examines the scope and potential of Canadian municipal policymaking. We begin by examining the structural and institutional constraints on local policymaking before moving on to matters of process: how policy problems are identified, where solutions come from, how the public is engaged, and how policies are implemented and evaluated. These issues will be explored through case studies.

While this course is open to both Public Administration and Political Science students, it is primarily designed for the benefit of the MPA and DPA students, who are encouraged to reflect on their professional practice in our interactive discussions. While the course introduces foundational concepts in policy theory, the focus is applied rather than normative or theoretical.
## SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Cases discussed</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan. 10</td>
<td>Local government public policy: A design perspective</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Jan. 17</td>
<td>The structural context of public policy: economic forces and ideas</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Jan. 24</td>
<td>The institutional context of public policy: intergovernmental and internal</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Jan. 31</td>
<td>Why do governments make policies?</td>
<td>1. Municipal climate change policy</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Feb. 7</td>
<td>Interpreting policymaking processes</td>
<td>1. Emergency management in Sarnia</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>2. Tower Renewal in Toronto</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Feb. 14</td>
<td>Agenda-setting and framing</td>
<td>1. Water privatization in Hamilton</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>2. Pesticide regulation</td>
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<td>*** Feb. 19–23 is Reading Week ***</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Feb. 28</td>
<td>Policy innovation and diffusion</td>
<td>1. Tobacco regulation</td>
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<td>2. TBA</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Mar. 7</td>
<td>Engaging the public: participation and visioning</td>
<td>1. TTC second exit policy in Toronto</td>
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<td>2. Atlanta 2020 visioning process</td>
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<td>*** Mar. 12–16 is March Break ***</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Mar. 21</td>
<td>Instruments and implementation</td>
<td>1. Plastic bag regulation</td>
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<td>Draft paper due</td>
<td>2. Contracting out garbage pickup</td>
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<td>Anonymized papers distributed for review</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Mar. 28</td>
<td>Evaluating public policies</td>
<td>1. Performance measurement in Ontario (FIRS/OMBI)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Apr. 4</td>
<td>Prof. Taylor will absent at a conference</td>
<td>Class is cancelled</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Apr. 11</td>
<td>Conclusion: Municipal policy design</td>
<td>Final paper due</td>
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Note that in recognition of the family responsibilities of many of our mature students, we will skip class on March 14 and extend the term to April 11.
COURSE WEBSITE
This course makes use of OWL. Please refer to the course website regularly for announcements and course information: https://owl.uwo.ca/portal.

COURSE MATERIALS
We will use a modestly priced textbook that can be purchased at the campus bookstore, or from popular on-line book retailers:


All readings from the Peters book are marked with a T in the reading schedule. Readings to be retrieved from publicly available websites are marked with a W. Readings marked with an E are electronic journal articles that can be retrieved through the Western Library website. All other readings are made available as PDFs on the course website.

You are encouraged to do as much reading as possible prior to the start of the course. You are also encouraged to print out posted case study packages so that you can refer to them in group discussion.

EVALUATION

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<tr>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frame analysis</td>
<td>Feb. 28</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy analysis assignment</td>
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<td>Outline</td>
<td>Feb. 14</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>Submit draft paper for peer review</td>
<td>Mar. 21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anonymous peer review of draft</td>
<td>Mar. 28</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final paper</td>
<td>Apr. 11</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<td>Overall participation</td>
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<td>10%</td>
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Frame analysis (20%): You will select a case of a contested municipal policy problem or issue and develop a brief (1,500 word) analysis of alternative definitions or framings advanced by various actors in the case.

Policy Analysis Assignment (70%): You will prepare a 15-page paper on one of the following topics (approximately 3,500 words).

- **Option 1: Municipal policy case study:** Analyze a specific municipal policymaking process using theoretical perspectives on policymaking discussed in class. Working professionals are encouraged to draw on their own experience and access to information and data. For example, you could apply the multiple-streams model to the City of Toronto’s adoption of the plastic bag fee, or to the construction of border infrastructure in Windsor.

- **Option 2: Intergovernmental policy case study:** Analyze and evaluate the implementation or impact of a specific federal-municipal or provincial-municipal policy within a municipality of your choice. For example, you could examine how a municipality has made choices in the context of the Provincial-Municipal Fiscal and Service Delivery Review, the Federal Gas Tax transfer, or in the context of provincial mandates and regulations.

To get you started, a two-page outline is due in Feb. 14. To receive additional feedback, you will submit a draft paper for anonymous peer review on March 21. The final paper is due April 11.

**Overall participation (10%):** Preparedness and active contribution to weekly class discussion. This is not an attendance grade. If you show up and do not participate, you will get a low score!
COURSE POLICIES

Electronic devices: Research shows that levels of student performance and participation are lower when computers, tablets, smartphones, and other devices are present in the classroom. In order to create a pleasant environment conducive to everyone’s learning and free from distractions, please refrain from using phones for texting or any other purposes during classes. The use of laptops and tablets is allowed for course-related activities and note taking only.

E-mail policy: All Western University students are required to have an @uwo.ca e-mail account. The instructor will only respond to e-mails sent from a Western University account, that clearly identify the sender, and have “PA9902” in the subject line. The instructor will not accept assignments by e-mail.

Submitting assignments: Written assignments may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (http://www.turnitin.com). Note that you will be able to view your Turnitin Originality Report after submitting. You may resubmit at any time before the deadline.

Late assignments: The penalty for late assignments is two percentage points per day (including weekend days). A grade of 80% on an assignment therefore becomes 72% in four days. Assignments more than 10 days late will not be accepted. Extensions due to illness require a medical certificate. If you foresee problems meeting submission deadlines please consult the instructor early; accommodations can always be made with adequate advance notice. This means at least before the deadline, not the night before the work is due!

Academic integrity: Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:
http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf
ASSISTANCE

If you are having trouble with the course material or are falling behind in your work, please contact the course instructor as soon as possible. We can only help you if the lines of communication are open.

Help with writing: Learning to express ideas clearly is a central goal of the university experience. If academic writing does not come easily to you, you are strongly encouraged to make use of the Writing Support Centre: http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/writing/.

Accommodations on medical grounds: Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments must apply to the Academic Counseling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Please refer to the Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm and download a Student Medical Certificate (SMC): https://studentservices.uwo.ca/ under the Medical Documentation heading. Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Accommodations on religious grounds: Every effort has been made to avoid scheduling assignment due dates on religious holidays. Please inform the instructor at the beginning of the course if you will be unable to attend class for reason of religious observance.
READING SCHEDULE

Class 1  Jan, 10  Local government public policy: A design perspective


T Chapter 1, “Public Policy: A Design Perspective.”


Class 2  Jan. 17  The structural context of public policy: Economic forces and ideas


Class 3  Jan. 24  The institutional context of public policy: intergovernmental and internal


Class 4  Jan. 31  Why do governments make policies?

T Chapter 2, “Policy Problems.”

Case Study: Municipal Responses to Climate Change


Class 5  Feb. 7  Interpreting policymaking processes

T Chapter 3, “Models of Policymaking.”

Case Study: Emergency management in Sarnia


Case Study: Tower Renewal Program in Toronto

Case package: Media articles and staff reports on the City of Toronto’s Tower Renewal Program.

Class 6  Feb. 14  Agenda-setting and framing

T Chapter 4, “Agendas, Agenda-setting, and Framing.” Read pp. 66–78.


Case Study: Agenda-setting and water system privatization in Hamilton


Case package: Summary of the Hamilton water case

Case Study: Agenda-setting and Canadian pesticides policy


Framing case package
Class 7  Feb. 28  Policy innovation and diffusion


Case study on innovation TBA.


Case Study: Framing and diffusion of smoking regulation


Timeline of smoking regulation in Canada

Class 8  Mar. 7  Engaging the public: public participation and visioning


Case Study: The Toronto Transit Commission’s Second Exit Project


Case package: the TTC’s Second Exit Project.
Case Study: Atlanta 2020 visioning process


Class 9  Mar. 21  Instruments and implementation

- Chapter 5, “Designing Intervention and Implementation.”
- Chapter 6, “Policy Instruments.”

Case Study: Regulating plastic bags


Case package: Media articles and staff reports on the City of Toronto’s plastic bag fee.

Case Study: Solid waste collection


Case package: Media articles and staff reports on the City of Toronto’s waste collection contracting out.

Class 10  Mar. 28  Policy evaluation

- Chapter 7, “Evaluating Public Policy: An Introduction.”
- Chapter 8, “Evaluating Public Policy: The Utilitarian Dimension.”
- Chapter 9 “Normative and Ethical Analysis of Public Policy.”

Case Study: Performance measurement in Ontario — OMBI and FIRS/MPMP

Chapter 10, “Conclusion: Policy Success and Failure.”