PS4902-002: POLICY PROCESS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT
City of Toronto Diploma in Public Administration
Western University, Local Government Program
Fall 2014

Instructor: Gabriel Eidelman
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Schedule: Class meets 9am-12pm and 1pm-4pm on the following dates:
Sept. 26 Metro Hall, Rm 310
Oct. 10 Metro Hall, Rm 302
Nov. 7 Metro Hall, Rm 308
Nov. 21 Metro Hall, Rm 308
Dec. 5 Metro Hall, Rm 308

Course Description

This course introduces students to select aspects of the academic literature on the process of public policy making. Using case studies, you will learn how to apply theories and concepts from the policy literature to local government, with particular emphasis on policy making in Toronto. Topics covered include the stages of the policy process, the “multiple streams” approach to understanding public policy, and the role of political interests, institutions, and ideas as drivers of, and constraints on, policy making at the local level.

By the end of this course, you will:
- Understand the factors that lead to different policy outcomes in different circumstances
- Appreciate the strengths and limitations of theoretical perspectives on the policy process
- Recognize the primary components of the policy process in everyday issues in local policy making.

[Revised August 14, 2014]
OUTLINE OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Week 1  September 26  Introduction
  Morning  Policy Making in Theory
  Afternoon  Policy Making in Practice

Week 2  October 10  The Role of Actors and Interests
  Morning  Licences, Permits, and Ward-level Politics
  Afternoon  Taxis, Street Food, and Regulatory Reform

Week 3  November 7  The Role of Institutions
  Morning  Land Use Policy and the Ontario Municipal Board
  Afternoon  Multilevel Governance and Waterfront Revitalization

Week 4  November 21  The Role of Ideas and Ideology
  Morning  Transit Planning and Implementation
  Afternoon  Traffic and the “War on the Car”

Week 5  December 5  Student Presentations
  December 19  Hand in Research Paper

REQUIREMENTS & EVALUATION

Participation (25%): Based on contributions to class discussion, as measured by: (a) consistent attendance; (b) arriving prepared for class; (c) raising thoughtful comments and questions; (d) providing insight and analysis to the readings and discussions; and (e) bringing relevant news items or other materials to the attention of the class.

Research Project (75%):

a) Research Proposal (10%): A 3-4 page proposal outlining your intended research project, including a research question, brief background, methods, and sources. Due November 7.

b) Research Presentation (25%): A brief, 10 minute presentation that outlines your preliminary research findings and stimulates comments and suggestions for improvement from your peers. Due December 5, the final day of class.

c) Research Paper (40%): A final, 12-15 page academic paper on your chosen topic. Detailed guidelines will be discussed in class and posted on the course website in early October. Due December 19.
COURSE POLICIES

Submitting assignments: All assignments must be submitted electronically via the following link: http://tiny.cc/PS4902. Once complete, you are encouraged to save the submission receipt for your own records. Note that I do not accept assignments by email.

Late assignments: The penalty for late assignments is 2% per day (including weekend days). A grade of 80% therefore becomes 70% in five days. The protocol for submitting late assignments is the same as above. If you foresee problems meeting submission deadlines please contact me as soon as possible; accommodations can always be made with adequate advance notice.

Course Website: Readings, assignment descriptions, and course grades will be posted on the course website (OWL).

Academic integrity: It is the responsibility of each student to be able to demonstrate the originality of his or her work. Failure to properly reference figures, concepts, and quotations that are not your own will result in academic penalties, as required by Western’s policy on academic integrity. At a minimum, for every assignment, the sources of all data and ideas must be properly referenced using a standard academic referencing style such as Chicago, APA, or MLA. If you are unclear about what constitutes plagiarism or how to reference sources, please visit: http://www.lib.uwo.ca/researchmodules/socialsciences/writingyourownpaper/index.html

READINGS

All readings are available via the course website (OWL), and are best read in the order listed below.

Students wishing to refresh their memories regarding the basic structures and functions of local government should review the following readings prior to the start of the course:
Week 1 - September 26: Introduction

Morning Session - Policy Making in Theory

Afternoon Session - Policy Making in Practice

Week 2 - October 10: The Role of Actors and Interests

Morning Session - Licences, Permits, and Ward-level Politics

Afternoon Session - Taxis, Street Food, and Regulatory Reform
City of Toronto. 2014. Toronto’s Taxicab Industry Review: Final Report, pp. 22-44. (If you have the time, you are encouraged to read the whole report.
Cameron Hawkins & Associates Inc. 2011. Review of Toronto A La Cart Pilot Project, prepared for the City of Toronto, pp. 8-20. (Again, if you have the time, you are encouraged to read the whole report.)
Week 3 - November 7: The Role of Institutions

Morning Session - Land Use Policy and the Ontario Municipal Board

Afternoon Session - Multilevel Governance and Waterfront Revitalization

Week 4 - November 21: The Role of Ideas and Ideology

Morning Session - Transit Planning and Implementation
Lorinc, John. 2014. “The Political Movements Behind the Scarborough Subway.” Spacing Magazine [online], May 28-June 3 (Special Investigation, Parts 1-5).

Afternoon Session - Traffic and the “War on the Car”