

Western University
Department of Political Science
The Policy Process in Local Government
Public Administration 9902B
Winter 2019

Instructor: Martin Horak
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Time and Location: Wednesdays, 4:30–6:30pm, SSC 4255 (a.k.a. your second home)

Course Description: Building on PA9901 (Advanced Local Government), this course introduces students to selected aspects of the academic literature on public policy-making, and examines these in the Canadian municipal context, with particular (but not exclusive) emphasis on Ontario applications and examples. We begin by discussing how the distinct features and constraints of local government shape the scope and character of municipal policy-making. We then examine how policy problems are framed and how they emerge on municipal agendas; we discuss policy innovation and diffusion; we focus on policy leadership and the role of public engagement in local policy processes; and we discuss policy instruments and implementation. We then synthesize what we have learned by looking at the specific dynamics of policy-making in the fields of urban development and social policy.

Format: Lectures, class discussion, occasional group exercises, and student presentations.

Course Website: The syllabus, assignments, and some readings (see below) will be posted on OWL. Written assignments will be accepted by OWL only. Announcements will be made using the OWL system, which links to students' UWO e-mail addresses, so please make sure to check your UWO e-mail regularly.

Reading Materials: The course uses three chapters from the following textbook:

Sancton, Andrew. 2015. *Canadian Local Government: An Urban Perspective*, 2nd edition. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

Students who took PA9901 in fall 2017 or 2018 should already have this textbook. For those who do not have it, it is available through Amazon and other retailers.

Most other readings are available electronically through the UWO libraries system, or through web links included in the syllabus below. Remaining readings will be posted at least one week in advance of the relevant class in the "Resources" section of the OWL website.

Evaluation:**Participation – 15%**

This course demands active, thoughtful participation by students in class discussion and in-class work. This in turn requires that you complete all required readings *in advance* of the class for which they are assigned.

Case Analysis of Problem Definition / Framing – 15% *Due on OWL Feb 6 (Week 5)*

You will select a case of a contested municipal policy problem / issue, and develop a brief (about 1,500 words maximum) analysis of alternative definitions / framings of the problem advanced by various actors in the case. Detailed guidelines will be distributed in Week 3 of the course.

Research Project

You will design and complete your own research project, in which you will analyze a specific municipal or intergovernmental policy process using theories and concepts discussed in the class. Working professionals are encouraged to examine a policy process that relates to their professional experience and/or interests. Detailed guidelines will be distributed in Week 5 of the course. This assignment has four components:

a. Research Outline – 10% *Due on OWL Feb 13 (Week 6)*

You will develop a two-page (approx. 750 words) outline of your research project, including a draft research question, brief background, and a plan for completing the work.

b. Peer Review – 10% *Draft for peer review due on OWL Mar 20 (Week 9)*
Peer review of draft due on OWL Mar 27 (Week 10)

You will submit a first draft of your final paper for anonymous review by one of your classmates; the following week, you will submit a review of a draft by one of your peers.

c. “Three Minute Thesis” (3MT) Presentation – 5% *In class Apr 3 (Week 11)*

You will prepare a very brief presentation highlighting your research question and main findings, following the “three minute thesis” format.

d. Research Paper – 45% *Due on OWL Apr 3 (Week 11)*

You will write a research paper (max. 5,000 words including references) on your topic.

Course Policies:

Late Penalties: All written assignments must be submitted on the due date. Late assignments are subject to a penalty of 2% per day off of the assignment mark, weekends included. If you anticipate having trouble meeting a deadline, please speak with the instructor as soon as possible. Extensions will only be granted in the case of documented extenuating circumstances.

Electronic devices: In order to ensure a classroom free from distractions, please refrain from using phones during classes, and use laptops and tablets for course-related activities only.

Academic integrity: Scholastic offences are taken seriously. Students are directed to read the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf

Course Schedule and Required Readings

NB: Readings available electronically through UWO libraries are marked with an asterisk (*).

Week 1 **Jan 9: Introduction to Studying Public Policy**

Readings: Pal, Leslie. 2014. *Beyond Policy Analysis: Public Issues Management in Turbulent Times*, 5th edition. Toronto: Nelson, pp. 1-25.

* Howlett, Michael and Ishani Mukherjee. 2014. "Policy Design and Non-Design: Towards a Spectrum of Policy Formulation Types." *Politics and Governance* 2(2): 57-71.

Week 2 **Jan 16: Municipalities and Policy-Making**

Readings: Wolman, Harold, assisted by Robert McManmon. 2012. Ch. 21, "What Cities Do: How Much Does Urban Policy Matter?" In Karen Mossberger, Susan E. Clarke, and Peter John, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Urban Politics*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, pp. 415-441.

n.b. read this piece with an eye analytical themes and conclusions only; no need to absorb all the empirical details.

Taylor, Zack and Neil Bradford. 2015. Ch. 11, "The New Localism: Canadian Urban Governance in the 21st Century." In Pierre Filion et al., eds., *Canadian Cities in Transition*, 5th ed. Toronto: Oxford University Press, pp. 194-208.

Sancton, Andrew. 2015. *Canadian Local Government: An Urban Perspective*, 2nd edition. Toronto: Oxford University Press, pp. 249-267.

Week 3 **Jan 23: The Context for Local Policy-Making**

Readings: Peterson, Paul E. 2007 [1981]. "The Interests of the Limited City." In Elizabeth A. Strøm and John H. Mollenkopf, eds., *Urban Politics Reader*. New York: Routledge, pp. 120-129.

* McGregor, Michael and Zachary Spicer. 2016. "The Canadian Homevoter: Property Values and Municipal Politics in Canada". *Journal of Urban Affairs* 38(1): 123-39.

Week 4 Jan 30: Problem Definition, Framing and Agenda Setting

Readings: Pal, Leslie A. 2014. Excerpts from Chapter 3, “Problem Definition in Policy Analysis”. In *Beyond Policy Analysis: Public Issue Management in Turbulent Times* (5th ed.). Toronto: Nelson Education: pp. 97-114.

* Pralle, Sarah. 2006. “The “Mouse That Roared”: Agenda Setting in Canadian Pesticides Politics”. *Policy Studies Journal* 34: 171–194.

* Henstra, Daniel. 2010. “Explaining Local Policy Choices: A Multiple Streams Analysis”. *Canadian Public Administration* 53(2): 241 – 258.

Week 5 Feb 6: Policy Diffusion and Policy Innovation

Readings: * Shipan, Charles R. and Craig Volden. 2012. “Policy Diffusion: Seven Lessons for Scholars and Practitioners.” *Public Administration Review* 72(6): 788–796.

* Potts, Jason. 2009. “The Innovation Deficit in Public Services: The Curious Problem of Too Much Efficiency and Not Enough Waste and Failure.” *Innovation: Management, Policy, & Practice* 11(1): 34–43

* Burch, Sarah. 2010. “Transforming barriers into enablers of action on climate change: Insights from three municipal case studies in British Columbia, Canada”. *Global Environmental Change* 20(2): 287-297.

Week 6 Feb 13: Policy Leadership and Governing Coalitions

Readings: Sancton, Andrew. 2015. *Canadian Local Government: An Urban Perspective*, 2nd edition. Toronto: Oxford University Press, pp. 232-248.

Urbaniak, Tom. 2009. Chapter 11, “Leadership Lessons”, in *Her Worship: Hazel McCallion and the Development of Mississauga*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, pp. 230 – 249.

For review (most students read this in PA9903):

* Siegel, David. 2010. “The leadership role of the municipal chief administrative officer”, *Canadian Public Administration*, 53(2): 139-161.

Feb 20: No Class

Week 7 Feb 27: Engaging the Public: Possibilities and Challenges

Readings: * Fung, Archon. 2006. “Varieties of Participation in Complex Governance.” *Public Administration Review* 66(1): 66–75.

* Baker, William H., H. Lon Addams, and Brian Davis. 2005. "Critical Factors for Enhancing Municipal Public Hearings." *Public Administration Review* 65(4), pp. 490–99.

Shipley, Robert. 2002. "Visioning in planning: Is the practice based on sound theory?" *Environment and Planning A* 34(1): 7–22.

Week 8 Mar 6: Policy Instruments and Implementation

Readings: Pal, Leslie A. 2014. Figure 4.1. In *Beyond Policy Analysis: Public Issue Management in Turbulent Times* (5th ed.). Toronto: Nelson Education, p. 135.

Sabatier, Paul and Daniel Mazmanian. 1981. "The Implementation of Public Policy". In Mazmanian and Sabatier, eds. *Effective Policy Implementation*. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, pp. 3-35.

* Murdoch, Maggie. 2010. "The Road to Zero Waste: A Study of the Seattle Green Fee on Disposable Bags." *Environmental Practice* 12(1): 66–75.

Mar 13: No Class

Week 9 Mar 20: Policy-Making for Urban Development

Readings: Sancton, Andrew. 2015. *Canadian Local Government: An Urban Perspective*, 2nd edition. Toronto: Oxford University Press, pp. 210-225.

Polese, Mario. 2011. Urban Development Legends. *City Journal* 21(4).
Available at: <http://www.city-journal.org/html/urban-development-legends-13426.html>

* Leo, Christopher and Kathryn Anderson. 2006. "Being Realistic About Urban Growth". *Journal of Urban Affairs* 28(1): 169 – 189.

Week 10 Mar 27: Social Policy-Making in Municipalities

Readings: Macleod Irons, Angela. 2013. "Noble Frustrations: The many practical problems with municipal poverty initiatives". Calgary: Manning Foundation for Democratic Education.

Available at: <https://manningcentre.ca/report/noble-frustrations-many-practical-problems-municipal-poverty-initiatives>

Horak, Martin and Aaron A. Moore. 2015. "Policy Shift without Institutional Change: The Precarious Place of Neighborhood Revitalization in Toronto". In: Clarence Stone, Robert Stoker et al. *Urban Neighborhoods in a New Era:*

Revitalization Politics in the Postindustrial City. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 182-208.

* Quastel, Noah, Markus Moos and Nicholas Lynch. 2012. "Sustainability-As-Density and the Return of the Social: The Case of Vancouver, British Columbia". *Urban Geography* 33(7): 1055-1084.

Week 11 Apr 3: Course Conclusion and 3MT Presentations

No readings