

Western University
Department of Political Science
The Policy Process in Local Government
Public Administration 9902L
Summer 2020

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Time: May 11-15 (on-line). Meeting times vary, as per schedule below.

Course Description: Building on PA9901, this course introduces students to selected aspects of the academic literature on public policy processes and applies these in the Canadian municipal context, with particular emphasis on Ontario applications and examples. Topics include: How the distinct features of local government shape municipal policy-making; how policy problems are framed and how they emerge on municipal agendas; policy innovation and diffusion; policy leadership and the role of public engagement; and policy instruments and implementation.

Format: I will pre-record a brief lecture (20-40 minutes) for each course segment and post it on the OWL site. Please watch each lecture before the corresponding Zoom meeting time for each course segment. Zoom sessions will consist of: 1. Discussion of questions posed by the instructor in the lecture video; 2. Discussion of student questions about reading material; and 3. Small-group breakout work on case study assignments.

Course Website: The course OWL site will be the central venue for delivery. The syllabus, assignments, and non-textbook readings (see below) will be posted on OWL. Pre-recorded lectures for each section of the course 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: There are two required textbooks for the course:

B. Guy Peters. 2015. *Advanced Introduction to Public Policy*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar. Available in e-format through Google Play books.

Zachary Spicer, Joseph Lyons, and Kate Graham. 2019. *Local Government in Practice*. Toronto: Emond. Available in e-format for Adobe software (either one-year or lifetime access; I recommend the former), directly from Emond: <https://emond.ca/local-government-in-practice-cases-in-governance-planning-and-policy.html>

NOTE: The Spicer et al. text will be used for in-class group exercises in the Zoom sessions. You must read the relevant cases (fictional and real) in advance of each Zoom session, but you do not need to read the case exercises and discussion questions that go with them, since we will not necessarily use all of these in class.

All other readings will be posted in the “Resources” section of the OWL website.

Advance Preparation: All readings should be completed in advance of the relevant Zoom session. In addition, please watch the pre-recorded lecture before the relevant Zoom session.

I will post discussion questions for material in each section in a folder in “Resources” on the OWL site. Please read and reflect on the discussion questions for each segment before our Zoom session. In addition, please come to our Zoom session with your own questions on the material.

Evaluation:

Participation – 20%

This course demands active, thoughtful participation by students in class discussion and in-class work. You will be assessed on your participation in both large-group discussion and small-group case exercises in our Zoom sessions.

Quizzes – 20%

You will take a short (approx. 15 minute) multiple-choice quiz at the end of each day of the course. These will be posted under “Quizzes” on OWL and will test basic understanding of the material covered that day. Each quiz will be worth 4% of your course grade. All quizzes must be complete no later than the end of the day on Friday, May 15th.

Strategic Framing Assignment – 15% *Due on OWL May 22*

You will select a case of a contested municipal policy problem / issue and develop a brief (about 1,000 words maximum) analysis of alternative definitions / framings of the problem advanced by various actors in the case in their effort to secure support for their position on the issue. Detailed guidelines will be posted on the OWL site by Friday, May 15th

Policy Analysis Assignment – 45% *Due on OWL June 5*

You will choose a real-world case of either a municipal policy process, or an intergovernmental policy process involving municipalities. You will write a paper of about 3,000 words that analyzes key aspects of this policy process using concepts and theories discussed in the course. Detailed guidelines will be posted on the OWL site by Friday, May 15th

The instructor will be available for a one-on-one consultation session with each student during the week of May 18th to discuss their plans for the project.

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.

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

Notes:

- All readings not from textbooks are posted in the “Resources” folder on the OWL site.
- I am aiming to have our Zoom calls run between 1 hour and 90 minutes each, depending on the volume of material, but since this is the first time I have taught in this format, I am not sure how long they will last. Please keep up to 90 minutes open for each call.

Monday, May 11

Session 1 Introduction to the course Zoom 10am

I will discuss the purpose of the course and review the syllabus, and you can ask any questions you have about it. We will also start to get to know each other.

Session 2 Public Policy: What is it? Why do we need it? Zoom 1pm

Readings: Peters, Chs. 1 and 2

Tuesday, May 12

Session 3 The local policy context in Canada Zoom 10am

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

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

Case Study: Spicer et al., Ch. 11, “New Condo Development”

Session 4 Models of the policy process Zoom 1pm

Readings: Peters, Ch. 3

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

Case Studies: Spicer et al., Ch. 22, “Water Fluoridation”
Spicer et al., Ch. 24, “Crafting an Arts and Culture Strategy”

Wednesday, May 13**Session 5 Agenda Setting and Framing Zoom 10am**

Readings: Peters, Ch. 4

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

Case Studies: Spicer et al., Ch. 21, "Creating a new noise bylaw"
Spicer et al., Ch. 13, "Constructing a complete street downtown"

Session 6 Policy Diffusion and Policy Innovation Zoom 1pm

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.

Case Study: Spicer et al., Ch. 23, "Banning Plastic Bags"

Thursday, May 14**Session 7 Leadership in the Policy Process Zoom 10am**

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

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

Case Study: Small group exercise on effective policy leadership

Session 8 Engaging the Public Zoom 1pm

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.

Case Study: Spicer et al., Ch. 12, "Redeveloping an Old Industrial Area"

Friday, May 15**Session 9 Policy Instruments and Implementation Zoom 10am**

Readings: Peters, Chs. 5 and 6

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

Case Study: Spicer et al., Ch. 10, “Debating Privatization”

Session 10 What Is a Successful Policy? Zoom 1pm

Readings: Peters, Ch. 7

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.