

**HUMPHREY SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS**  
**PUBLIC AFFAIRS 5012 (SECTION 001)**  
**THE POLITICS OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

Wednesday 6:00-8:45 PM  
Spring 2013 (1/23/13 – 5/8/13)  
Blegen Hall, Room 425

---

Professor: Robin L. Phinney  
Office Hours: Wednesday 3:30-5:30 pm or by appointment  
Office Location: Room 1325 Social Sciences Building  
Email: rphinney@umn.edu

Teaching Assistant:  
Office Hours:  
Office Location:  
Email:

---

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Politics is an integral component of public affairs. Politics shapes how we decide to act on matters of shared concern, how we carry out the policies that we adopt, and how these policies change over time. This course is designed to help students think systematically about the role of politics in public affairs. Over the semester, we will consider how issues garner public attention and agenda space, how institutions affect policy creation and evolution, how formal and informal actors shape public decisions, and the role of political discourse and policy analysis in the policymaking process. Rather than focus exclusively on the obstacles created by the political system, we will examine how politics creates opportunities for positive change. While we will focus on the American national case, the course will provide opportunities for students to consider how politics and public affairs intersect across institutional settings and in a cross-national context.

**REQUIRED READINGS**

There are three required books, available from the University Bookstore. Additional readings are available on the course Moodle site: <https://moodle2.umn.edu/course/view.php?id=18604>

- Arnold, R. Douglas. *The Logic of Congressional Action*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990.
- Baumgartner, Frank R., Jeffrey M. Berry, Marie Hojnacki, David C. Kimball, and Beth L. Leech. *Lobbying and Policy Change: Who Wins, Who Loses, and Why*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009.
- Kingdon, John W. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies (2nd Edition)*. New York: HarperCollins College Publishers, 1995.

## GRADING

Success in this class requires a combination of reading, discussion, and writing. Grades will be based on the following components, discussed in greater detail below.

Reading, Attendance, and Participation	40 points	20% of overall grade
Policy Memos (2 total)	35 points each (70 points total)	Each memo is 17.5% of grade (35% total)
Class Presentation	20 points	10% of overall grade
Final Policy Memo	70 points	35% of overall grade
<i>Total</i>	200 points	100%

### READING, ATTENDANCE, AND PARTICIPATION (20%)

This course is conducted as a seminar, and your regular attendance and active engagement are essential to make it a success. While I will spend some time lecturing, we will devote a fair amount of class time to discussing and interpreting readings, and applying concepts from the readings to contemporary issues in public affairs. Because the readings serve as a springboard for class discussion, I expect you to have read and thought about the readings prior to class. At various points throughout the semester, I may supplement the reading list with additional readings. Any changes to the reading list will be announced in class. In class quizzes on the readings are possible to ensure that students are completing all readings.

Your grade will be based on your presence and engagement in class, your preparation and contributions to discussion, and your courtesy and respect for others. **Please come to class on time and stay for the entire session.** If you must arrive late, leave early, or if you anticipate missing a class, please notify me ahead of time. Failure to do so will result in a lower participation grade. In addition, more than one unexcused absence will lower your participation grade.

### SHORT POLICY MEMOS (17.5% EACH, 35% TOTAL)

Policy memos provide an opportunity for you to explore the relationship between politics and public policy for a particular issue, and to hone skills for communicating in the public arena. Each memo should be no longer than 5 pages, double-spaced (endnotes and references do not count toward the page total). The memo must integrate relevant course readings and apply them to a contemporary policy issue of your choosing. I will distribute memo prompts in class. Unless noted otherwise, all memos should identify real issues, organizations, and actors. Memos are due via email to [rphinney@umn.edu](mailto:rphinney@umn.edu) and [elyx0004@umn.edu](mailto:elyx0004@umn.edu) by midnight on the following dates: February 24<sup>th</sup> and March 31<sup>st</sup>.

## PRESENTATION AND 1-PAGER (10%)

During the final three weeks of class, each student will prepare a 5 minute class presentation and “1-pager.” In this presentation, you will assume that you are a policy entrepreneur for the issue that is the subject of your final paper. You have been granted a 5-minute meeting with an important political actor, during which you will attempt to persuade the actor to grant attention or pursue specific action on the issue. As part of this presentation, you will prepare a 1-page handout to leave with the political actor after the meeting.

## FINAL POLICY MEMO (35%)

In the final policy memo, you will integrate concepts learned over the semester and apply them to an issue of your choosing. In this assignment, you will assume that you are a political consultant. You have been hired by a client interested in policy *p*, which represents a change to the status quo policy. Your task is to assess the political environment and offer a recommendation for moving forward on policy *p*. Your memo must include attention to the getting on the agenda, venues for pursuing action on policy *p*, outside pressures that you will have to navigate or capitalize on, and barriers or opportunities created by political discourse. Each memo should be no longer than 15 pages, double-spaced (endnotes and references do not count toward the page total). All memos should identify real issues, organizations, and actors. Memos are due in hard copy to my mailbox in Humphrey by 5pm on Monday, May 13<sup>th</sup>.

## TOTAL POINTS AND GRADING

The relationship between points and grade is as follows:

A	(187-200 points, or 94-100 percent)	C	(147-152 points, or 74-76 percent)
A-	(179-186 points, or 90-93 percent)	C-	(139-146 points, or 70-73 percent)
B+	(173-178 points, or 87-89 percent)	D+	(133-138 points, or 67-69 percent)
B	(167-172 points, or 84-86 percent)	D	(127-132 points, or 64-66 percent)
B-	(159-166 points, or 80-83 percent)	S	139 or more points/70% or greater
C+	(153-158 points, or 77-79 percent)		

## LATE POLICY

Please keep in mind the following dates/deadlines. There are a number of assignments in this class, and turning assignments in by each due date is your responsibility.

- ❖ **Feb. 24<sup>h</sup>**: First memo due (via email by midnight)
- ❖ **Mar. 31<sup>st</sup>**: Second memo due (via email by midnight)
- ❖ **Apr. 24<sup>th</sup>, May 1<sup>st</sup>, and May 8<sup>th</sup>**: Presentation due dates
- ❖ **May 13<sup>th</sup>**: Final paper due (by 5pm in hard copy to my mailbox in Humphrey)

Late papers *will not be accepted except under extraordinary circumstances*, and then only *with prior permission* from the instructor.

## **OFFICE HOURS AND EMAIL**

Office hours are a great chance to ask questions or discuss ideas raised in class, assignments, or readings. My scheduled office hours are on Wednesday from 3:30-5:30 pm in Social Sciences Building Room 1325. If you can't make office hours, I am happy to set up an appointment for another time Tuesday or Wednesday. If you need to contact me outside of class, the best way to reach me is via email ([rphinney@umn.edu](mailto:rphinney@umn.edu)). You may email me with questions or concerns, and I will do my best to respond to you within 24 hours if your email is received Sunday-Thursday. Messages received Friday or Saturday may have to wait until Monday. In addition, please make sure you regularly check your official UMN email, as I will conduct class-related business via email.

Please remember that email is a *professional* communication and should be treated as such. If you need to miss a class, please coordinate with your peers to obtain class notes. I will not summarize lectures, discussions, readings, or missed classes via email.

## **ADDITIONAL UNIVERSITY POLICY STATEMENTS**

### **Student Conduct Code:**

The University seeks an environment that promotes academic achievement and integrity, that is protective of free inquiry, and that serves the educational mission of the University. Similarly, the University seeks a community that is free from violence, threats, and intimidation; that is respectful of the rights, opportunities, and welfare of students, faculty, staff, and guests of the University; and that does not threaten the physical or mental health or safety of members of the University community. As a student at the University you are expected adhere to Board of Regents Policy: *Student Conduct Code*. To review the Student Conduct Code, see: [http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/academic/Student\\_Conduct\\_Code.html](http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/academic/Student_Conduct_Code.html). Note that the conduct code specifically addresses disruptive classroom conduct, which means "engaging in behavior that substantially or repeatedly interrupts either the instructor's ability to teach or student learning. The classroom extends to any setting where a student is engaged in work toward academic credit or satisfaction of program-based requirements or related activities."

### **Use of Personal Electronic Devices in the Classroom:**

Using personal electronic devices in the classroom setting can hinder instruction and learning, not only for the student using the device but also for other students in the class. To this end, the University establishes the right of each faculty member to determine if and how personal electronic devices are allowed to be used in the classroom. For complete information, please reference: <http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/CLASSROOMPED.html>.

### **Scholastic Dishonesty:**

You are expected to do your own academic work and cite sources as necessary. Failing to do so is scholastic dishonesty. Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or

examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. ([http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/academic/Student\\_Conduct\\_Code.html](http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/academic/Student_Conduct_Code.html)) If it is determined that a student has cheated, he or she may be given an "F" or an "N" for the course, and may face additional sanctions from the University. For additional information, please see: <http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/INSTRUCTORRESP.html>.

The Office for Student Conduct and Academic Integrity has compiled a list of Frequently Asked Questions about scholastic dishonesty: <http://www1.umn.edu/oscai/integrity/student/index.html>. If you have additional questions, please clarify with your instructor for the course. Your instructor can respond to your specific questions regarding what would constitute scholastic dishonesty in the context of a particular class-e.g., whether collaboration on assignments is permitted, requirements and methods for citing sources, if electronic aids are permitted or prohibited during an exam.

### **Makeup Work for Legitimate Absences:**

Students will not be penalized for absence during the semester due to unavoidable or legitimate circumstances. Such circumstances include verified illness, participation in intercollegiate athletic events, subpoenas, jury duty, military service, bereavement, and religious observances. Such circumstances do not include voting in local, state, or national elections. For complete information, see: <http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/MAKEUPWORK.html>.

### **Appropriate Student Use of Class Notes and Course Materials:**

Taking notes is a means of recording information but more importantly of personally absorbing and integrating the educational experience. However, broadly disseminating class notes beyond the classroom community or accepting compensation for taking and distributing classroom notes undermines instructor interests in their intellectual work product while not substantially furthering instructor and student interests in effective learning. Such actions violate shared norms and standards of the academic community. For additional information, please see: <http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/CLASSNOTESSTUDENTS.html>.

### **Sexual Harassment:**

"Sexual harassment" means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment in any University activity or program. Such behavior is not acceptable in the University setting. For additional information, please see: <http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/humanresources/SexHarassment.html>

### **Grading and Transcripts:**

The University utilizes plus and minus grading on a 4.000 cumulative grade point scale in accordance with the following:

A	4.000 - Represents achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements
A-	3.667
B+	3.333
B	3.000 - Represents achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements
B-	2.667
C+	2.333
C	2.000 - Represents achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect
C-	1.667
D+	1.333
D	1.000 - Represents achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements
S	Represents achievement that is satisfactory, which is equivalent to a C- or better.

For additional information, please refer to:

<http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/GRADINGTRANSCRIPTS.html>.

### **Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action:**

The University will provide equal access to and opportunity in its programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. For more information, please consult Board of Regents Policy:

[http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/administrative/Equity\\_Diversity\\_EO\\_AA.html](http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/administrative/Equity_Diversity_EO_AA.html).

### **Disability Accommodations:**

The University is committed to providing quality education to all students regardless of ability. Determining appropriate disability accommodations is a collaborative process. You as a student must register with Disability Services and provide documentation of your disability. The course instructor must provide information regarding a course's content, methods, and essential components. The combination of this information will be used by Disability Services to determine appropriate accommodations for a particular student in a particular course. For more information, please reference Disability Services: <http://ds.umn.edu/student-services.html>.

### **Mental Health and Stress Management:**

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may

lead to diminished academic performance and may reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Student Mental Health Website: <http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu>.

**Academic Freedom and Responsibility: *for courses that do not involve students in research***

Academic freedom is a cornerstone of the University. Within the scope and content of the course as defined by the instructor, it includes the freedom to discuss relevant matters in the classroom. Along with this freedom comes responsibility. Students are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for truth. Students are free to take reasoned exception to the views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled. Reports of concerns about academic freedom are taken seriously, and there are individuals and offices available for help. Contact the instructor, the Department Chair, your adviser, the associate dean of the college, or the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs in the Office of the Provost.

## WEEKLY TOPICS AND READING LIST

### *Introduction*

---

#### **Week 1 (1/23/13): What is the politics of public affairs and why does it matter?**

- Deborah Stone. 2002. *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making (Revised Edition)*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company. Introduction and Chapter 1 (pp. 1-34)
- Alan Blinder. 1997. "Is Government Too Political?" *Foreign Affairs* 76 (November/December): 115-126.

### *Part 1: Getting on the Agenda*

---

#### **Week 2 (1/30/13): Policy Actors and Problem Definition**

- John Kingdon. 2002. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policy, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*. New York: Longman. Chapters 1-5 (pp. 1-115)

#### **Week 3 (2/6/13): Policy Windows**

- John Kingdon. 2002. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policy, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*. New York: Longman. Chapters 6-10 (pp. 116-230).
- Jacob S. Hacker. 2010. "The Road to Somewhere: Why Health Reform Happened," *Perspectives on Politics*, 8(3): 861-876.

### *Part 2: Institutions and Formal Policy Actors in the American Political System*

---

#### **Week 4 (2/13/13): Creating Policy in Congress**

- Arnold, R. Douglas. 1990. *The Logic of Congressional Action*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Chapters 1-6 (pp. 1-148)

#### **Week 5 (2/20/13): Agency Policymaking**

- Cornelius Kerwin. 2003. *Rulemaking: How Government Agencies Write Law and Make Policy, 3rd Edition*. Washington D.C: CQ Press. (Read pp. 1-6; 40-84).
- Terry M. Moe. 1989. "The Politics of Bureaucratic Structure," in *Can the Government Govern?* J. Chubb and P. Peterson (eds). Washington, DC. Brookings Institution (pp. 267-330).
- Amy B. Zegart. 2007. *Spying Blind: The CIA, the FBI, and the Origins of 9/11*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. (Read Chapter 6 "Real Men Don't Type: Adaptation Failure in the FBI," pp. 120-155)

#### **Week 6 (2/27/13): Courts and Policy**

- R. Shep Melnick. 2004. "Courts and Agencies," in *Making Policy, Making Law: An Interbranch Perspective*. Mark C. Miller and Jeb Barnes (eds). Washington DC: Georgetown University Press.
- Paul Frymer. 2003. "Acting When Elected Officials Won't: Federal Courts and Civil Rights Enforcement in U.S. Labor Unions, 1935-1985." *American Political Science Review* 97: 483-499.

**Week 7 (3/6/13): State Institutions and Actors**

- Paul E. Peterson. 1995. *The Price of Federalism*. Washington DC: The Brookings Institution. Read Chapter 4 (“Why States Choose Different Policies”) (pp. 85-105)
- Charles R. Shipan and Craig Volden. 2006. “Bottom-Up Federalism: The Diffusion of Antismoking Policies from U.S. Cities to States.” *American Journal of Political Science* 50(4): 825-843).
- Andreas Kluth. 2011. “Where it all went wrong: A Special Report on California’s Dysfunctional Democracy.” *The Economist*, 23-29 April, pp.3-16.

**Week 8 (3/13/13): Choosing Targets and Venues**

- Marie Hojnacki and David C. Kimball. 1998. “Organized Interests and the Decision of Whom to Lobby in Congress.” *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 92, No. 4. (December): 775-790.
- Andrew Karch. 2009. “Venue Shopping, Policy Feedback, and American Preschool Education.” *Journal of Policy History* 21(1): 38-60.

ENJOY YOUR SPRING BREAK! (NO CLASS 3/20/13)

**Part 3: Informal Policy Actors**

---

**Week 9 (3/27/13): Public Opinion and Mass Mobilization**

- Paul Burstein. 2003. “The Impact of Public Opinion on Public Policy: A Review and an Agenda.” *Political Research Quarterly* 56(1): 29-40.
- Vanessa Williamson, Theda Skocpol, and John Coggin. 2011. “The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism.” *Perspectives on Politics* 9(1): 25-43.
- Kennedy School of Government (KSG) Case C14-00-1541.0. “No Prison in East LA! Birth of Grassroots Movement.”
- Clifford Bob. 2002. “Merchants of Morality.” *Foreign Policy* 129: 36-45.

**Week 10 (4/3/13): Organized Interests across Contexts**

- Frank R. Baumgartner, Jeffrey M. Berry, Marie Hojnacki, David C. Kimball, and Beth L. Leech. 2009. *Lobbying and Policy Change: Who Wins, Who Loses, and Why*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. (Read Chapters 1-3; pp. 1-67)
- Arndt Wonka, Frank R. Baumgartner, Christine Mahoney, and Joost Berkhout. 2010. “Measuring the Size and Scope of the EU Interest Group Population.” *European Union Politics* 11(3): 463-476.
- Kim D. Reimann. 2006. “A View from the Top: International Politics, Norms, and the Worldwide Growth of NGOs.” *International Studies Quarterly* 50: 45-67.

**Week 11 (4/10/13): Organized Interests and Policy Change**

- Frank R. Baumgartner, Jeffrey M. Berry, Marie Hojnacki, David C. Kimball, and Beth L. Leech. 2009. *Lobbying and Policy Change: Who Wins, Who Loses, and Why*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. (Chapters 6-12; pp. 110-260)

### **Week 12 (4/17/13): Political Parties**

- Harold W. Stanley and Richard G. Niemi, "Partisanship, Party Coalitions, and Group Support, 1952-2004" *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 36(2): 172-188.
- Nolan McCarty. "The Policy Effects of Political Polarization," in *The Transformation of American Politics: Activist Government and the Rise of Conservatism*. Paul Pierson and Theda Skocpol (eds). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. (pp. 223-255)
- Torben Iversen and David Soskice. 2008. "Electoral Institutions, Parties, and the Politics of Class: Explaining the Formation of Redistributive Coalitions," in *Democracy, Inequality, and Representation*. Christopher Anderson and Pablo Beramendi (eds.). New York: Russell Sage 2008. (pp. 93-117)

### *Part 4: Political Discourse and Policy Analysis*

---

### **Week 13 (4/24/13): Constructing Problems and Policy-Relevant Social Groups**

- Deborah Stone. 2002. *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making (Revised Edition)*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company. Chapter 7 ("Symbols") (pp. 157-182)
- Peter Andreas and Kelly M Greenhill. 2010. *Sex, Drugs and Body Counts: The Politics of Numbers in Global Crime and Conflict*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. Read the introduction ("The Politics of Numbers") (pp. 1-22)
- Anne Schneider and Helen Ingram. 1993. "Social Construction of Target Populations: Implications for Politics and Policy." *American Political Science Review* 87: 334-347.

### **Week 14 (5/1/13): Policy Frames and Arguments**

- Frank R. Baumgartner, Jeffrey M. Berry, Marie Hojnacki, David C. Kimball, and Beth L. Leech. 2009. *Lobbying and Policy Change: Who Wins, Who Loses, and Why*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. Read Chapter 7 ("Arguments") (pp. 129-148)
- Charlotte Ryan and William A. Gamson. 2006. "The Art of Reframing Political Debates." *Contexts* 5(1): 13-18.
- Nisbet, "Communicating Climate Change: Why Frames Matter for Public Engagement" (2009)

### **Week 15 (5/8/13): What Role for Policy Analysis?**

- J.A. Hird. 2005. "Policy Analysis for What?" *Policy Studies Journal* 33(1): 83-105.
- Nancy Shulock. 1999. The Paradox of Policy Analysis: If It is Not Used, Why Do We Produce So Much of It? *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 18(2): 226-244.
- Sanford Schram and Joe Soss. 2001. "Success Stories: Welfare Reform, Policy Discourse, and the Politics of Research." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 557: 49-65.

FINAL PAPER DUE IN HARD COPY, MONDAY MAY 13, 2013 BY 5PM