

PPOL5110/SOSC 5780  
Foundation in Public Policy (L2)  
Fall 2022  
Class: Monday and Wednesday, 05/09/2022-30/11/2022  
Venue: Room 2503  
Time: 10:20-11:50 am

Instructor: Professor Kira MATUS  
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Drop-in hours: Wednesday afternoons 14:00- 15:15pm  
or by appointment

Teaching Assistants:  
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### Course Description

This course introduces to students the study of public policy. We will explore key theories and analytical frameworks for public policy and how they can be applied to approach contemporary public policy issues. The first part of the course will deal with the roles of key building blocks of the policy systems, such as approaches, value, policy actors, policy instruments, and policy context, in shaping policymaking. The second part of the course will examine key stages in policy-making process, such as agenda setting, policy formation, decision-making, policy implementation and policy evaluation.

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- ◆ Be familiar with key terms, concepts, approaches, and frameworks concerning public policy;
- ◆ Describe important structures and interactions among key components of policy systems, such as policy actors, policy environment and policy instruments;
- ◆ Understand key theories and frameworks of the policy process and identify areas of potential improvement in a given context;
- ◆ Improve analytical, writing, group work, and presentation skills

### Assessment

The assessment of student performance in the course will be based on written assignments, class participation, and the final exam. The following weights will be used to determine course grades:

Component	Weight
Case Analysis (4)	40% (4 x10%)
Op-ed (2)	15% (1 x 5%, 1x 10% )
Policy Evaluation Exercise (Group project)	30%
Class Participation	15% (5% for attendance, 10% for in-class and after-class participation)

### EXPECTATIONS:

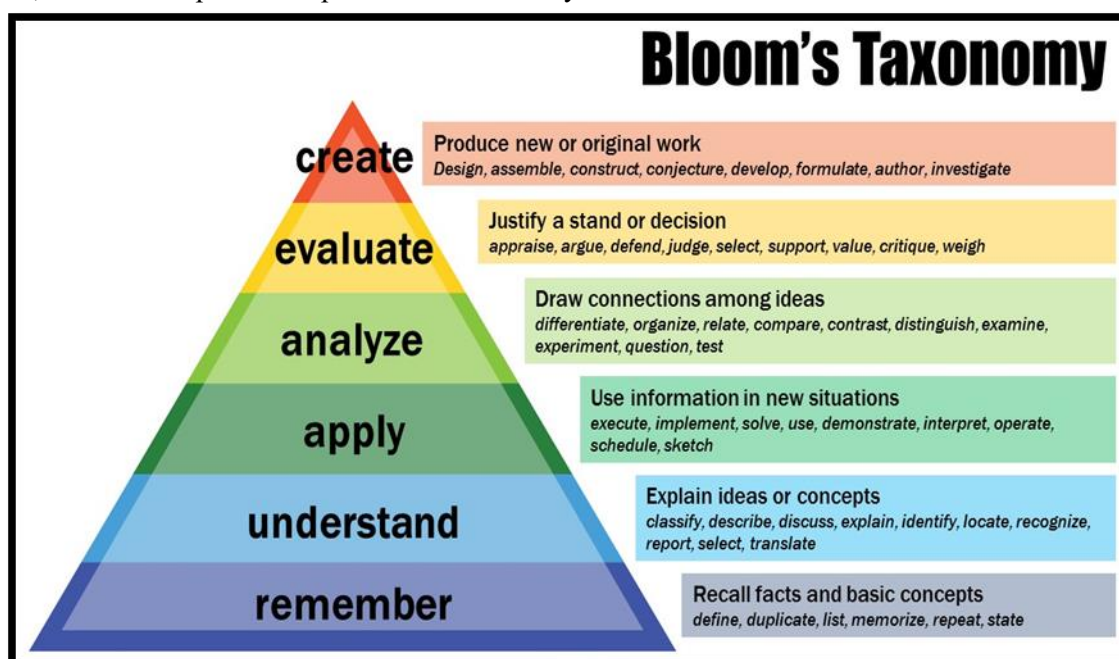
This is a course MPP students. By this point in your university career, I expect that you are responsible, independent students. At the same time, the topic matter (or most of it) will be new to the majority of you. This can mean a heavy load at times. **Attendance is mandatory, and the expectation is that you will do the readings for each session before the class.**

The reason that it is so important to do the readings and class assignments is that this course is only as good as what you each are willing to put into it. Case sessions (usually Wednesdays), in particular, will only work well if students are prepared, and come to class willing to engage in fruitful discussions. This is not a brain-transfer from the instructor to the classroom. Public policy is a cooperative, interdisciplinary endeavour, and working through the material together is as much an element of the course as the subject matter itself. The structure of the course gives multiple ways for students to contribute, orally and in writing. But working on oral skills is an important element of the class, and the expectation is that all students will contribute to the discussions.

At HKUST, we have a wonderful diversity of students. They bring with them a wealth of perspectives and experiences. So while vigorous discussion is encouraged, disrespect, inside of the classroom or out, will not be tolerated. We will work under Chatham House rules- what is said in the classroom stays in the classroom. Furthermore, under no circumstances will any student resort to personal attacks, however dry or witty. Any disrespectful or disruptive students will be asked to leave the class.

### **GRADING:**

For each assignment, we will provide the outline and general marking rubrics. But for all assignments, it will be helpful to keep Bloom's Taxonomy in mind.



In general, the different levels relate to grades as follows (but keep in mind, different assignments may have particular requirements that need to be met which may change this a bit):

- Create: 100%***
- Evaluate: 90%***
- Analyze: 80%***
- Apply: 70%***
- Understand: 60%***
- Remember: <60%***

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY CODE**

All work must be entirely your own. Please cite the relevant work whenever you borrow ideas from others, using the proper reference format (e.g., APA, MLA). Examples of violations of the academic integrity code include but are not limited to: failure to use quotation marks when quoting, failure to give full credit when paraphrasing, use of others' ideas or work products, submission of work prepared through impermissible collaboration, and submission of work prepared by you for another class. (Your work in this class may be related to your work in another class, but the work you submit for this class should not duplicate that submitted for another class. If you anticipate an exception, please do not hesitate to ask.) Violation of the Academic Integrity Code may result in failure in the course, as well as more serious academic sanctions. For details about the academic integrity code, please refer to <https://acadreg.ust.hk/generalreg.html>.

Please check for plagiarism before you turn in each homework, for example using the anti-plagiarism software Turnitin available on Canvas. **A rule of thumb is that the similarity score should not exceed 15%, excluding references.**

## LATE HOMEWORK POLICY

*Note: Late assignments will incur a penalty for each day they are late, except in cases where extensions have been granted by the instructor. Except for emergencies, extensions are much more likely to be granted when they are requested well in advance, with strong justification. If you are struggling to complete your coursework, please come discuss with us sooner rather than later, as it is always easier to adjust things before there is a crisis.*

## TOPICS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

Note: All readings and case materials can be accessed through Canvas.

We have two core texts in this course.

**Hassel and Wegrich** is a very practically oriented text, and is a good starting point for understanding key concepts. **Wu, Ramesh, Howlett and Fritzen** is a more theoretical (though still very useful!) treatment of the topic areas. Taken together, they complement each other very well, and as you will see, we often assign both.

- Hassel, A. and Wegrich, K. (2022). *How to Do Public Policy*, Oxford University Press. Chapter 1: Public Policy.
- Wu, X, M. Ramesh, M. Howlett, and S. Fritzen (2018). *The Public Policy Primer: Managing the Policy Process*, Routledge. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition.

There are a few other textbooks that we use on occasion, and these books can be useful resources throughout the course (and are available at the library or online, should you need them). If you're looking for some background reading on a topic where you are still a bit confused, I would highly recommend looking at these four.

Stone, D. (2002). *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*. London and New York, NY: WW Norton and Company. [This is a classic!]

Cairney, P. (2019). *Understanding Public Policy: Theories and Issues*. Red Globe Press.

Knill, C. and Tosun, J. (2020). *Public Policy: A New Introduction*. Red Globe Press.

**Note: this list is preliminary and subject to adjustment. Policy is constantly happening – so we will adjust accordingly. Up to date reading lists, assignments, and announcements will all be posted on Canvas.**

## **PART I. Building Blocks of Policy Systems**

### **Session 1&2 (September 5&7): Introduction to Public Policy**

Hassel, A. and Wegrich, K. (2022). *How to Do Public Policy*, Oxford University Press. Chapter 1: Public Policy.

Wu, X, M. Ramesh, M. Howlett, and S. Fritzen (2018). *The Public Policy Primer: Managing the Policy Process*, Routledge. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Chapter 1: Introduction: Managing the Policy Process, pp. 1-25.

Head, B. (2008). Wicked Problems in Public Policy. *Public Policy*, 3(2), 101-118.

Peters, G. (2005). The Problem of Policy Problems. *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis*, 7(4), 349-370.

Smith, K. and C. Larimer (2009). *The Public Policy Theory Primer*, Westview Press. Chapter 1 Public Policy as a Concept and a Field (or Fields) or Study.

Case: The Government Weighs in on Housing in Hong Kong (**Op-ed No.1**)

### **Session 3 (September 14): Power, Interests, and Institutions**

Stone, D. (2002). *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*. London and New York, NY: WW Norton and Company. Chapter 1: The Market and the Polis. Chapter 9: Interests

Cairney, P. (2019). *Understanding Public Policy: Theories and Issues*. Red Globe Press. Chapter 3: Power and Public Policy

Roberts, A. (2019). *Reinventing Public Administration for a Dangerous Century*. Cornell University Press. Chapter 7: Laws, Organizations, Programs, and Practices.

Weimer, D. and R. Vining (2011) *Policy Analysis*.

***Op-ed No.1 due on September 18.***

### **Session 4 & 5 (September 19 & 21): Value for Public Policy**

Stone, D. (2002). *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*. London and New York, NY: WW Norton and Company. Chapters 2, 3, 4, and 5

de Graaf, G., L. Huberts, R. Smulders (2016). Coping with Public Value Conflicts. *Administration & Society*, 48(9)

Case 2 (**Case Analysis No. 1**)

### **Session 6 & 7 (September 26 & 28): Policy Actors**

Knill, C. and Tosun, J. (2020). *Public Policy: A New Introduction*. Red Globe Press. Chapter 3: The Context for Policy-Making: Central Institutions and Actors

Brinkerhoff, D. & B. Crosby (2002), *Managing Policy Reform: Concepts and Tools for Decision-Makers in Developing and Transitioning Countries*, Kumarian Press. Chapter 6 Stakeholder Analysis; Chapter 8 Political and Institutional Mapping

Case 3 (Case Analysis No.2)

***Case Analysis No.1 due on October 2.***

**Session 8 & 9 (October 3 & 5): Policy Context**

Guest Lecture (October 5): Professor Anthony B. L. Cheung

Howlett, M., M. Ramesh and A. Perl (2009). *Studying Public Policy*. 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Chapter 3: The Policy Context, pp. 50-89.

Ostrom, E. (2010). Beyond markets and states: polycentric governance of complex economic systems. *The American Economic Review*, 641-672.

Eggers, W., L. Baker, R. Gonzalez, A. Vaughn (2012) *Public sector, disrupted. How disruptive innovation can help government achieve more for less*. Deloitte.

**Session 10 & 11 (October 10 & 12): Policy Instruments**

Hassel, A. and Wegrich, K. (2022). *How to Do Public Policy*, Oxford University Press. Ch 4.4 “The Government’s Toolbox”

Howlett, M., M. Ramesh and A. Perl (2009). *Studying Public Policy*. Routledge. 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Chapter 5: Policy Formulation. pp. 114-135

Weimer, D., and A. Vining (2011). *Policy Analysis*. Chapter 10 Correcting Market and Government Failures: Generic Policies. pp. 209-262

Wu, X. and M. Ramesh. (2014) “Market Imperfections, Government Imperfections and Innovative Policy Mixes in Singapore”, *Policy Sciences*, 47(3): 305-320.

Case: Jiahe Demolition and Relocation Incident

***Case Analysis No.2 due October 16.***

**PART II. Key Stages in Policy-Making Process**

**Session 12 & 13 (October 17 & 19): Agenda Setting**

Hassel, A. and Wegrich, K. (2022). *How to Do Public Policy*, Oxford University Press. Ch 3. “How to Set the Agenda”

Wu, X., M. Ramesh, M. Howlett, and S. Fritzen (2018), *The Public Policy Primer: Managing the Policy Process*, Routledge. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Chapter 2: Agenda Setting, pp. 26-49.

Birkland, T. A. (1998) Focusing Events, Mobilization, and Agenda Setting. *Journal of Public Policy*, 18(1): 53-74

Stone, D. 1989. Causal Stories and the Formation of Policy Agendas. *Political Science Quarterly* 104 (2): 281–300

Feezeill, J. (2017) Agenda Setting through Social Media: The Importance of Incidental News Exposure and Social Filtering in the Digital Era. *Political Research Quarterly*

Case (Case Analysis No.3)

**Session 14 & 15 (October 24 & 26): Policy Formulation**

Hassel, A. and Wegrich, K. (2022). *How to Do Public Policy*, Oxford University Press. Ch 4 “How to Choose and Design Policy Instruments”

Wu, X., M. Ramesh, M. Howlett, and S. Fritzen (2018), *The Public Policy Primer: Managing the Policy Process*, Routledge. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Chapter 3: Policy Formulation, pp. 50-75.

Kingdon, J. (1995). “How Does and Idea’s Time Come? Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies.” In *Classics of Public Administration*, 7th edition 454-459.

Sabatier, P. A. (1988). An advocacy coalition framework of policy change and the role of policy-oriented learning therein. *Policy Sciences*, 21(2-3), 129-168.

Case 3

***Case Analysis No.3 due October 30.***

**Session 16 & 17 (October 31 & November 2): Decision making**

Wu, X, M. Ramesh, M. Howlett, and S. Fritzen (2018), *The Public Policy Primer: Managing the Policy Process*, Routledge. Chapter 4: Decision-Making, pp. 76-99.

Jones, B. D., & Baumgartner, F. R. (2012). From there to here: Punctuated equilibrium to the general punctuation thesis to a theory of government information processing. *Policy Studies Journal*, 40(1), 1-20.

Pal, L. (2011). “Assessing Incrementalism: Formative Assumptions, Contemporary Realities,” *Policy and Society* 30(1)

Allison, G. Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis, *The American Political Science Review*, Volume 63, Issue 3 (Sep., 1969), 689-718.

Case 4 (Op-ed No.2)

**Session 18 & 19 (November 7 and 9): Policy Implementation**

Hassel, A. and Wegrich, K. (2022). *How to Do Public Policy*, Oxford University Press. Ch 5 “How to Implement Public Policy”

Wu, X., M. Ramesh, M. Howlett, and S. Fritzen (2018), *The Public Policy Primer: Managing the Policy Process*, Routledge. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Chapter 5: Policy Implementation, pp. 100-123.

Weaver, K. (2010) But Will It Work?: Implementation Analysis to Improve Government Performance. *Issues in Governance Studies*. No. 32.

Brinkerhoff, D. & B. Crosby (2002), *Managing Policy Reform: Concepts and Tools for Decision-Makers in Developing and Transitioning Countries*, Kumarian Press. Chapter 7 Policy Characteristics Analysis

Case 5 (Case Analysis No.4)

***Op-ed No.2 due November 13.***

**Session 20, 21, 22 (November 14 & 16 & 21): Policy Evaluation**

Guest Lecture (tentatively November 21): Professor Christine Loh

Hassel, A. and Wegrich, K. (2022). *How to Do Public Policy*, Oxford University Press. Ch 6 “How to Evaluate Policies”

Wu, X., M. Ramesh, M. Howlett, and S. Fritzen (2018), *The Public Policy Primer: Managing the Policy Process*, Routledge, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Ch. 6 “Policy Evaluation,” pp. 124-139.

McConnell, A (2010). Policy Success, Policy Failure and Grey Areas In-Between. *Journal of Public Policy*.

Bovens, M., P. 'T Hart, S. Kuipers (2008). Oxford Handbook of Policy Analysis: Chapter 15 The Politics of Policy Evaluation.

Case 6

***Case Analysis No.4 due November 20.***

**Session 23, 24 and 25 (November 23, 28 & 30): Student Presentations and Overview of the Course**

***Policy Evaluation Exercise due December 6.***

***Final group project (Case Writing and Comparative Case Analysis) due December 19.***