Course syllabus
POL317 H1F L0101
COMPARATIVE PUBLIC POLICY
Summer 2018

Mon, Wed 2:00 – 4:00pm
Location, Room: LM 155
Office Hours: Mon, Wed
12:00 – 1:30pm, SS3058

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Required text: Kenneth A. Shepsle. (2010). *Analyzing politics*, 2nd ed. New York: Norton.

Course description: This course surveys the concepts, theories and frameworks developed by social scientists to analyze and understand policymaking in modern democracies. Given that leading theories of the policy process are of primarily American origin, the objective of the course is to develop students' knowledge of comparative politics so that they may reflect critically on the generalizability of theories across dissimilar institutional contexts and propose ways in which existing approaches may be improved.

Format: The course format consists of roughly 60 minutes of lecture per meeting, with the remainder devoted to group exercises and class discussion of the readings. Thematically, the course is split into two parts. Part I spans meetings one through five and is intended to introduce students to the analytical basis upon which the field of comparative public policy rests. Part I also gives students an opportunity to familiarize or refresh themselves with the institutional foundations of policymaking, such as the function of legislatures, committees, executives and the bureaucracy in different political systems. Part II spans meetings six through twelve and critically surveys the dominant theories of the policy process from the 1960s to the present.

Readings: Readings are sourced from academic journals, peer-reviewed monographs and edited volumes. The course text, Kenneth A. Shepsle's *Analyzing politics,* 2nd ed., is available at the University of Toronto bookstore at St. George and College. All other readings will be posted to Blackboard (Portal) by the second week of class. Class participation is facilitated by discussion questions listed below readings in the course schedule (see below). Students are expected to come to class having reviewed the required readings with an answer to discussion question in mind.

Grading Scheme and Course Requirements:

Outline and annotated bibliography (due 23 May)	15%
Midterm exam (28 May)	25%
Term paper (due 15 June)	40%
Attendance and participation	20%

Midterm exam: The midterm will take place during the first 60 minutes of class on 28 May. It will consist of a mix of multiple choice and short answer questions based on the material covered in Part I. It is a closed book examination.

Written assignments: A major component of this course is a term paper written in the format of a scholarly article. Students are encouraged to start thinking about their term papers in the first week of class. All students must submit a **3-5 page** outline, including a 100-150 word abstract and annotated bibliography, **no later than one week prior to the university's course drop deadline (5 June).** The instructions for the term paper are as follows: *Apply one of the theories or frameworks analyzed in this class to a particular case of public policy in a country* <u>*other than the United States*</u>*. Evaluate how well the theory applies, or can be made to apply, to the institutional context of that country and suggest any changes that should be made to the theory or framework. Be sure to do a thorough review of the literature; many of the theories and frameworks studied in this class have "variations."* Alternatively, students may analyze two cases of public policy in the same country (but *not* the United States) or the same policy area in two countries, *one of which* may be the United States. Papers may employ large-N comparative statistical analysis, but they should include some detailed discussion of select data points (i.e., cases within the population set). Papers should be no shorter than 5,000 words, including abstract, bibliography, notes and tables, and no longer than 8,000 words. *Ceteris paribus,* there is no correspondence between paper length and quality of scholarship, so there should be no correspondence between the length of papers and their grade. The theories of the policy process analyzed in this class are: *the policy cycle/stages heuristic, the funnel of causality, the multiple streams approach, the advocacy coalition framework, institutional analysis and development, punctuated equilibrium theory, policy paradigms, and incrementalism*. All assignments are due by 11:59pm on the date listed.

Assignment submission: Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site. <u>Submission to Turnitin is voluntary</u>. Students who wish to submit written assignments by other means must make arrangements with the instructor prior to the assignment due date. For instructions on how to submit using the Turnitin Blackboard application, visit:
http://portalinfo.utoronto.ca/content/submit-turnitin-assignment

Participation: Participation is expected. Students will be evaluated on the quality, not the quantity, of their contributions. The instructor will occasionally ask students to write down and submit discussion question answers in class, so it is important that students come prepared.

Missed tests, late assignments, extensions and absences: Extensions will be granted, and absences excused, only in the event of documented medical necessity. Late assignments will be penalized 5% per day. No assignments will be accepted after 26 June, except under extraneous circumstances. If a student must submit an assignment after 26 June, a petition through the student's college may be required.

Grade appeals: Grades for major assignments (e.g., midterm, final paper) may be appealed, first, to the course instructor and, subsequently, to the Undergraduate Director.

Accessibility needs: The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require assistance or have any accessibility concerns, please visit: http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility

Academic misconduct: Make sure the information in your essays is in your own words. Plagiarism is a serious academic offence and will be handled according to the rules in the university's Code of Behaviour. For further information, see the University of Toronto's policy on academic integrity at: http://academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/

Learning outcomes:

Students will:

(1)   develop a basic comprehension of analytical concepts and tools used in comparative politics, including utility theory, median voter theory, committee voting and dimensional/veto players analysis.

(2)   understand the general procedural differences and similarities between industrialized democracies with respect to how governing institutions and decision rules affect policymaking and policy outcomes.

(3)   build awareness of large-N and case study research as the two primary ways comparative policy research is conducted and gain an appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of each approach.

(4)   become familiar with the dominant theories of the policy process, which are of primarily American origin.

(5)   critically evaluate theories of the policy process for their explanatory potential in policymaking contexts outside of the United States.

PART 1: ANALYTICAL FOUNDATIONS

7 May: Introduction and public policy primer
        Required reading: review the notation cheat sheet (available on Blackboard)
                            skim Shepsle, chapters 3, 4

9 May: The analytical toolset: preferences, utility and group choice
        Required reading: Shepsle, chapters 5, 6
        Recommended reading: review Shepsle, chapters 3, 4

        Discussion question: Whose preferences should we expect to be reflected in policy when the
                            method of majority rule is employed? What determines this? Can we
                            predict it?

14 May: Decisionmaking institutions: voting methods, strategic behaviour and collective action
  Required reading: Shepsle, chapters 7, 8, 9
  Recommended reading: Lijphart (2012), chapter 9
                        Knoke & Laumann (1988)
                        Jordan (1990)

  Discussion question: What determines whether actors will cooperate? What impedes cooperation?

16 May: Governing institutions: executives, legislatures, bureaucracy and beyond
  Required reading: Shepsle, chapters 11, 12, 13
                      skim Lijphart (2012), chapters 2, 3
  Recommended reading: same as previous class

  Discussion question: How do "macropolitical institutions" affect how policy is made in different political systems? Try ranking the following countries according to the ease with which the policy status quo can be changed (hint: "institutional friction" is a function of the number of institutionalized veto players in a political system): Austria, Germany, the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada (federal), Canada (provincial).

21 May: Victoria Day, no classes

23 May: Methods and methodology

OUTLINE AND ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE

  Required reading: Mahoney (2008)
                      Lieberman (2015)
  Recommended reading: Rohlfing (2008)

  Further reading: Charles C. Ragin. (2008). *Redesigning social inquiry: fuzzy sets and beyond*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

                       Fritz W. Scharpf. (1997). *Games real actors play: actor centred institutionalism in policy research*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

  Discussion question: What should a thorough study of public policy look like?

PART 2: APPLIED THEORY

28 May: Stages and cycles

MID TERM EXAM ON PART I
> *No required reading or discussion question; study for the midterm!*
> *Recommended reading:* DeLeon (1999)

30 May: DHS and the funnel of causality
> *Required reading*: Hofferbert (1974), chapter 7
>   Eger & Marlowe (2006)
> *Recommended reading:* Blomquist (2007)

> *Discussion question:* Post-secondary education in Ontario is now much more financially accessible than it was in the past and compared to other jurisdictions. Offer an explanation for why this is the case by evoking the funnel of causality.

4 June: The Garbage Can Model (GCM) and Multiple Streams Approach (MSA)
> *Required reading:* skim Shepsle, chapter 14
>   Zahariadis (2007)
>   skim Cohen, March & Olsen (1972), pp. 1-4
> *Recommended reading:* Kingdon (1984), chapter 8
>   Herwig et al. (2018)

> *Discussion question:* How do individuals and organizations learn? To what extent is organizational learning analogous to human (individual) learning? (hint: what does Shepsle say about "legislative intent"?)

6 June: The Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF)
> *Required reading:* Sabatier (1988)
>   skim Jenkins-Smith et al. (2018)
> *Recommended reading:* Jones, McBeth & Shanahan (2014)

> *Discussion question:* How are preferences conceived of in the ACF?

11 June: Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD)
        Required reading: skim Shepsle, chapters 9, 10
                                 Kiser & Ostrom (1984)
        Recommended reading: Lubell (2013)
                                 Schlager & Cox (2018)

        Discussion question: What are the "three worlds of action"? Provide an example of how each "world" bears on policymaking in a specific polity (e.g., a private body/firm, local government, sub-state government, national government, international government).

13 June: Punctuated Equilibrium Theory (PET)
        Required reading: Baumgartner & Jones (1991)
                             skim Jones et al. (2009)
        Recommended reading: Baumgartner (1989)
                                Baumgartner et al. (2018)

        Discussion question: In what ways is PET a "unified theory" in Mahoney's (2008) parlance? If you were to write a book employing PET in a cross-country study, how would you go about your research? (i.e., how would you design your project?).

15 June: ***TERM PAPER DUE (Turnitin)***

18 June: Is public policy paradigmatic? Is policy change paradigmatic or incremental?
        Required reading: Lindblom (1959)
                             Hall (1993)
        Recommended reading: Carstensen (2011)
                                Lindblom (1979)
                                Blyth (2013)

        Discussion question: Is public policy paradigmatic? Is policy change paradigmatic or incremental?