

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY
Woodrow Wilson School

WWS 466
The Politics of Policy Making

Spring 2001
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This seminar introduces students to the political analysis of policy making in the American setting. The focus is on developing tools for the analysis of politics in any setting — national, state, or local. The first three weeks examine policy making as a whole and the concept of power in political science. The next three weeks examine the environment within which policy makers operate, with special attention to public opinion and elections. Next we focus on political institutions and the making of policy decisions, giving attention to agenda setting, legislatures, political parties, executives, and the courts.

A. Weekly Schedule

1. Organizational Meeting	February 5
2. The Politics of Policy Making	February 12
3. The Analysis of Power in Politics	February 19
4. Public Opinion I	February 26
5. Public Opinion II	March 5
6. Elections	March 12
7. Agenda Setting	March 26
8. Legislatures and Public Policy	April 2
9. Political Parties and Public Policy	April 9
10. Separation of Powers and Public Policy	April 16
11. Courts and Public Policy	April 23
12. Presidents and Public Policy	April 30

B. Course Requirements

1. **Reading.** The course operates as a seminar. The amount of reading averages about 200 pages per week, all of it nontechnical. Each student is expected to do the assigned reading *before* each seminar and come to class prepared for discussion.
2. **Discussion.** The main event each week is a structured discussion of the week's reading. I provide the structure; you provide the discussion. Our aim is to come to terms with a serious piece of scholarship *and* to see what lessons it offers for those involved in making and administering public policy. Each student is expected to participate actively in each week's discussion.

3. **Three Short Papers.** Each student writes three short papers during the course of the semester. These are opportunities for you to discuss the week's readings, unprompted by the instructor or your fellow students.

The key to a good paper is to pose an interesting question and then answer it. You might focus on the value of an author's theory, examining its logical rigor, the plausibility of the arguments, or its relation to other theories. You might focus on the adequacy of the empirical evidence, asking whether the author used appropriate methods, whether the evidence really supports the hypotheses, or whether other evidence contradicts it. Alternatively, you might address the question of how well a piece of scholarship helps to illuminate other happenings in the real world. Does a book help to explain why government makes the decisions it does? Under what conditions does it appear useful? These papers are *not* an opportunity to summarize the week's readings. You should assume that anyone who reads your paper has also done the week's reading.

These papers should be well organized and well written. A paper that fails to develop an argument until the last paragraph is called a first draft. A paper that fails to anticipate potential counter arguments, is written in the passive voice, or is filled with grammatical, spelling, or typing errors, is called a second draft. A paper that you would be proud to read to the class is called a final draft. I like final drafts.

The class will be divided in thirds, with one group writing in weeks 3, 6, and 9, a second group writing in weeks 4, 7, and 10, and the third group writing in weeks 5, 8, and 11. Your papers should be typed, double-spaced, and a maximum of *four* pages. They are due at the *start* of the seminar in which their subjects are scheduled for discussion. I will return each of the short papers with comments a week after they are due.

4. **Final Paper.** The final paper requires that you apply the lessons of the seminar to explaining why some governmental institution enacted, or failed to enact, a significant policy change. The aim is to explain how and why political forces combined to produce or thwart change. You may choose any level of government — national, state, or local — and you may choose any significant policy change, whether adopted or rejected.

Although these papers require some outside research, the emphasis should be on original political analysis, not exhaustive research in primary source materials or extensive interviews with participants. Some description will undoubtedly be necessary, but your paper should primarily be a piece of analysis. You should attempt to *explain* why an institution adopted or rejected a proposed policy change.

You are free to choose a policy area in which you already have some expertise. You are free to choose a subject that journalists or other observers have already covered extensively. You are free to select a topic for which the gathering of research materials is relatively easy. I am

more interested in observing your analytic skills than your research skills. If you are having trouble choosing, or narrowing down, a topic, please come and see me. You should select a topic and submit a one-page description of the policy decision that you intend to analyze by Monday, March 26.

The final paper should be typed, double-spaced, and a *maximum* of 25 pages, and is due on Tuesday, May 15, at 4:00. The real world of politics and public affairs does not grant extensions, and neither do I. Papers should be placed in my Robertson Hall mailbox.

5. **Due Dates.**

Short papers:	Due at the <i>start</i> of each week's seminar.
Research plan:	Due Monday, March 26
Research paper:	Due Tuesday, May 15

6. **Grading.**

Seminar participation	20%
Short papers	30%
Final paper	50%

C. **Availability of Readings**

1. **Reserve Readings.** There are multiple copies of each required book on reserve in the Wilson School Library in Wallace Hall.
2. **Books Available for Purchase.** If you prefer to buy books, the Princeton University Store has copies of 10 books that we will use most intensively.
3. **Suggested Readings.** The suggested readings are places you can turn if you want to learn more about a given subject. Although all of these works are available somewhere in the Princeton University library system, I have not placed them on reserve for this course.

D. **Times and Places**

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| 1. Seminar Meetings. | Monday, 1:30-4:20 | Robertson Hall, Room 10 |
| 2. Office Hours. | Wednesday, 1:30-3:30 | Robertson Hall, Room 310 |
| | Phone: 258-4855 | arnold@princeton.edu |

Occasional changes in office hours will be announced during Monday's class. I am also available by appointment. Please send an e-mail outlining your constraints over the coming week. I will respond with an appointment that works for both of us.

Weekly Schedule

1. Organizational Meeting (February 5)

General discussion of the politics of policymaking.

2. The Politics of Policy Making (February 12)

Himelfarb attempts to explain the making and unmaking of Medicare policy. Arnold analyzes the future politics of Social Security.

a. *Required* (134 pages)

Richard Himelfarb, *Catastrophic Politics: The Rise and Fall of the Medicare Catastrophic Coverage Act of 1988* (1995), pp. vii-ix, 1-103.

R. Douglas Arnold, "The Politics of Reforming Social Security," *Political Science Quarterly* (Summer 1998), pp. 213-240.

3. The Analysis of Power in Politics (February 19)

Power is one of the fundamental concepts in political science. Gaventa reviews several alternative conceptions of power and then seeks to measure power in an isolated Appalachian community. How well does Gaventa capture power relations in this community? How generalizable are his findings to other communities? How useful are the various notions of power?

a. *Required* (266 pages)

John Gaventa, *Power and Powerlessness: Quiescence and Rebellion in an Appalachian Valley* (1980), pp. v-xi, 3-261.

b. *Suggested*

E. E. Schattschneider, *The Semi-Sovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America* (1960).

Robert A. Dahl, *Who Governs? Democracy and Power in an American City* (1961).

Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz, *Power and Poverty* (1970).

Stephen Lukes, *Power: A Radical View* (1974).

Robert Caro, *The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York* (1974).

Jack H. Nagel, *The Descriptive Analysis of Power* (1975).

R. Douglas Arnold, *Congress and the Bureaucracy: A Theory of Influence* (1979).

Nelson Polsby, *Community Power and Political Theory*, 2nd ed. (1980).

Paul Peterson, *City Limits* (1981).

Ian Shapiro and Grant Reeher (eds), *Power, Inequality, and Democratic Politics: Essays in Honor of Robert A. Dahl* (1988).

Robert A. Dahl, *Modern Political Analysis*, 5th ed. (1991).

4. Public Opinion I (February 26)

How do citizens acquire opinions about policies and politicians? Zaller offers a sophisticated theory to explain public opinion. How well does this theory explain your own opinions? Your friends and family? The mass public? What seems to account for the shape of mass opinion in society?

a. *Required* (96 pages)

John R. Zaller, *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion* (1992), pp. 1-96.

b. *Suggested*

M. Kent Jennings and Richard G. Niemi, *The Political Character of Adolescence* (1974).

Jennifer Hochschild, *What's Fair? American Beliefs About Distributive Justice* (1981).

M. Kent Jennings and Richard G. Niemi, *Generations and Politics* (1982).

Daniel Kahneman, Paul Slovic, and Amos Tversky, *Judgment under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases* (1982).

Herbert McClosky and Alida Brill, *Dimensions of Tolerance: What Americans Believe About Civil Liberties* (1983).

Herbert McClosky and John Zaller, *The American Ethos: Public Attitudes Toward Capitalism and Democracy* (1984).

Shanto Iyengar and Donald R. Kinder, *News That Matters: Television and American Opinion* (1987).

David O. Sears and Carolyn L. Funk, "Self-Interest in Americans' Political Opinions," in Jane J. Mansbridge (ed), *Beyond Self-Interest* (1990), pp. 147-170.

Daniel Yankelovich, *Coming to Public Judgment: Making Democracy Work in a Complex World* (1991).

Samuel L. Popkin, *The Reasoning Voter: Communication and Persuasion in Presidential Campaigns* (1991).

William A. Gamson, *Talking Politics* (1992).

Robert S. Erikson and Kent L. Tedin, *American Public Opinion: Its Origins, Content, and Impact*, 5th ed. (1995).

Michael H. Delli Carpini and Scott Keeter, *What Americans Know about Politics and Why It Matters* (1996).

5. Public Opinion II (March 5)

How can one explain the dynamics of public opinion? What accounts for stability and change in public opinion over time?

a. *Required* (213 pages)

John R. Zaller, *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion* (1992), pp. 97-309.

b. *Suggested*

John E. Mueller, *War, Presidents, and Public Opinion* (1973).

Morris P. Fiorina, *Retrospective Voting in American National Elections* (1981).

D. Roderick Kiewiet, *Macroeconomics and Micropolitics: The Electoral Effects of Economic Issues* (1983).

James Sundquist, *Dynamics of the Party System* (1983).

Benjamin I. Page, Robert Y. Shapiro, and Glenn R. Dempsey, "What Moves Public Opinion?" *American Political Science Review* (March 1987), pp. 23-43.

Larry M. Bartels, *Presidential Primaries and the Dynamics of Public Choice* (1988).

Edward G. Carmines and James A. Stimson, *Issue Evolution: Race and the Transformation of American Politics* (1989).

Richard Brody, *Assessing the President: The Media, Elite Opinion, and Public Support* (1991).

Larry M. Bartels, "Constituency Opinion and Congressional Policy Making: The Reagan Defense Buildup," *American Political Science Review* (June 1991), pp. 457-474.

Benjamin Page and Robert Shapiro, *The Rational Public: Fifty Years of Trends in American's Policy Preferences* (1992).

Bryan D. Jones, *Reconceiving Decision-Making in Democratic Politics: Attention, Choice, and Public Policy* (1994).

James Stimson, *Public Opinion in America: Moods, Cycles, and Swings*, 2nd. ed. (1999).

Martin Gilens, *Why Americans Hate Welfare: Race, Media, and the Politics of Antipoverty Programs* (1999).

6. Elections (March 12)

How can we explain election outcomes? How much are congressional elections national contests between two parties? How much are they local contests between pairs of candidates? How important are campaigns? Information? Money?

a. *Required* (201 pages)

Gary C. Jacobson, *The Politics of Congressional Elections*, 4th ed. (1997), pp. 1-178, 204-226.

b. *Suggested*

Angus Campbell, Philip Converse, Warren Miller, and Donald Stokes, *The American Voter* (1960).

Angus Campbell, Philip Converse, Warren Miller, and Donald Stokes, *Elections and the Political Order* (1966).

Norman H. Nie, Sidney Verba, and John Petrocik, *The Changing American Voter* (1976).

Raymond Wolfinger and Steven Rosenstone, *Who Votes?* (1980).

Stanley Kelley, *Interpreting Elections* (1983).

D. Roderick Kiewiet, *Macroeconomics and Micropolitics: The Electoral Effects of Economic Issues* (1983).

Larry M. Bartels, *Presidential Primaries and the Dynamics of Public Choice* (1988).

Linda L. Fowler and Robert D. McClure, *Political Ambition: Who Decides to Run for Congress?* (1989).

Richard Niemi and Herbert Weisberg (eds.), *Controversies in Voting Behavior*, 3rd ed. (1993).

Richard Niemi and Herbert Weisberg (eds.), *Classics in Voting Behavior* (1993).

Jonathan S. Krasno, *Challengers, Competition, and Reelection: Comparing Senate and House Elections* (1994).

Marion Just, Ann Crigler, Dean Alger, Timothy Cook, Montague Kern, and Darrell West, *Crosstalk: Citizens, Candidates, and the Media in a Presidential Campaign* (1996).

Paul Herrnson, *Congressional Elections: Campaigning at Home and in Washington*, 3rd ed. (2000).

7. Agenda Setting (March 26)

How does government decide which problems to attack? Which solutions to consider? What are the roles of bureaucrats, executives, legislators, the mass media, interest groups, and public opinion in shaping the governmental agenda?

a. Required (230 pages)

John W. Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*, 2nd ed. (1995), pp. 1-230.

b. *Suggested*

Roger W. Cobb and Charles D. Elder, *Participation in American Politics: The Dynamics of Agenda-Building* (1972).

Martha Derthick, *Policy Making for Social Security* (1979).

T. R. Reid, *Congressional Odyssey: The Saga of a Senate Bill* (1980).

John Mendeloff, *Regulating Safety: An Economic and Political Analysis of Occupational Safety and Health Policy* (1980).

Nelson W. Polsby, *Political Innovation in America: The Politics of Policy Initiation* (1984).

Martha Derthick and Paul Quirk, *The Politics of Deregulation* (1985).

R. Kent Weaver and Bert A. Rockman, *Do Institutions Matter? Government Capabilities in the United States and Abroad* (1993).

Frank R. Baumgartner and Bryan D. Jones, *Agendas and Instability in American Politics* (1993).

Bryan D. Jones, *Reconceiving Decision-Making in Democratic Politics: Attention, Choice, and Public Policy* (1994).

David A. Rochefort and Roger W. Cobb (ed), *The Politics of Problem Definition: Shaping the Policy Agenda* (1994).

Richard Himelfarb, *Catastrophic Politics: The Rise and Fall of the Medicare Catastrophic Coverage Act of 1988* (1995).

Margaret Weir (ed.), *The Social Divide: Political Parties and the Future of Activist Government* (1998).

R. Kent Weaver, *Ending Welfare as We Know It* (2000).

8. Legislatures and Public Policy (April 2)

How do legislators respond to public opinion? What accounts for legislatures sometimes serving narrow and particularistic interests and sometimes serving more general interests? What strategies are available for encouraging legislators to adopt specific policies?

a. *Required* (233 pages)

R. Douglas Arnold, *The Logic of Congressional Action* (1990), pp. 3-223, 265-276.

b. *Suggested*

David R. Mayhew, *Congress: The Electoral Connection* (1974).

Richard F. Fenno, Jr., *Home Style: House Members in Their Districts* (1978).

William Muir, *Legislature: California's School for Politics* (1982).

Bruce Cain, John Ferejohn, and Morris Fiorina, *The Personal Vote: Constituency Service and Electoral Independence* (1987).

John W. Kingdon, *Congressmen's Voting Decisions*, 3rd ed. (1989).

Keith Krehbiel, *Information and Legislative Organization* (1991).

Carol Swain, *Black Faces, Black Interests: The Representation of African Americans in Congress* (1993).

Gary W. Cox and Mathew D. McCubbins, *Legislative Leviathan: Party Government in the House* (1993).

Richard F. Fenno, Jr., *Senators on the Campaign: Trail The Politics of Representation* (1996).

Richard L. Hall, *Participation in Congress* (1996).

Keith T. Poole and Howard Rosenthal, *Congress: A Political-Economic History of Roll Call Voting* (1997).

9. Political Parties and Public Policy (April 9)

What role do political parties play in the policy-making process? Does it matter whether a single party controls government? Mayhew first argues that it does not and then offers alternative macro-explanations for variations in policy making.

a. *Required* (174 pages)

David R. Mayhew, *Divided We Govern: Party Control, Lawmaking, and Investigations, 1946-1990* (1991), pp. 1-7, 34-200.

b. *Suggested*

James L. Sundquist, *Politics and Policy: The Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson Years* (1968).

David W. Brady, *Critical Elections and Congressional Policy Making* (1988).

Edward G. Carmines and James A. Stimson, *Issue Evolution: Race and the Transformation of American Politics* (1989).

David W. Rohde, *Parties and Leaders in the Postreform House* (1991).

Gary W. Cox and Samuel Kernell (eds), *The Politics of Divided Government* (1991).

John Aldrich, *Why Parties? The Origins and Transformation of Party Politics in America* (1995).

David R. Mayhew, "Presidential Elections and Policy Change: How Much of a Connection Is There?" in Harvey L. Schantz (ed.), *American Presidential Elections: Process, Policy, and Political Change* (1996).

Morris Fiorina, *Divided Government, 2nd ed.* (1996).

Howell, William, Scott Adler, Charles Cameron, and Charles Riemann, "Divided Government and the Legislative Productivity of Congress, 1945-94," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* (May 2000), pp. 285-312

10. Separation of Powers and Public Policy (April 16)

What kind of an imprint does separation of powers leave on the shape of public policy?

a. *Required* (182 pages)

David W. Brady and Craig Volden, *Revolving Gridlock: Politics and Policy from Carter to Clinton* (1998), pp. 1-182.

b. *Suggested*

Keith Krehbiel, *Pivotal Politics: A Theory of U.S. Lawmaking* (1998).

Charles M. Cameron, *Veto Bargaining: Presidents and the Politics of Negative Power* (2000).

11. Courts and Public Policy (April 23)

How much influence do courts have in the making of public policy? Can courts be used to bypass elected legislatures and executives? Under what conditions do courts matter?

a. *Required* (273 pages)

Gerald N. Rosenberg, *The Hollow Hope: Can Courts Bring About Social Change?* (1991), pp. 1-265, 336-343.

b. *Suggested*

Walter F. Murphy, *Elements of Judicial Strategy* (1964).

Robert G. Dixon, Jr., *Democratic Representation: Reapportionment in Law and Politics* (1968).

Donald L. Horowitz, *The Courts and Social Policy* (1977).

Martin Shapiro, *Courts: A Comparative and Political Analysis* (1981).

Jennifer Hochschild, *The New American Dilemma: Liberal Democracy and School Desegregation* (1984).

David M. O'Brien, *Storm Center: The Supreme Court in American Politics*, 2nd ed. (1990).

H. W. Perry, Jr., *Deciding to Decide: Agenda Setting in the United States Supreme Court* (1991).

G. Alan Tarr, *Judicial Process and Judicial Policy Making* (1994).

David L. Kirp, John P. Dwyer, and Larry Rosenthal, *Our Town: Race, Housing, and the Soul of Suburbia* (1995).

Charles M. Haar, *Suburbs Under Siege: Race, Space, and Audacious Judges* (1996).

Neal Devins, *Shaping Constitutional Values: Elected Government, The Supreme Court, and the Abortion Debate* (1996).

Robert A. Katzmann, *Courts and Congress* (1997).

David A. Schultz (ed.), *Leveraging the Law: Using the Courts to Achieve Social Change* (1998).

12. Executives and Public Policy (April 30)

How much influence do individual executives have on politics and public policy? Can we generalize about the secrets of effective leadership?

a. *Required* (200 pages)

Fred I. Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference: Leadership Style from FDR to Clinton* (2000), pp. 1-200.

b. *Suggested*

James David Barber, *The Presidential Character* (1977, 1992).

Irving Janis, *Groupthink* (1982).

Fred I. Greenstein, *The Hidden-Hand President: Eisenhower as Leader* (1982).

Jeffrey Tulis, *The Rhetorical Presidency* (1987).

Fred I. Greenstein (ed.), *Leadership in the Modern Presidency* (1988).

John P. Burke and Fred I. Greenstein, *How Presidents Test Reality: Decisions on Vietnam, 1954 and 1965* (1989).

Richard E. Neustadt, *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents: The Politics of Leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan* (1960, 1990).

Stephen Skowronek, *The Politics Presidents Make* (1994).

Charles O. Jones, *The Presidency in a Separated System* (1994).

Samuel Kernell, *Going Public: New Strategies of Presidential Leadership*, 3rd ed. (1997).